

General Topics :: Obese Christians?

**Obese Christians? - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/6 22:23**

First of all I want to set a few things straight. By obese I mean someone who is 30 pounds plus over weight (the medical definition), not some one who has a few pounds to lose. I myself could stand to lose a few more pounds and I have a large frame body type. I am 6' 2" 255, I work out 4 days a week, watch what I eat, fast at least once a week, and ride a bike 20 to 40 mile a week. If I were to stop doing this I would be over 300 pounds in no time flat. That is just the type of body the Lord gave me. I am not one of those people who can eat anything, never exercise and never gain a pound.

With that being said - I would like to pose the following questions:

Isn't it a sin to be obese?

We know the health problems of obesity are staggering. A literal health epidemic in America. I have even heard it said that being obese is more harmful to your health than smoking. I can't imagine that harming our bodies in such a way would be anything but sin in the eyes of God. Aren't our bodies to be offered as a sacrifice holy and acceptable to God? Aren't our bodies the temple of the Holy Ghost? Won't we stand naked before God on the day of judgment?

Yet I go to numerous different churches and see obese people worshiping and dancing as if they are doing nothing wrong and not living a continual lifestyle of sin. As many as 3 out of every 10 people fit this category. (30+ pounds over weight) How can this be? Are pastors too cowardly to confront the obese members of their congregation with their lifestyle of sin. Would pastors allow openly homosexuals to worship and dance week after week along with the rest of their congregation and pretend they are Christian while they live a continual lifestyle of sin? Then why are pastors allowing obese people to dance and worship dance week after week along with the rest of their congregation and pretend they are Christian while they live a continual lifestyle of sin?

Can anyone give me a link to a sermon where the speaker has firmly denounced obesity and calls it sin?

:o I honestly don't mean to offend any one, but I feel it is a legitimate question. And I feel calling sin - sin is more important then the chance we may offend.

**Re: Obese Christians?, on: 2005/8/6 22:36**

Well, I'm not over-weight, to put it more kindly, but I'd rather have a bunch of fat "Loving" folks in my Church, then well, how would ya say it ... I guess, it's a question of casting the first stone or something.

Ha, I'm sorry for that answer ... I'm sure you didn't need to hear from the peanut-head-gallery today. :-?

Maybe I'm just in my silly-mode again. (no doubt)

Hope someone can give you a better answer.

Love to you.

Annie

**Re: obesity - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/8/6 22:51**

Hi Patrick,

Yes, we have actually discussed this a few times on SI before. I think it was not long ago that Dann posted a wonderful post about gluttony, the overlooked sin- about his own weight loss and how he has been riding his bike also.

this is the thread, hope it's not backwards :)

([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id6090&forum35#44950](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id6090&forum35#44950)) Gluttony- the overlooked Sin

As a former personal fitness trainer, but also a person in bondage to eating disorders, it is a subject that is near to my heart. All things should be done for the glory of God and we should have self control in all areas as well. Self control is a fruit of the spirit.

When I went through a program called the Lord's Table, we learned that the reason we wanted to get our eating on track, was not because of our looks or for our happiness, but to please God, to bring him glory in our lives.

For some, food is an addiction, a source of comfort, a form of denial. Food can be an idol. Just like anything else can be an idol.

This is not to say that gluttony is any worse or better than other sins.

Well, I could go on and on about this, so I'll just stop here. :)

But I will leave you these verses:

Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness...  
Ezekiel 16:49

for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking,  
but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.  
Romans 14:17

For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty,  
and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.  
Proverbs 23:21

But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I preach to others,  
I myself should become disqualified.  
1 Corinthians 9:27

...do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body.  
Is not life more important than food and the body more than clothing?  
Matthew 6:25

Hope this helped to answer some of your questions :)

In Him, Chanin

**Re: Obese Christians? - posted by ccchhrrriiiss () , on: 2005/8/6 23:27**

Hi Christisking...!

Perhaps you should make a distinction between *obesity* and *gluttony*. It is not a sin to be obese. There are people that I know who eat far less than I do, yet are plagued with obesity. Often, this has less to do with *how much* they eat, as with what they eat. Such a lifestyle can be a terrible price to pay for later in life. I am thin (but somewhat athletic), yet I often feel convicted because of the foods that I eat.

The Bible is clear that our bodies are the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Thus, we should not take things into our body that might be harmful to us. But who is to judge what those things might be? A half of a twinkie might be worse than a large bag of potato chips. And remember, each person reacts differently to particular foods. My mother's nutritionist urges her to stay away from many green vegetables (containing Vitamin K) because of excess clotting agents in her blood. On the other hand, most people are urged to eat their vegetables.

## General Topics :: Obese Christians?

The important thing is that we should urge one another to take care of the "temple" that God has given us. We should not be lazy. We should always eat in moderation. And we should always be aware of what things we are placing in our body. But we should not be judgmental of those who are "obese." Calling someone that is obese "sinful" is like calling someone that is thin an "athlete."

I agree that it is good for ministers to implore their congregations to take care of themselves -- physically, mentally and spiritually. However, if pastors were called to confront those in worship about *eating too much*, should they not also confront all sorts of other sins? There is a whole list of such *sins* that a pastor could mention in front of congregations.

It is well within the call of a pastor to denounce and preach against sin -- including those which are wrongly considered "minor" in modern churches. But remember, not everything is always what it appears to be. And everything that we do should be motivated by pure love. Remember that Jesus did not *cast out* the prostitutes and tax collectors. He ate and sat with them. Why? Jesus wanted to bring them to the Kingdom.

Scriptures about gluttony:

I Timothy 4:8

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Philippians 4:5

Daniel 1:12-17

James 4:7

Romans 8:1-4

I John 2:15

Galatians 5:13

I Corinthians 3:16

:~)

**Re:, on: 2005/8/7 0:27**

I meant no disrespect by my first post ... but having worked in the Medical field, I know that many have thyroid issues or are on steroids for many diseases, and just these two alone, will blow you up like a toad.

If it's a medical condition, which oft times it can be, and a Pastor preaches on obesity, well, to tell you the truth, I've seen this happen and the people who "couldn't help it" were very-very hurt.

Many years ago, a certain 'christian' college, wouldn't let "obese" people apply for admission.

And things I've read about Moody's "big belly" and Spurgeon's cigar ... I just want to see what is in the inner man, to be a tad bit more important.

Though things like adultery and a lot of others, like abortion, are big enough to merit reproofs/corrections, etc..

There's a verse, that says, "if you find yourself given to gluttony, put a knife to your throat" ... now what do we do with that ?

Or pluck out your eye, or cut off your hand ?

I only see Jesus really rebuking the self-righteous, when He was here, in the flesh.

And if we really focus on the First Commandment, to 1st Love God, with All our hearts, souls, minds, and strength and others as ourselves, the rest falls into place. Right ?

Such a subject, that I guess, knowing so many beautiful on the inside folks who struggle with hormones, metabolism, etc . etc., I guess I just didn't see this on my burger-biggie list.

No pun intended.

Sorry for my flippant answers.

Chanin, maybe I'm just tired ? Probably.

**Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/7 1:17**

Chris,

You said:

"However, if pastors were called to confront those in worship about eating too much, should they not also confront all sorts of other sins? There is a whole list of such sins that a pastor could mention in front of congregations."

My answer is yes, yes, yes a thousand times yes. This is just one on a very, very, very long list that happens to be on my mind lately and that I've noticed particularly in the past couple of weeks. I would be happy to discuss other sins pastors shy away from confronting and would be interested in knowing what other sins others have noticed as well.

You also said:

"Remember that Jesus did not cast out the prostitutes and tax collectors. He ate and sat with them. Why? Jesus wanted to bring them to the Kingdom."

This is also true, but we must remember that He also gave the stern and unwavering command to - go on sin no more.

Granny Annie also brings up a good point:

"If it's a medical condition, which oft times it can be, and a Pastor preaches on obesity, well, to tell you the truth, I've seen this happen and the people who "couldn't help it" were very-very hurt."

I think it would be a shame if a pastor did not verbally excuse such rare conditions and unavoidable circumstances when giving such a message or rebuke. If a pastor was not to do this, he in my opinion would be in error. A certain amount of tact and respect, as in all cases, must be observed. If one was to say "you now who you are, and God knows who you are, and the Holy Spirit knows who you are and if this does not apply to you based on some rare medical condition please bear with us for the sake of the edification and repentance of your fellow brothers and sisters."

I have known of a few people who have such medical conditions and they are almost always very outspoken about the medication they take or thyroid problem they may have. I'm not sure this a reason to just be silent. But it is absolutely a reason to clearly state an exception to these people. And to clearly state an intention not to offend but to bring to repentance.

**Re:, on: 2005/8/7 1:34**

I think you all brought out good points. Very good.

One other thought I had, and I'm not trying to get in my silly-mode again, but down in the Bible Belt here, we have a Restaurant, that's an "All-You-Can-Eat" Buffet style place.

Well, every Wednesday, if you have any form of Credentials, that you are a licensed Minister, you can eat for free.

I don't think you could count the "skinny" Pastors on one hand, even though the joint is packed.

Maybe that's another reason why it's not or can't be preached :-? .

ChristisKing (that's for sure)

You make a lot of good points too.

How could we make a "list" of sins though ?

The definition of "sin" is "to miss the mark", and that "mark" is the exact 'Image of the Son'.  
Rom 8:29 and others.

That would be an infinite list, that's for sure.

I can't even list my own without feeling despair beyond being able to hold my head up, when I look at me, compared to "

Him".

But that's our goal though, like Paul said. Right ?

**Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2005/8/7 2:29**

Hi Christisking...!

As mentioned in my earlier post, it is definitely a good thing for a man of God to denounce and preach against sin. This should always be done with the greatest compassion and with a broken heart. The man of God should *hurt* when he does this -- and never with a self-righteous attitude. As many preachers have often pointed out, Jesus "*wept before he whipped*." Jesus literally *wept* as he arrived to Jerusalem, longing to hold the people of Jerusalem in his arms. He did this just a short while before he pulled out the whip at the Temple (Luke 19:41-46). Leonard Ravenhill once said, "A preacher has no business using the whip unless he has wept uncontrollably for those to whom he preaches."

You make a valid point about how many preachers fail to preach against certain sins for fear of upsetting or embarrassing a particular member (or group of members) of the congregation. I know of a church that suffers terribly from rampant gossip -- and the pastor privately admitted that he doesn't know what to do. If he confronts it, he feels that he will offend many away from the church. If he lets it go on, many people will continue to be hurt. So he is stuck in a dilemma...and he unfortunately does nothing.

However, in your post, you state that *obesity* is a sin. It is not. Obesity is just a physical condition. And yes, that condition often comes as a result of a sin -- called *gluttony*. But obesity can also be the result of a bad selection of foods (such as junk food). Some metabolisms break down fatty foods rather quickly, while others may have slower metabolisms. Therefore, it is difficult to judge which person is obese because of diet or health, and which person is obese due to the sin of gluttony.

In the same way, every person who suffers from AIDS cannot be judged as having contracted the disease via sinful actions. While in the United States, most people who suffer from AIDS contract the disease via sinful practices (sexual immorality, drugs, etc...) -- there are still many others who contracted that disease from other means (such as from a cheating spouse, hospital drug transfusion, a cop who poked his fingers on an infected needle, rape victims, etc...). In many third world nations, AIDS is often contracted through unclean needles at hospitals (in the US and Canada, a used needle is thrown away, but in Africa, the needles are often reused). Thus, it is impossible to make a "blanket statement" that all AIDS victims have contracted the disease because of their own sinfulness.

So, should a person suffering from AIDS, or obesity, or lust, or a person that is pregnant with an illegitimate child, etc... be allowed to publicly worship? Of course they should! Why? Because only God knows the heart of a person! Who knows if that person is in the condition that they are in because of undisclosed sin? And who knows if that person *has* or *has not* repented? To view people in any other way can be damaging and lead to a prideful, judgmental or self-righteous attitude (Luke 18:10-14).

If a pastor were to spend his time publicly and individually exposing *every* sin of *every* person in a congregation -- he would not have time to preach the Word! Instead, the pastor should publicly preach against sin as it is written in the Word. He should boldly and openly preach against sins of lust, gossip, gluttony, abortion, sexual immorality, spiritual indifference, etc... Yet he should do this with the greatest of love, so that like Jesus, he would want none to fall away. He should only expose people individually that are blatantly unrepentant -- or leading others astray (as in I Corinthians 5). Remember, there is a powerful yet subtle difference between conviction and condemnation. The Lord came to *convict* us of sin -- not *condemn* us in our sin (John 3:17).

May God help us to have the same compassion and mercy for others as we need and desire for ourselves! Yes, we should love them enough to tell them the truth. But as Paul states, may God help us to "speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). When spoken with such *agape* love, it is difficult to misunderstand our motives.

:)

**Re: Obese Christians? - posted by savedgrace, on: 2005/8/7 2:35**

Of course it is not a sin to be obese.

If it is, would that imply that being fabulously fit and trim equates to being righteous? What if I am fabulously fit and trim because I throw all my energy into exercise and am obsessed with my body image?

You need to look behind the body shape to what is inside the person's heart. What is first in their life? Are they looking to food or exercise to replace a God-shaped hole in their heart? ... and if they are, does that mean we throw them out of fellowship?

Not having managed to get through a single day of my life without sin, I'm not going to cast the first stone.

Grace

**Re: - posted by CHRISTian722 (), on: 2005/8/7 2:41**

well..I am a nutrition major here so I may have a bit of a bias..lol..however..I wud like to point out some things...

for one..obesity (not being overweight) is not necessarily genetic. You can have a predisposition to gain weight easily, but it will never take u to the lengths of obesity. In the same light...there are very thin people who are that way genetically, but never to the point of being unhealthy. I have noticed painfully thin people who claim to have a "good metabolism" when in reality that is only partially true. These people also only eat as an average person, when their body is made to eat more than that. On the same token, obese people tend to eat more than the average person (I am speaking abt calories here not quantity or bulk of food. Both are unhealthy and are only made as such by lack of effort on the part of the person.

However, it is true that obese people are certainly more susceptible to gaining weight. This is why taking an active role in taking care of the body is very important. It may not seem fair, but those are the casualties of life. there are certain things that different people have to deal with and they simply deal with them...that said.. There is simply no excuse for obesity...I do not mean to sound harsh at all..(and i hope that i do not)

I think that you have brought to light, perhaps, some biases within the Christian community. We say that smoking is wrong because it is harmful to the body and addictive..and yet so is food...and so is not taking care of the body we have been given.

**Re:Food and economics - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/8/7 2:50**

Quote:

-----Are they looking to food or exercise to replace a God-shaped hole in their heart?  
-----

I don't know why but I suddenly have a craving for donuts! :-P

Seriously, the distinction between gluttony and obesity is a keen one. Still, it is unmistakable the positive effect of simply eating better grade food.

A friend of mine is convinced that the challenge of eating healthy is greater for people in poverty. He makes the case that it costs more money to eat healthy...cheaper food contains fat, sugars, and carbs. Poorer people can sometimes be healthier because they have less time and money to take care of themselves.

While I'm not asking if anyone agrees completely...does anyone here have any sympathy for this idea?

Just asking,

MC

**Re: Donuts (o: }, on: 2005/8/7 3:23**

How'd I wind up back here ?

Anyhow, I liked so much what Chris had said, especially about the "tears of a Pastor".

If there's no "weeping before the whipping", or however Chris put it, then they are not a Shepherd, but just a Puffed-up hi reling.

Compton, you've got a great point, since you asked... :-)

When I met my husband, his Mom raised he and his siblings on junk food. She still lives on it.

I've got him on cereal or whatever for breakfast, all fruit for lunch, and tons of it, then a healthy dinner, with not as much of the meat that he used to consume (as in a 1 LB steak per sitting :).

Now, when he's at work with the guys, he sees what they eat "on the run", and he grieves inside for them. Most working people, 'are' on the run, and you are very right, that 'eating right' can get expensive ... but it can be weighed out in other ways ... but I think the 'time' factor for most part is a real issue.

I worry more about people's health than their size.

But, sometimes it also goes to the issue of depression with some people. They feel alone, not good enough for anybody , etc. etc. etc., and maybe if we just "fill that hole" that was brought up, and look deeper inside these folks, maybe we'd find out "WHY" they may be overweight, rather than painting them all with such a wide brush.

People are Hurting inside, and each tends to that hurt, in different ways.

It takes 'time' for God to come in and heal us from the inside out. Then we can feel worthy enough to "take care of ourselves".

In America, we're told we 'have to' eat 3 times a day, plus snacks. Missionaries can go on one meal a day.

I'll take that donut now MC :-D

**Re: - posted by CHRISTian722 (), on: 2005/8/7 3:36**

Quote:  
-----A friend of mine is convinced that the challenge of eating healthy is greater for people in poverty. He makes the case that it costs more money to eat healthy...cheaper food contains fat, sugars, and carbs. Poorer people can sometimes be heavier because they have less time and money to take care of themselves.  
-----

this is partially true but only because modern society makes it much easier for us to be less active. If u are poor (as i was growing up) you may not have money to eat the commercialized stuff..but u can afford to eat healthy for the most part..u m..also..u tend to eat less....

But nowadays people are much MUCH less active than in times past. It is much easier to remain obese nowadays and it is not necessarily anyone's fault...it is hard to walk places with the traffic and such..unless u live in NY ..lol



## General Topics :: Obese Christians?

**Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/8/7 4:01**

Quote:  
-----If there's no "weeping before the whipping", or however Chris put it, then they are not a Shepherd, but just a Puffed-up hireling....People are Hurting inside, and each tends to that hurt, in different ways.  
-----

This comment reminded me of a little episode with the friend I was talking about. One Sunday we were at church in a prayer circle before worship when someone asked where a certain missing musician was. Because this absent fellow was quite overweight, a few of the guys made some callous jokes about him probably being at McDonalds. At this point, my friend rebuked the whole lot of us. Having to fight to keep his own weight off, he said with tears in his own eyes, "How touching that you are concerned about his weight! Which one of you will be a brother and encourage him to lose weight? Which one of you will get up early with him to help him stick to an exercise program?" He walked off the stage and left everyone feeling rightfully ashamed of their insensitivity.

Quote:  
-----I'll take that donut now MC  
-----

This reminds me of a children's song by the "Donut Man." "Life without Jesus is like a donut." Knowing my kids, they would ask what kind...jelly or custard?

**Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/8/7 4:05**

CHRISTian722,

As a nutritionist I thought you might find this Interesting.

A friend from Hong Kong once complained to me about the invasion of American fast food in Asia. He told me that for the first time in thousands of years, obesity in China, especially among the youth, is on the rise.

We discussed this at one of his favorite restaurants over there...KFC.

MC

**Re: - posted by CHRISTian722 (), on: 2005/8/7 4:13**

lol!..yes!! because the food has so much more calories here due to frying and additives and preservatives and all that jazz.

Many foreigners say they gain weight when they come here even though they eat the same portions. They are only able to lose the weight when they return to their native diets..lol..the American diet- Fast Food!! :))

**Re: Supersize Me - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/8/7 5:59**

Quote:  
-----Many foreigners say they gain weight when they come here even though they eat the same portions.  
-----

Has anyone here seen the documentary on McDonalds called "Supersize Me?" The filmmaker decided to live on nothing but three McDonald's meals a day for 30 days while being monitored by a small team of health experts...and record the whole thing on film. The film claims that the food is chemically addictive and that it took 6 months to lose the weight gained during the "experiment."



**Re:, on: 2005/8/7 6:36**

I read the original post, but have not read thru all the responses... but here is my take on obese believers.

Barring any medical conditions that cause people to be overweight (i.e. out of their control) being over weight is generally cause by one thing: gluttony. And the root sin of gluttony is: selfishness.

I want that donut. I want **my** fries supersized. I hate working out.

Eating can also be an addiction. Many many people eat to escape. We feel some sort of emotional pain... what soothes it? Ben & Jerry's ice cream. This is called *idolatry*.

Now, having said this, we can not go around and look at people who struggle with weight and judge them. Why? Well, first off... how do you know they dont have a thyroid condition? And if they dont have one, we still should not sit in judgement on them if we see them getting in line for the 3rd time at the buffet because YOU may not have a problem controlling you eating... but you may have a problem controlling your TV. You may have a problem controlling your temper when you're driving. Etc.

We certainly can approach someone we know who has a problem controlling their eating... doing so in love, and offering to help them over come it. I'm sure a lot of guilt goes along with this particular problem. Especially if someone has lost weight, and then put it back on plus another 10.

Of all the issues in the church, this is probably one of the most wide spread problems... and the hardest to address without offending. God be with any pastor who attempts to deal with it in his fellowship.

Krispy

**Re: Is obesity a sin?, on: 2005/8/7 7:42**

Quote:  
-----A friend of mine is convinced that the challenge of eating healthy is greater for people in poverty. He makes the case that it costs more money to eat healthy...cheaper food contains fat, sugars, and carbs. Poorer people can sometimes be heavier because they have less time and money to take care of themselves.  
-----

There is plenty of research in the UK confirming the truth of your friend's theory. This is compounded by the cost of joining a gym, sports or leisure club, which is WAY beyond the pocket even of a non-smoking, non-drinking, honest Benefit claimant.

My experience of controlling my weight rests entirely on DECIDING to control my weight. After that, no problem. For anyone on drugs or hormones or a low income, they have their back to the wall unless they are also educated, motivated and have enough time to overcome these extra difficulties. I agree with previous posts which have outlined the many reasons not everyone who is obese, can be accused of 'sin'.

Just a word about nursing mothers... not only do women naturally carry a higher %fat than men, but successful nursing may depend on carrying extra weight too - although this is not a 'rule', as some people lose weight faster, because of nursing!

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/7 8:27**

I recall trying to help a Christian family who were struggling with the fact that their unmarried teenage daughter had become pregnant. It is very important to separate causes from effects in bringing a word from God to such settings. So I tried to spell it out like this;

It is not sin to be having a child when you are unmarried. It is a natural consequence of something earlier. The sin was the relationship outside marriage; the pregnancy was the consequence. The shame is human shame, not conviction. God convicts of the sin; men judge the consequences.

Obesity is not sin. The cause of the obesity which probably took place in secret with no one to observe may well have been sin. Gluttony is a sin, but then gluttony is not the only cause of obesity. Men are very proficient at judging consequences; only the Spirit of God can convict the heart.

**Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2005/8/7 12:50**

I don't know why but I suddenly have a craving for donuts! :-P

Maybe you had a desire to be a cop at some point. :-P

**Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/7 13:06**

Savedgrace wrote:

"Of course it is not a sin to be obese."

I respectfully and firmly disagree!!! When you know that being obese because of overeating and lack of exercise is more harmful to your body than smoking cigarettes, how can you say it is not a sin. Do you think smoking is also not a sin? Doing deliberate harm to your body day after day is absolutely a sin. It is a lifestyle of sin, just like homosexuality, drug addiction, alcohol addiction, food addiction or any other addiction. Obviously not acceptable for one who claims to be a child of God

Like I said in my original post - I'm not talking about someone who has a few pounds to lose, I'm talking about someone who is obese (30+ pounds over weight) because they can't stop over eating and refuse to exercise and refuse to take care of their body which is the temple of the Holy Ghost. If you deliberately keep the temple of the Holy Ghost in a miserable and terrible condition - I would have to disagree and firmly state that this is a sin. I believe there will be many who present their temple of the Holy Ghost in a shambles and complete disarray to a Holy and Righteous God on the day of judgment who will be cast into outer darkness while saying "Lord, Lord, Lord"

By the grace of God we have the power to overcome sin! We should ask ourselves - "Have we allowed the grace of God to produce holy living in our lives or have we accepted the grace of God in vain?" If we continue to sin after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no covering left for these sins and all we have to look forward to is the eternal fires of the pits of hell that consume the enemies of God.

Heb:10:26-27 -

"Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received a full knowledge of the truth, there is no other sacrifice that will cover these sins. There will be nothing to look forward to but the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies"

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/7 13:32**

Christisking, you write:

Quote:

-----"Of course it is not a sin to be obese."

I respectfully and firmly disagree!!!

I think perhaps you are missing our point here. Lung cancer is not a sin; it may be the consequence of sin, but the condition is not the sin, only the result of it. Aids is not a sin: it may be the consequence of sin, but the condition is not the sin, only the result of it. Similarly, obesity, in itself is not a sin, but it may well be the consequence of a sin.

I have carefully chosen the examples above because not all lung-cancer is the result of mis-stewardship of the body. And not all Aids is the result of sexual misbehaviour. Similarly, not all obesity is the result of gluttony.

## General Topics :: Obese Christians?

**Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiss () , on: 2005/8/7 13:35**

Hi philologos...!

Quote:

-----"It is not sin to be having a child when you are unmarried. It is a natural consequence of something earlier. The sin was the relationship outside marriage; the pregnancy was the consequence. The shame is human shame, not conviction. God convicts of the sin; men judge the consequences."

-----  
I was just telling this to someone a couple of days ago! I have always heard of people saying that an illegitimate child is the consequence of sin. I told them that this concept is wrong -- and perhaps damaging to the child. A child is the result (or consequence) of a biological process that was created by God initiated through sex. A child is always a blessing -- regardless of whether this child was conceived in sin or not. While we should never condone sin (including sexual sin), we should be very caring for both those conceived as a result of sin, and those who have repented thereof.

Thanks for the post.

:-)

**Re: Obese Christians? - posted by ravin, on: 2005/8/7 16:22**

Can we pray for one another, as Christ prayed for us (John 17.) for the word says we are one body and one spirit, not enemies.

Christians who should be helping one another.

"Beloved I would that you should love one another even as I love you" my hero Jesus

Father I pray that the body be united and work as in one spirit, that when one part of the body hurt we all hurt. I pray for strength for the weak, I pray for love for the hurting, oil for the wounds, the broken hearted. I pray for the Holy Spirit to move on a heart to speak words of comfort. For brother and sisters to stand together united in one faith, one God, one Spirit. Let us work in a heart of love and Lord give me strength to do they will. Amen

**Re: - posted by lastblast () , on: 2005/8/7 16:52**

Quote:

-----A friend from Hong Kong once complained to me about the invasion of American fast food in Asia. He told me that for the first time in thousands of years, obesity in China, especially among the youth, is on the rise.

-----  
I can totally understand that. We went to China last year and hardly saw any overweight persons. (We were in an area where Western type restaurants were few and far between). I do understand why they stay so thin.....for one, the majority walk or ride bicycles everywhere they go. They ride in taxis very little.

I lost about 5 lbs in 2 weeks while there and I can tell you I was NEVER hungry. Matter of fact, I was stuffed for the most part. While we were there, they (the family we were with) ate a lot, but their diet was so very different from ours. They do use a lot of oil to cook their meats and vegetables, but they DO NOT eat hardly any sugar/sweets. Big, huge difference from the U.S./Western World, where we feel deprived if we don't have a sweet/dessert at least once a day. They eat fruit for their sweets. :-) good habit to get into.....

**Re: - posted by lastblast () , on: 2005/8/7 16:54**

Quote:

-----not all lung-cancer is the result of mis-stewardship of the body. And not all Aids is the result of sexual misbehaviour. Similarly, not all obesity is the result of gluttony.

-----  
Great point to remember.....

## General Topics :: Obese Christians?

**Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/8/7 17:40**

Quote:  
-----I can totally understand that. We went to China last year and hardly saw any overweight persons. (We were in an area where Western type restaurants were few and far between).  
-----

For what it is worth, I can tell you there is a real difference between areas like Hong Kong and many parts of China. The food I have eaten in Hong Kong (Kowloon) is the richest I have ever eaten. There was this one Australian restaurant there that made this huge hamburger with bacon and two giant eggs laid right on the patties...

Yet most of the places I visited in China appeared closer to third world in terms of urban development. Oh the things I ingested in those restaurants...I am proud to say I never declined to try a single dish...even the thousand-year old egg. (I think they were making sport of the guai lo.:o )

You must be right...most of China doesn't have access to our fast foods,... to my disappointment.(Just kidding)

MC

**Re: poverty and health - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/8/7 17:45**

I came across these stats on the negative effects poverty may have on health.....I thought they related to our conversation.

Low-income Asian and Pacific Islander children in California are becoming overweight at an alarming rate -- and will soon catch up to low-income white, African-American and Latin-American children in the proportion who are overweight or obese, according to research reported at the 5th Asian American Cancer Control Academy.

The percentage of low-income Asian and Pacific Islander children in California who are overweight more than doubled between 1994 and 2003, from 7 percent to 15 percent.

U.S. Teens More Overweight Than Youth In 14 Other Countries (January 9, 2004) -- U.S. teens are more likely to be overweight than are teens from 14 other industrialized nations, according to survey information collected in 1997 and 1998 by two agencies of the Department of Health ...

Stress Leads Kids To Unhealthy Diets (August 4, 2003) -- Stressed-out 11-year-olds eat more unhealthful food than their less-anxious classmates and consume fewer nutritious meals and snacks.

**Re: Obese Christians? - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2005/8/7 19:56**

We keep the church building clean and maintained. How much more should we maintain the temple of God?

Remember, though, that many overweight Christians are getting ahold of heaven while we are accusing them of being fat. Have you thought to yourself, 'he ought to lose weight' more times than you have prayed for revival the last week?

**Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/7 20:07**

philologos wrote:

"I have carefully chosen the examples above because not all lung-cancer is the result of mis-stewardship of the body. And not all Aids is the result of sexual misbehavior. Similarly, not all obesity is the result of gluttony."

You are totally missing the point. I very clearly stated that the very small percentage of cases that are not from over eating, gluttony and abuse of one's body should be clearly made an exception. The fact is that the vast majority of lung cancer cases are caused from smoking. Equally the vast majority of obesity cases are from gluttony. It would be a very rare and few and far between case that someone was obese and not a glutton. The same thing goes with lung cancer and smoking.

Again I will say it plain and clear so every one understands. I am not talking about the very rare exception cases of medical condition. I am talking about the vast majority of case which are result of gluttony!

Come on now philologos this post is total cop out. Get real and discuss the issue.

**Re: - posted by ravin, on: 2005/8/7 21:06**

Well lets get real what do you want us to do walk up to some one and say bless you what happened to you.....

I believe we know to little of what has happened to some one to just judge them as sinners.

some have had things done to them that they never ask for, it may have happened as a child by some preaditor. it may be health reasons.

whats your answer to ones hurts? I would much rather be by Jesus and him writting in the sand then reading what he is writting.

so whats the real answer? to stand and pray thank you God that I am not a sinner.

I pray God that you have mercy on me a sinner.

who is next people who to short or have less hair. you can't just judge by appearance.

I find that I have to get to know someone and the lord willing they will share the hurt with a Brother and not an accuser.

I just feel I know where Paul of old was coming from when he said I wish I to had a crown and was sitting on a throne. Lord God have mercy on us.

what ever happened to bearing one anothers burden and so fulfil the law of Christ.

no one is washing the others feet they are judging their foot wear.

**Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2005/8/7 21:13**

Hi Christisking...!

I guess that we can all agree that gluttony is a sin, as are other sins against an individual's own temple, such as smoking, non-medicinal drugs, lack of exercise, tattoos, etc... However, if we want to get really picky, we can also pinpoint other *damages* inflicted upon our temples -- like too much caffeine (drugs), candy (rots our teeth), junk food (art ery cloggers), too much time in the sun (harms the eyes and skin), too much time in front of the computer (harms the vision), lack of sleep (damaging to our mental aptitude), lack of washing the face (leads to pimples and acne), etc...

Again, in this particular topic, the distinction needs to be made between the cause and the effect. The cause (gluttony) often leads to the effect (obesity). Gluttony is a sin. And like other sins, a person should rely on God to help them overcome that sin. But to pinpoint the effect (obesity) and say that such people should not be allowed to worship (or passing judgment by saying that they are not really christians) can be quite ungracious.

Christisking wrote:

Quote:  
-----"Then why are pastors allowing obese people to dance and worship dance week after week along with the rest of their congregation and pretend they are Christian while they live a continual lifestyle of sin?"  
-----

Perhaps those who are rejoicing are actually gluttons. But perhaps they have also repented of their gluttony. Perhaps they have asked for God's help to overcome such behavior. Remember, David was still allowed to worship even *after* his sins were exposed.

How do we know if those worshippers are truly unrepentent sinners?

We don't.

And God doesn't really have to tell us. That is His responsibility.

If you feel the need to say something, pray and fast about the matter. Then, if you still feel the unction from the Lord, sp

Speak with your pastor about it. And, if after all of that you still feel an unction from the Lord to say something, go to that person and lovingly show them the truth about such perceived sin.

But as long as the Pastor preaches the truth (yes, including the fact that gluttony is a sin that needs to be overcome, and that we should take care of our bodies), then we should allow the Holy Spirit to have his work. To abrasively and publicly preach it to specific individuals will probably (and maybe rightfully) be perceived as self-righteousness. There are so many sins that can be dealt with (including some that we might not be aware of in our own lives). But it is the job of the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us into all truth.

I will pray for your congregation -- that they will take care of their "temples" with Biblical care.

:~)

**Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/7 22:12**

I'm not saying we should completely vilify any one over a certain weight limit. I'm not calling for an all out holy war on overweight people. I am not saying that pastors need to lambaste every obese person in the congregation in a mean and cutting, hurtful way. That is the last thing I would want to see happen. But I am trying to make the case that gluttony is a rampant sin in the churches today and almost never even mentioned if addressed at all! Shouldn't these issues be addressed and dealt with within the church? Shouldn't we try to help our brothers and sisters to live Holy and Righteous lives? If a sin is running rampant within our churches and nation. (Obesity is considered a national "American" health epidemic) shouldn't such sin be addressed from every pulpit, even at the risk of possibly offending a few? I just think that any sin that is running rampant through our churches needs to be addressed. That's all, and I am truly sorry if anyone disagrees.

**Re: - posted by mary0418 (), on: 2005/8/7 22:38**

I am so glad that someone is finally speaking about that proverbial "pink elephant"!!!

I personally have fought with my weight and still do everyday! I like to eat yummy stuff! It is a hard thing to do - to watch what you eat in this "fast food" society. How easy is it to grab a \$5 hot and ready?? or a value meal on the way home from work?

But is being a Christian really easy? Aren't we supposed to be separated from the world? Not look like the rest of every body?

We are commanded to crucify our fleshly desires- and that includes over indulging in food.

As Christians, we are to lead disciplined lives and are to take care of the bodies that God gave us. I have to work out almost every day so I won't get fat.

I mean, I wear a size 14 pants- I'm not all skin and bones. We just have to do what we have to do as Christians. It is our duty- right?

Let us just take a look at our Example- the Lord Jesus- was He obese? we need to keep in mind our Glorious Example and do what He does.

We should probably try to not be so incredibly carnal about such matters. Let's just be the saints of God that we are and press on to maturity. Remember Matthew 5:48 "But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Thank you Christisking for having the courage to bring up such things for discussion.

mary0418

**Re: obesity - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/8/7 23:05**

I just wanted to make myself clear from my last post: I agree with many on here that obesity itself is NOT a sin. But gluttony is a sin. Gluttony not only leads to obesity and poor health (not taking care of our temples) but also causes slothfulness. When we overeat, it causes us to get tired and there for many times, lazy. There is a reason why gluttony is called out in the Bible.

I don't think obesity should be preached against, but I do think that there should be preaching on self-discipline and self-control- in all areas of our lives, so that it gives glory to God. Most people know it when they are not obeying the Lord about their eating. Many people are in bondage to food. Again, it is an idol to many people.

Do you know people can be thin and still be gluttons? It's the heart motive behind it. Also there are gluttons for other things than just food. Remember Paul's words about how we should not be mastered by anything?

If anyone has problems with overeating, there is a wonderful book by Elyse Fitzpatrick (a nouthetic biblical counselor) called "'Love to Eat- Hate to Eat'- Breaking the Bondage of Destructive Eating Habits"

Funny thing about this is that before i totally surrendered to the Lord three years ago, i was thinner and at about 10% bodyfat- because i was not only obsessed with food intake/reduction, but I was obsessed with "looks". Now I am "fluffier" and my weight is up about 10 lbs (maybe more :) but I know I am being obedient to God by not obsessing about my weight, but also asking Him to help me with eating in moderation. I don't think people would recognize me as a personal trainer anymore- and that has been a death to 'self' all in itself :) Now I'll just settle for being a 'spiritual fitness trainer' :)

Pressing on with you all, Chanin

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/8 6:43**

Hi Chanin

I bet you're not as 'fluffy' as I am. :-D

On this theme I came across something while reading about conscience for another thread. It comes from O Hallesby's book "Conscience" where he is speaking about the 'new' viewpoint towards sin that Jesus brought in. He writes: He preached the new and revolutionary truth that sin does not consist fundamentally in the deeds we do, nor in the words we speak, but in the attitude of heart from which these proceed. He says, for instance, "For from inside, out of a man's heart, come evil thoughts, acts of fornication, of theft, murder, adultery, ruthless greed, and malice; fraud, indecency, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly" (Mark 7:21,22 NEB)

Here Jesus says that what makes a deed good or bad, sinful or not sinful, is not the doing of it, not its consequence, nor its result, but the motive, the impelling purpose which gives rise to it. Sin is therefore primarily and basically a condition of our heart, an expression of our will. That is pretty much what I have been trying to say in my contributions to this thread.

yours, with a definite intention towards less fluffiness...

**Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/8 12:13**

Quote:

"Here Jesus says that what makes a deed good or bad, sinful or not sinful, is not the doing of it, not its consequence, nor its result, but the motive, the impelling purpose which gives rise to it. Sin is therefore primarily and basically a condition of our heart, an expression of our will."

That is a total cop out. You can not justify sin because of motive or heart. When start trying to justify sin behind the guise of motive and heart condition we are sliding down a grease slide towards pits of hell. We are to live Holy and Righteous lives through the power of the grace of God as a living sacrifice to a Holy and Righteous God. This is where that "God's going to Judge my heart" type of garbage comes from.

**Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/8 12:15**

Quote:

"I agree with many on here that obesity itself is NOT a sin."

The only way obesity is not a sin is on the very rare occasion when it is a medical condition. Otherwise I think very few would disagree that obesity is a sin.

Some here present the position that obesity is only a sin if it is the result of gluttony, and of course this is almost always the cause of obesity. I like Chanin gained weight after becoming a Christian because I was not vain and not overly concerned with my outward appearance anymore. But I would never allow myself to become obese because it would be a sin against the temple of the Holy Spirit. I am sure the Holy Spirit is not too happy with people who continually sin against His temple no matter how good a Christian they pretend to be. I would have serious doubt that anyone who sins against the temple of the Holy Spirit day after day and night after night is even a Christian at all no matter what else they say or do



Now I will use myself as an example, I have a large frame low metabolism body type. (at 17 I was in the best shape of my life, a well conditioned athlete with 10% body fat and 225lbs) If at age 35 I was to eat reasonable portions of reasonably healthy food I would become obese without being a glutton. I have to work hard and make a conscious effort not to become obese. If I were to allow myself to become obese even though I was not being a glutton it would without a doubt be a sin against the temple of the Holy Spirit. If this is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, God gave me, it is my responsibility to take care of it, even if that means I need to put in more effort than others. Hopefully everyone can see how that works by using myself as an example. I could not be a glutton, allow myself to become obese and be living a continual lifestyle of sin.

The only way that one could be obese and not be sinning is the very rare and almost nonexistent case of medical condition. If you don't have a medical condition and are obese you are living a life of sin, no different than a alcoholic or homosexual. If you don't have a medical condition and are obese you are living a life of sin, you need to repent and change your behavior or you will show up on judgment day having rejected the grace of God as power to break the bonds of sin. This is not the position you want to be on the day of judgment my friend.

Heb:10:26-27 -

“Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received a full knowledge of the truth, there is no other sacrifice that will cover these sins. There will be nothing to look forward to but the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies”

“Today, 64.5 percent of adult Americans (about 127 million) are categorized as being obese. Each year, obesity causes at least 300,000 excess deaths in the U.S., and healthcare costs of American adults with obesity amount to approximately \$100 billion. Obesity is the second leading cause of unnecessary deaths.” American Obesity Association

These statistics bring to mind the following verses -

“Their future is eternal destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and all they think about is this life here on earth.” Philippians 3:19

“Listen to me, you "fat cows" of Samaria, you women who oppress the poor and crush the needy and who are always asking your husbands for another drink!” Amos 4:1

"Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy.” Ezekiel 16:49

Boy how these verse so accurately describe the condition of America today, both inside and outside the church!!!

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/8 13:39**

Quote:

-----That is a total cop out. You can not justify sin because of motive or heart. When start trying to justify sin behind the guise of motive and heart condition we are sliding down a grease slide towards pits of hell.  
-----

I think you must have misunderstood what Hallesby is saying here. He is certainly not trying to reduce man's culpability but rather to increase it. I can't think how you got the notion that 'motive justifies sin' from this quotation.

**Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/8 14:20**

Sorry - must have read it wrong. I've heard this type of thing before(motive or heart justifies sin)so maybe that is why I thought that is what he was trying to say. Thanks for clarifying for me. :-?

At least we are on the same page. :-D

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/8 14:27**

Quote:

-----At least we are on the same page.

copy!

**Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/8/8 14:57**

Luk 16:18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.

What if the person was a sinner when they divorced and remarried? And later got saved. Are they still in sin? No, I don't believe so. Did the product of the former marriage (children) disappear? No.

What if a person is a glutton and then gets saved? Does the weight disappear? No.

Gluttony is sin, not obesity. I thank God He doesn't judge our outsides, but of heart whether it be full of sin or washed by the blood. Please don't go on a post about God does or doesn't judge the heart. Actions are judged too. What makes a man fornicate? Does it not start with his heart lusting?

PS I can't decide what to do after reading this thread... fast or eat :-)

**Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2005/8/8 15:58**

Quote:

-----Luk 16:18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery. What if the person was a sinner when they divorced and remarried? And later got saved. Are they still in sin? No, I don't believe so. Did the product of the former marriage (children) disappear? No.

What if a person is a glutton and then gets saved? Does the weight disappear? No.

-----  
Personally, I don't think that is a good analogy. For one, you are making the assumption that God does not recognize unsaved persons marriages as "joined by Him". I disagree.

I do agree that just by looking at the PRESENT condition of the outside, we do not know what God is accomplishing in their heart. Maybe they are already taking "baby steps" in overcoming their sin-----maybe they have lost some weight or are exercising more. The outward man in this instance may not noticeably reflect what changes ARE occurring.

I do think I understand the reason for this thread: a desire to see ALL sins within the church addressed and dealt with, not just some. In a perfect world..... ;-) Hopefully, if for nothing else, it got all of us thinking more. It did me. Blessings in Jesus, Cindy

**Re: - posted by mary0418 (), on: 2005/8/8 17:15**

Again, we should not vilify anyone over a certain weight limit, but gluttony and taking care of one's temple should be addressed in the church much more than it is, since it is a big problem not only in our country but in our churches. We must also understand that losing weight is a sometimes slow and long process, but we need to encourage and try to make sure that those in our churches are taking those steps and on that path. Instead many times we turn a blind eye out of fear we may offend. How unloving!

Quote:

What if a person is a glutton and then gets saved? Does the weight disappear? No.

I would disagree. If a person stops being a glutton who once was a glutton would lose weight over time.

I say these things and bring up these topics not to tear anyone down, but to build them up that they may be set free. Our Lord Jesus Christ died to set us free. Anyone who is living in the bondage of addiction of food or drug or alcohol or any sin can be set free by the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

If any one is suffering from food addiction, gluttony or obesity please click on the link below. Brothers and sisters in Christ - JESUS SHED HIS BLOOD TO SET YOU FREE!!!

([http://www.settingcaptivefree.com/lords\\_table/](http://www.settingcaptivefree.com/lords_table/)) Setting Captives Free - The Lords Table

**Re: Lay the axe to the root... - posted by ccchhrrriiss () , on: 2005/8/8 17:53**

Hello...!

Again, I believe that the distinction needs to be made that there is a difference between *cause* and *effect*. Obesity is often the effect (or consequence) of certain sins (such as gluttony, laziness, etc...).

However, there can be many other causes of obesity. I have shared the Lord at several nursing homes and rehabilitation centers, where people are often physically unable to walk or exercise. Often, obesity might not be caused by *gluttony* but by *dietary choice*. A person who fills his or her body full of artery clogging fats or carbs is almost always destined to gain weight. I have seen people who eat little, but gain weight quickly through eating junk foods (like donuts, potato chips, french fries, pizza, etc...). A person who only exercises moderately will almost assuredly gain weight off of junk food.

The point is that when we confront sin, the "axe should be laid to the root." When Jesus spoke the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:21-30, he exposed the root of several sins.

Quote:  
-----Verse 21-22  
"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment."  
Verse 27-28 "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."  
-----

The root of obesity may or may not be gluttony. It could be something else. It could be laziness, gluttony, indifference, or possibly even health issues. But remember, gluttony is a sin -- regardless of whether someone is fat or not. You may not see the results, but the sin could still be there. I am a relatively thin person (actually slightly underweight). Yet I have sometimes been convicted for eating more than I should have. But such excess never really shows on me because of a fast metabolism, along with how much I exercise. Yet gluttony is still a sin -- even if a person is thin and such gluttony never manifests on the body!

You are correct in that all such issues should be taught in local churches. There is a terrible epidemic in the world today with health problems that arise from obesity. But should we proudly confront such people? Should we stand on a street corner and say, "*I thank you God that I am not like fat sister Suzy*"? Or should we lovingly weep with them and for them for whatever battle that they face? Regardless, we do not have the right authority to question the salvation of a person based solely on a person's weight. And we should never *ban* a person from worship for such things. Whether or not God hears their worship is between that person and God. If you have such concern about a person's weight -- speak to them privately and with great love and compassion. And always do so with the same tenderness and grace that you would want someone else to show for a spiritual deficiency in your own life. And always approach the issue with the understanding that not all things are as they appear.

:~)

**Re: - posted by deltadom () , on: 2005/8/8 18:18**

What about the other way!!! Thin people I have got an article but I figure the amount of time we spend sitting down and on our diet when we amuse ourselves .

I am thin, C S Lewis talks about the gluttony of delicacy he says the what I want phase!! and gluttony can be in small quantities as well as large quantities!!

Is it the mentally or the actual thing we are trying to analyse!!

God made us exactly how we are should we not thank him whether we are fat or thin and thank him we are not starving!  
!

I am generally quite thin and face that problem but as God made my body and it is the temple of the Holy Spirit!!

But I also know that my body is just a shell and what is inside matters more than what is outside!!  
I guess if we were just thankful for who we were that would make a difference!!  
As a man thinketh in his heart so is he!!  
I may not no much and I may find that article!!  
Is pride really the issue we face here!! or am I facing it !!  
I agree with chris that we should treat people with compassion and love them even more!! :)  
god bless  
Dom

**Re: Obese Christians? - posted by HopeinChrist, on: 2005/8/9 20:10**

I would like to make a few comments on this thread from the heart of someone who has struggled with many addictions throughout my life including food. I was able to crucify the flesh to many powerful addictions through the power and grace of our Lord including a cocaine addiction that should have killed me. But this one thing.....food stumbled me over and over and over. I felt much guilt and condemnation over it, like a dog returning to his vomit. I did not need anyone to tell me I was sinning. I knew it. Being obese is like wearing a scarlet letter on your dress. And yes there are individual circumstances that lead to obesity that do not stem from gluttony but I would say that usually gluttony is the cause. I wonder how many people we see singing and dancing and worshipping every Sunday have a problem with lust, anger, infidelity, pride, self-righteous spirit, judgmentalism, greed, etc..... yet they appear to be living holy and upright to others.

I think one issue with a food addiction versus other addictions is that you cannot just walk away from food. It is needed for survival. I think if I could have gone on a permanent fast I could have nipped this thing a long time ago. I have had to learn moderation over and above crucifying the flesh. I could not count the times I prayed and vowed to honor my body as the temple of the Holy Spirit only to fall short. I knew for years that this issue was keeping me from a deeper relationship with my Lord and lover of my soul but I never felt like I was going to hell over it, which I get the impression from your post that you feel that if a person struggles with gluttony then they are not really saved and on the road to hell. I hope I have misinterpreted your stance. Maybe I am the only one God has had to grow. I did not instantly become holy when I accepted the power of Christ's blood to cover "all" of my sins. Now my spirit became new instantly but my mind and body are still trying to catch up with what happened in my spirit. And yes I do think it is possible to live a holy life but I think it is a process not an event. At least for most of us.

There were two revelations that finally helped me begin to conquer this stronghold on my life. The first one was discovering the root of it. Someone mentioned that gluttony was rooted in selfishness and I thought the same thing for years but one day the Holy Spirit revealed to me that it was rooted in pride, at least for me. I was sexually molested as a child and really had a difficult time as a young adult and the dating years. I really did not want attention from men and still don't. Remarks that would flatter most women make me very uncomfortable. I think I began to use weight as a barrier to keep the opposite sex at a distance. It was my way of protecting myself. What is self protection? Relying on me to protect me rather than trusting God. This whole thing was rooted in pride. The second revelation and the thing that really turned it around for me was these simple words spoke during a sermon that literally broke my heart. "Lovest thou these more than me?" I understand how Peter must have felt.

I have a lot of compassion and patience with saints who are still held captive to many things in their life that they really want to be free from. As you spoke in another post about pastor's not wanting to make people feel guilty, I don't think they have to. The devil does a good enough job of it. I am not saying they should not preach on sin and specific sins but the Holy Spirit is quite capable of penetrating the hearts of his people and a pastor does not need to be manipulative and preach his opinion. Just preach the Word and pray that it is received into the hearts of the people. Christians don't want to be in bondage to sin they want to be free and sometimes it takes years of being bathed in the word before they get the word that truly sets "them" free. And yes I do think there must be remorse over sin before repentance. You said in another post that feeling sorry and guilt were the same thing. I disagree with this. It is quite possible to be and feel guilty and not be sorry or repentant. I equate guilt (the feeling not the state) with condemnation. (There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.) I think it is the conviction of the Holy Spirit that leads to true repentance. Under conviction one has hope. Under condemnation one has no hope.

Blessings,  
HopeinChrist

**Re: hopeinchrist - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/8/9 21:12**

HopeinChrist,

thank you for sharing your testimony. I hope it will encourage someone else who may be struggling. :-)

In Him, Chanin

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/10 7:12**

savedgrace wrote

Quote:

-----Of course it is not a sin to be obese.

If it is, would that imply that being fabulously fit and trim equates to being righteous? What if I am fabulously fit and trim because I throw all my energy into exercise and am obsessed with my body image?

... and I am not sure that the conversation really picked up an important point here, namely that someone can be a glutton and have a trim figure. Am I right in thinking that the only person accused of gluttony in the NT was Jesus? The outward signs can often be very misleading. Matt. 11:19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children. The word translated glutton really just means someone who is an inappropriate eater. Someone noted for his 'eating'.

I wonder whether our question ought to have been is 'gourmet' eating a sin? Wesley, of course, would have said 'yes'. Anything that is not primarily fuel was inappropriate for him. He banned sweets to the children in the orphanage because it encouraged sensual pleasure without meeting a basic human need. For the same reason he banned flowers from the garden of the orphanage and insisted they grow only vegetables. He was not in favour of aesthetic pleasure or sensual pleasure because they were not 'necessary'. He would have frowned upon our annual holiday...

Wesley was accused of being extreme by the Bishop of London and replied By 'extraordinary strictnesses and severities', I presume your Lordship means the abstaining from wine and animal food; which, it is sure, Christianity does not require. But if you do, I fear your Lordship is not thoroughly informed of the matter of fact. I began to do this about twelve years ago, when I had no thought of 'annoying parochial ministers,' or of 'captivating' any 'people' thereby, unless it were the Chicasaw or Choctaw Indians. But I resumed the use of them both, about two years after, for the sake of some who thought I made it a point of conscience; telling them, 'I will eat flesh while the world standeth' rather than 'make my brother too offend.' Dr. Cheyne advised me to leave them off again, assuring me, 'Till you do, you will never be free from fevers.' And since I have taken his advice, I have been free (blessed be God) from all bodily disorders. Wesley, apparently, became a vegetarian. A physician named Dr. George Cheyne was a key influence on John Wesley. He had recommended a lifelong diet "for all those who would cultivate and maintain clear heads and quick senses to the last." According to John Wesley's Works (edited by Ward & Heitzenrater, Vol. 20, Journal & Diaries), Wesley used Cheyne's diet advice throughout his life.

The essence of the "Dr. Cheyne Diet" was that for most of our lives we should limit the amount of "animal food" (meat) and fermented liquors in our diets. At age 50, Dr. Cheyne recommended that one completely eliminate "animal food" suppliers and fermented liquors. At age 60 he recommended a total vegetarian diet. Every 10 years thereafter, Dr. Cheyne encouraged Wesley and his other patients to reduce their vegetable intake by 25 percent.

quoted from: <http://www.gborocollege.edu/prescorner/diet.html>

For almost four years, Wesley's diet consisted mainly of potatoes, partly to improve his health, but also to save money. He said: "What I save from my own meat will feed another that else would have none."

However, to return to the original thought... to 'sin' by unnecessary eating and then to provide 'atonement' by excessive exercising would be a curious theology. Got to go now all this talk about not-eating has made me ready for my lunch.

edit: What a hoot! The automated google adds to the left obviously picked up on the word 'obese' on this thread and provided a URL to a specialist dating agency; [www.largefriends.com](http://www.largefriends.com) :-D :-D Apparently I am "...just seconds away from taking that first step towards a happy ending." If that means I am on my way to my sandwich they are right. :-D

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/8/10 8:31

Quote:  
-----e banned sweets to the children in the orphanage because it encouraged sensual pleasure without meeting a basic human need. F  
or the same reason he banned flowers from the garden of the orphanage and insisted they grow only vegetables.  
-----

As much as I admire Wesley and Finney I simply cannot take this route. I personally believe that this level of strictness has done more harm than good in my circles. I say that because the generations who grew up in the churches that knew no real pleasure (sit down, shut up, kids are to be seen not heard, no cake, no apples, etc.) responded to these personal convictions by opening the flood gates to frivolity and riot. It is the nature of man to go to extremes one way or the other.

The worst thing of all is that when ministers in olden days ran out of biblical means of 'breaking down' the congregations they resorted to preaching all manner of personal convictions. I see at the root of this the error of Oberlin Theology. O.T. simply cannot in the long run sustain a man. I almost ran aground myself early this year as I was in circles of conversation with folks radical in their zeal to discover sin to the point where they were probing and probing and probing for sin and unearthed my own personal 'Machpelah'. Imagine having to re-bury all that madness! It looked like a CSI crime scene with folk digging around in the bones looking for somewhat to put me away.

For those who are reading this that may be overweight fear not. I was a skinny guy eating 2 quarter pounders with cheese, large french fries, large coke, and a chocolate sundae just for lunch and weighed a mere 165 lbs at 24 years of age. I didn't feel like a glutton. Maybe I was. God never convicted me of overeating. Now I eat about 35% less than those days and weigh about 215 and workout regularly.

Again, I think we often blur spirituality and asceticism. This is the slippery slope to monasticism. Reading Finney's works he had made it a sin to salt your food for pleasure. God forbid we had eaten a chocolate ice cream with whip cream and sprinkles.

Quote:  
-----For almost four years, Wesley's diet consisted mainly of potatoes, partly to improve his health, but also to save money. He said: "What I save from my own meat will feed another that else would have none."  
-----

This is wonderful in practice, but I have little patience for folk who would preach it without practice for mere piety sake. I am sure Wesley practiced it. What I mean is, a person should preach with their life first. My pastor has a saying, "Live it as hard as you preach it." If I am in ministry 6 days a week and 52 weeks a year I do not expect that it shall become a doctrine either. At the end of the day it is just a matter of preaching against areas that we may have secured- since we see others who have not secured that area. I am 'here' so you should be 'here' also. Really, it is just immaturity talking.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/10 10:12

Hi Robert

Yes, although I am a fan of Wesley too I don't believe he was infallible. Not even 'I' am infallible... well, not all the time. :-D

'immaturity talking' ...and that perennial weed of legalism which equates correctness with righteousness.

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/8/10 10:50

Hi Ron,

Are you aware of any discussions here on SI that deal with the differences between asceticism (harsh discipline) and genuine spirituality? I am afraid that there is some confusion here. There are lots of religions that are very 'disciplined' to do certain things a certain way at certain times and even practice extreme self-denial. But they are in no wise spiritual. Islam comes to mind immediately. Maybe I have a thought on the fringe and can't quite spit out what I am trying to say here. If Spirituality can be achieved by a host of disciplines we have essentially usurped the role of the Holy Spirit and inserted a substitute. Do-it-yourself 'Christianity' is a bit removed from what I read in the New Testament. Those folks were fueled



led by the Holy Spirit that gave them the power to overcome the world, flesh, and the enemy. Yet I know also that there is a discipline involved in 'discipleship', but what is the thrust of that discipline? Is it safe to say that a person full of the Holy Spirit will live disciplined lives or can the disciplined life lead to fulness? I don't think it can be both, but I see it as a good discussion point.

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/10 11:04**

Robert

This might deserve a new thread I think. My dictionary defines 'ascetic' (pronounced a-set-ic for any who don't know the word) as noun. a person who practises severe self-discipline and abstains from all forms of pleasure, esp. for religious or spiritual reasons.

adj. relating to or characteristic of ascetics or asceticism, abstaining from pleasure There is an introduction in (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ascetic>) wikipedia that might help too.

**Re: How many of are meat in curries is Halal - posted by deltadom (), on: 2005/8/10 11:09**

I am just wondering whether how much food we have is actually offered to other gods!!

I am just interested if there is anyone knowledgeable on this subject.

Such as going down Asda! How do you know what are food has been offered to!!

**Re: - posted by AgapeLove81 (), on: 2005/8/10 23:52**

For all men that don't know; most women naturally hold weight more, after having a baby. I'm sure someone has already mentioned this, but I want to put my two cents worth in. Everyone has brought up great "words of wisdom" to say yes obesity is sin and no it is not sin.

My personal experience is this. And I am not making any excuses for myself. After I gave birth to my daughter I breast fed her for a yr. So I got used to eating a certain amount to make up for the calories burned due to the milk production. After I stopped I was still used to eating that certain amount so I gained a little weight (OK like 15 lbs). Up until 6 months ago I was on medication for depression and birth control pills. Both of which has warning signs about "may cause weight gain." I never over ate or ate a lot of junk food. But yet the weight still came on.

I have struggled with weight all my life. And to say that I am a sinner because I am not at my ideal weight and "obese" is one of the most narrow minded things anyone can say. I am very sensitive about my weight. I find it funny that for the most part it is the thin people that say that obesity is a sin. NOT EVERYONE THAT IS OBESE IS A GLUTTON AND NOT EVERY GLUTTON IS OBESE. That is just a fact of life. And gluttony is not only about food. If you watch too much tv you are a glutton. If you type on the computer ALL DAY you are a glutton. Anything that you do in excess of (except studying the word, praying or anything else God has called us to do) is gluttony. So obesity is not the sin, gluttony is.

**Re: Self Acceptance - posted by deltadom (), on: 2005/8/11 18:43**

Mt 19:19 - Show Context Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself

Joh 2:21 - Show Context But he spake of the temple of his body.

1Co 6:19 - Show Context What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

Mt 6:25 - Show Context Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?



**personally speaking - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/8/11 22:17**

I would rather chose FAT christians! F - faithful A - available T - teachable. sorry guys, just my attempt at being humorous :-)

**Re: personally speaking, on: 2005/8/11 22:49**

i have felt that this curse came on from God when we were separated from His Glory. I seriously believe that sex and food were not created in the capacity that they are abused in this day when God had originally planned it. Of what i know of myself and the mere ropes that these two things provide a fall in my christian walk, i know i always have to watch both. I seriously believe these two things were altered in our body when God's glory departed due to a sinful nature dwelling in us. i don't believe foreexample that God created us for our hormones to rage at the time when we go from childhood to adolescence. now i might see a reason why God has decided to let it happen this way, but i don't see it being logical consistent if the intent of God in His creation was to have these hormonal imbalances to occur at those specific ages. (i hope I didn't put God in a box, if i did, please let me know (and i am serious about it))

**Re: confused - posted by jimp, on: 2005/8/12 3:09**

who is my advocate with the Father? who is the accuser of the brethren? Micah 6:8 He has shown thee o man what is good, and what does the Lord REQUIRE of thee; to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God. God allows me to criticize others in direct proportion to the amount of time i spend weeping on my face for their condition, interceding for their deliverance. i am just sounding cymbal or a tinkling brass otherwise. obese christians

**Re: personally speaking - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/12 4:14**

Quote:

-----I would rather chose FAT christians! F - faithful A - available T - teachable. sorry guys, just my attempt at being humorous  
-----

“Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;” (Psa. 92:13-14, KJVS)

“And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” (Is. 58:11, KJVS).

;-) ;-) I reckon, if I have 'fat bones' there's little hope for that trim figure. ;-) ;-)

**Re:, on: 2005/8/12 4:59**

I have a friend who eats more than I have ever seen anyone eat before. The other day when we were out for lunch he ordered 3 meals and ate them all in the space of time that I had eaten 1! He reckons though that he is actually not full up! He also got refused any more meat at an 'eat as much as you like' fondue place as him and his 2 friends had already gone through 10 trays of meat! (I don't think the trays could have been that big though. Still, you get chips with them as well :-D) He maintains that he is not full up though and is not really overweight. I guess it is not the amount that we eat but the importance we put on what we eat maybe and whether we regularly eat until we are overfull. I don't think there is anything wrong with enjoying food though. When I go on holiday that is one of the things I enjoy the most!

**Re: - posted by AgapeLove81 (), on: 2005/8/12 8:33**

Thank you philologos for finding those verses for us. As I said in my last post I am sensitive about my weight, but at least I know that somewhere in my book of knowledge (my bible) it talks about being a "healthy" size.

**Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/8/12 8:44**

Forgive me here I am trying to summarize all this. Is it safe to say that we know very little about a person based solely on their outward appearance?

I thought I would add that my Dad was telling me yesterday that when he goes to the cardiologist that 2/3's of the people he sees there are his size (fairly thin). It has totally changed his perception that only heavy people have heart attacks.

In retrospect I have also found that many people in the nursing homes we attend are heavy also and some of them are in their 90's. Its when they loose all their weight that they often start going down hill. I don't know about you, but I think it to be good to have some 'reserve' in case I was to get so ill I could not eat.

Another point I think interesting is that I have been very skinny and have been a little heavier and can say that persecution comes no matter what size you are. "Strong wind comes up gonna carry you off boy!" or "You look like a bean pole."

If there is one thing we need liberty from in this life it is the opinions of men.

**Re: - posted by mary0418 (), on: 2005/8/12 13:34**

I am really tired of everyone thinking it is OK to be obese. Why in the world would anyone think that it is OK? Everyone is SOOO sensitive about this subject. Let's think of why this is true...could it be that the majority of you are guilty of obesity????

Honestly, do you really want to stand before Jesus on the day of Judgement with a big, fat, unhealthy body? And those of you who are obese because of medicine you are taking- I'm not talking about you! Jesus surely know those of you who are obese not from your own doing.

But those of you who lack self control and self discipline, I'm telling you out of pure Christian love- stop sinning! Jesus can strengthen you to help you fight this battle! It is winnable!

Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit and if you truly are filled with the Holy Spirit you will be able to exercise self-control.

Some people have to fight the battle of viewing pornography. It is desperately hard for them to not pick up those magazines or check out those web sites- they have to fight and pray for strength every day. Well, the same goes for overeating. It is a battle. It is a sinful behavior that leads to having an unholy temple. And we all claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit- we have to have a holy temple. We MUST take care of what God gave us. We will be held accountable of everything God has given us. My only desire is to exhort you all to take care of your temple. Repent! turn from your sin and turn to God.

You can try to excuse it all you want. You may say that well, we aren't warned about obesity in the Bible, so it must not be a sin.

Well, being addicted to drugs is also not in the Bible. Is that not a sin? Would you not call a drug addict a sinner? Please, we need to admit that we are all unworthy of God's grace. I have also fought with my weight. But I work to take care of my body. And no, I am not obsessed with it. I do not have a fabulously fit body, but I am also not obese. Let's stop being so carnal about this. Stop trying to make excuses for yourself. I stopped doing it and I have never felt so free in my life. I can repent and be cleansed! I die to sin and to this world- Jesus has set me free!!!!Sin has no power over me anymore! We are supposed to die to our fleshly desires-and that includes overeating which causes obesity!

I wish only the best for you all and wish you would repent and be reconciled to God.

Mary0418

**Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/8/12 14:32**

Hi Mary,

Quote:  
-----I am really tired of everyone thinking it is OK to be obese. Why in the world would anyone think that it is OK? Everyone is SOOO sensitive about this subject. Let's think of why this is true...could it be that the majority of you are guilty of obesity????  
-----

Personally I do not fit that category of being obese. Nor do I assert that it 'OK' to be obese. But by virtue of the question,

## General Topics :: Obese Christians?

is anyone 'guilty' here of anorexia nervosa? What I am saying is that a person overweight may not necessarily be living in excess compared to a 'skinny' person. It is like the pregnant out-of-wedlock teen. Do you think that girl is any guiltier than the one who didn't get caught? A small belly does not indicate innocence of fornication.

Quote:

-----Honestly, do you really want to stand before Jesus on the day of Judgement with a big, fat, unhealthy body? And those of you who are obese because of medicine you are taking- I'm not talking about you! Jesus surely know those of you who are obese not from your own doing.

No, I plan to stand before Him in my glorified body. I don't know exactly what that will look like, but I am pretty sure from there we head to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

Quote:

-----But those of you who lack self control and self discipline, I'm telling you out of pure Christian love- stop sinning! Jesus can strengthen you to help you fight this battle! It is winnable!

Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit and if you truly are filled with the Holy Spirit you will be able to exercise self-control.

This is true, but it assumes that we have our ducks in a row in other areas of our lives with which we can safely assume that we can make a judgment on others when we are in fact living with glaring elements of our lack of self-discipline. The first point of control is the tongue. The things that go into a man cannot defile him- it is that which comes out.

Quote:

-----Some people have to fight the battle of viewing pornography. It is desperately hard for them to not pick up those magazines or check out those web sites- they have to fight and pray for strength every day. Well, the same goes for overeating. It is a battle. It is a sinful behavior that leads to having an unholy temple

I agree here with most of this except for the end part. I am having a hard time thinking that overeating defiles the Temple. Pornography would because the pictures enter into our chambers of images.

Quote:

-----And we all claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit- we have to have a holy temple. We MUST take care of what God gave us. We will be held accountable of everything God has given us. My only desire is to exhort you all to take care of your temple. Repent! turn from your sin and turn to God.

Wow. That's a powerful word of repentance. I understand where you are coming from and am quite sure Finney and others would take this line. However, do we condemn a person for their 'size' or for the sheer volume of food they eat. What about the 'type' of food? What about sugar and salt? What about once we get this in order- do we call a word of repentance on caffeine? No more cokes and coffee! It was many years ago that a dear old lady was seen drinking a cup of hot water with sugar and creamer in it. What are you doing momma?, she was asked. I have given up coffee. Why is that? The preacher said it was a sin. And in so doing- he effected her conscience.

Quote:

-----You can try to excuse it all you want. You may say that well, we aren't warned about obesity in the Bible, so it must not be a sin. Well, being addicted to drugs is also not in the Bible. Is that not a sin? Would you not call a drug addict a sinner?

## General Topics :: Obese Christians?

The only way I could bring this word is if I knew I had the flesh totally in subjection. I mean totally. Drugs are in the bible it is the Greek word pharmakia- translated sorcery in the Revelation. "Spell binding potients (sp?)". That is definately a sin. But when we say overeating; when is when ? When I eat a piece of candy? I didn't need that for 'fuel.' No more Ice Cream? No more cake or pies? I am with you on the overeating as a sin part, but where do we draw the line.

Quote:  
----- have also fought with my weight. But I work to take care of my body. And no, I am not obsessed with it. I do not have a fabulously fit body, but I am also not obese. Let's stop being so carnal about this. Stop trying to make excuses for yourself. I stopped doing it and I have never felt so free in my life. I can repent and be cleansed! I die to sin and to this world- Jesus has set me free!!!!Sin has no power over me any more! We are supposed to die to our fleshly desires-and that includes overeating which causes obesity!  
I wish only the best for you all and wish you would repent and be reconciled to God.  
-----

This statement is 90% good corn. The problem is to assume that God has forsaken these folks just because they fit the category of obese. That I can not believe.

God Bless,

-Robert

**Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/8/13 11:07**

That was a good response Robert. Personally I think much of what we see in over weight people as well as many illnesses is due to the way our meats are raised and processed, as well as some of our foods. Lets face it, they grow up a calf with drugs to help it bulk up so they can make more per pound at market. Then the FDA says that the meat is steroid free? I don't believe it! We use genetics to ultra corn as well as most of our fruits and veggys, to help fight against insects or to make them capable of growing in an environment they normally can't survive in. We have beef and other animals growing 3 to 4 times faster than they would naturally because of drug enhancements and somehow we believe that that is n't in our meats? Same with plant life.

**Re: Obese Christians - how we get our weight, on: 2005/8/14 10:19**

Bro Daryl,

These are very valid points. I know farmers, (married to each other), one with a degree in Agriculture who volunteered in Africa for 3 years and one, the lady, with a degree in Biology. Both were brought up on farms and now run an organic farm. The lady won't eat any meat unless she KNOWS how it has been reared. My experience of organic meat in the UK is that it has more than one difference in quality - not just flavour - texture, and, after eating non-organically produced meat, there is a definite feeling that one's body is dealing with more than food... all that stuff which has not been cleared from the animal's system, as you said. There is also a lot of water in most meats, deliberately encouraged, so it weighs more than it's worth.

Right at the beginning of this thread, ravin made a post alluding to the link with (?child) abuse and excessive weight. I heard (on the radio) a report of research which has been done in the US, linking excessive weight to raised cortisol (a stress response) in 50% of the cohort. There is a definite link between eating and abuse, because the body is forced to pull out energy reserves to cope with the physical and mental trauma; if the abuse is regular, the comensatory eating (which later in life may become 'comfort eating' because the effects of the abuse have not yet been addressed) becomes necessarily habitual. This trains the biochemistry, in much the same way as people who work out may have to alter what they eat and drink. It's exactly the same principle, except, it has a deep-seated cause, which cannot be switched on and off, in the manner one may decide to stop going to the gym.

The restrospective stats on childhood abuse mean this is something the churches should be much better at helping people to bring to the Lord, without judging the way their body works. We are joined in and by the Spirit, primarily, not by our outward appearance. I speak to myself very much in that last sentence, as I also find appearance more challenging than the worldly status of the saint. I think the Lord is speaking to me about the huge diversity of human beings, and that if they would, He would - save them all.

A brother who picks at his food, by comparison with many I know, quietly said something about 'the benefits of self-discipline', when refusing another helping of a very modest meal. It struck me at the time, when I was an energetic younger person who could eat much more than I need now, and still sticks with me, though I haven't mastered it like he had.

**Re: The Heavyweights Are Christians - posted by Christisking (), on: 2005/8/25 23:02**

There are many points worth discussion in this article, but the weight issues applies to this thread.

The Heavyweights Are Christians

Ray Furr

02-06-02

They'll know we are Christians by our love and by our bulging waistlines. And the larger the middle, the more likely you are to be pastor of a church.

Obesity is a growing epidemic claiming some 300,000 lives each year. Defined as being overweight by 20 percent or by 25 to 35 pounds, physicians agree that being too fat is hazardous to your health.

While the secular community is sounding the alarm over the evils of obesity, Christian churches have not gotten the message. Many don't consider or don't want to consider that over eating is a sin as is sexual promiscuity, murder and greed.

When it comes to the fattest of the fat, Christians weigh more than other religious groups and un-churched people, according to Kenneth Ferraro, a sociologist at the University of Purdue.

His analysis of data from two national surveys, published in the Review of Religious Research, showed that regardless of the religion, religious people tend weigh more than their nonreligious counterparts.

While his discovery applies to all major religions in the United States, American Jews, Muslims and Buddhists on average weigh less than American Christians.

States with a high rate of religious affiliation such as Mississippi, Michigan and Indiana also have higher rates of citizens who are overweight. Conversely, the more secular the state—Massachusetts, Hawaii and Colorado—the less its citizens weigh.

Among Christian denominations, Southern Baptists have the most overweight and obese members.

While there is little information on obesity in ministers, Ferraro's data is similar to the results of a 1997 study conducted on ministers during the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas. Of the 969 people surveyed, 60 percent of the ministers and their spouses were overweight which corresponded to the national average. More than 47 percent were obese—a rate similar to the national average. The difference was that those who were obese were very obese.

The problem lies not only with how much these ministers eat, but also the quality of the food they eat.

While only a small percentage eat breakfast, 61 percent reported they eat donuts and pastries—foods that are high in fat with little nutritional value. Forty-eight percent eat lunch in fast food restaurants at least twice a week. Seventy-five percent reported eating fried foods for dinner—their largest meal—four nights a week. Forty percent snack two or more times a day on cookies, chips and candy.

While alcohol and tobacco are out for Baptist preachers, coffee is definitely in with 25 percent drinking six or more cups per day.

Even though Baptists are noted for their covered dishes and fried chicken, job stress may be the major culprit. And, while Baptist ministers may hold the heavyweight title, other clergy may not be far behind. Stress requires ministers to eat whatever they can get whenever they can get it. People with high levels of stress tend to eat more.

Kate Harvey, executive director of the American Baptist Ministers Council, said clergy put exercise, weight control and ot

her self-care matters on the back burner for more immediate issues. She noted that ministers are constantly faced with high stress loads like church conflicts, while serving in isolated areas where there are few support groups.

“Pastors are hounded by work pressures. If the church doesn’t grow, the finger gets pointed at the pastor,” Harvey said. “Low morale, the eroding position of the clergy in society and low compensation are more important. Some of them are barely making it on what the church pays them.”

“I can only give you anecdotal information and I don’t have any data to back this up, but there does seem to be an inordinate amount of heart attacks and heart conditions among our clergy,” Harvey said.

Long work hours every week of the year takes its toll. John C. LaRue Jr., vice president of research and development for Christianity Today International, reported findings from a study he conducted that ministers are working long hours and working six days a week.

“Though Sundays tend to be long days for pastors, Wednesday is typically their longest day. Throughout the week, pastors spend four evenings in ministry activities and take four phone calls at home after 6 p.m.,” LaRue discovered.

“Forty percent of the pastors in our study said they are working more hours each week than they were five years ago. About 40 percent said they’re working the same amount. And only 15 percent are working fewer hours than in 1992,” he reported. “Furthermore, 75 percent of the pastors who came to the pastorate from another career said they work more hours in ministry than they did in their former jobs.”

Long work hours seemed to be correlated with job security.

“Working more hours appears to be one way to increase job security. Pastors who work 50 hours or less each week are 35 percent more likely to be terminated,” LaRue said.

In a survey of Episcopal clergy in the United States, 38 percent of clergy identified burnout as the greatest danger to them and their families, 80 percent named isolation as the number one problem that they face and 80 percent said their occupation negatively affects their families.

The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland established a Clergy Wellness Commission in 1997 and reported their recommendations in June 1999. The Committee concluded that, “Ministry must be a mutual exercise, and we need to understand the stress that Christian Leadership places ordained clergy under.”

Concerned over the large numbers of inactive priests, Episcopal Church officials have instituted a Web site and program for clergy wellness.

The Missouri Synod Lutherans have an entire department designated for health-related issues in the church and for clergy. The department provides printed and other resources to ministers.

The Fuller Institute of Church Growth Pastors Survey confirmed pastors’ concerns:

33 percent said that "Being in ministry is clearly a hazard to my family."

75 percent reported a significant crisis due to stress at least once in their ministry.

50 percent felt unable to meet the needs of the job.

90 percent felt they were not adequately trained to cope with the ministry demands placed upon them.

40 percent reported a serious conflict with a parishioner at least once a month.

70 percent of pastors do not have someone they would consider a close friend.

37 percent have been involved in inappropriate sexual behavior with someone in the church.

70 percent have a lower self-image after they’ve pastored than when they started.

Christian ministers may be heavier and less physically active than the general population, and it may be due to a lack of discipline or gluttony. However, the real culprit may be the stress of being in the Christian ministry.

**Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/8/25 23:19**

Christisking,

Thanks for posting this article. Many points for prayer here. May the Lord help us be more charitable to our pastors and elders!

MC

**Re: - posted by deltadom (), on: 2005/8/26 0:59**

I wish I would gain weight more!!!

DOm