

# *Divine* Dining

**365 Devotions to Guide You  
to Healthier Weight and  
Abundant Wellness**

**By Janet K. Brown**

**Pen-L Publishing**

Divine Dining: 365 Devotions to Guide You to  
Healthier Weight and Abundant Wellness  
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## Introduction

My first diet started at age fourteen. Through marriage and the birth of three daughters, I gained more weight and suffered more emotional scarring. My health deteriorated physically and mentally. I reached two hundred fifty pounds. By then I was a wreck, with thoughts of suicide. Food dominated everything I did.

Our praise and worship leader at church began Christian Weight Controllers. He taught from his own battles, so he had no established curriculum, but it was God's blessing for me.

Over a period of two years, I lost ninety-five pounds. My mentor moved on and bequeathed the class to me. I taught it for several years, writing my own curriculum as I went. During that time, help also came in the form of a series of twelve-step programs. I have maintained my loss for seventeen years, but rarely teach, preferring instead to encourage on-on-one.

One tool in my recovery remains the daily reading of inspirational books. I found my library incomplete when I searched for one that combined a twelve-step program with God as the Higher Power. One night, God woke me in the middle of the night and gave me fourteen devotions that became the first of the three hundred and sixty-five in this book. The biggest secret to my success is giving up *my* will and letting God do it through me.

This book of daily devotions comes from my journals and memories. This is one woman's road for success. I pray these thoughts help others reach the same healing God gave to me. It's all about God.

Janet K. Brown

*Divine*  
**Dining**

# January 1



## Repairer of Broken Walls

*The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land . . . you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings. Isaiah 58: 11,12*

Do you have moments when you feel like you're losing your mind? The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. Sound familiar?

A psychiatrist once told me trying to willingly destroy one's self is not sane. Compulsive overeaters kill themselves slowly with legal means, but it's no less crazy.

Resentment, envy, and anger tear down the mind's protective walls. The enemy of the soul can oppress an unguarded mind.

In my case, these emotions created havoc and caused emotional imbalance; insanity, if you will.

Of my own free will, I chose to ignore the enemy's influence and gave my mind and my body to the Lord's control. God used my day-to-day actions to repair those walls and restore in me normality.

Healing is contingent on spiritual condition.

*Prayer: Lord, today take my thoughts, my will, and my choices and let them be Yours.*



## January 2

### Stiff-Necked, Unrelenting Will

*... let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance. Exodus 34:9*

We read about the stiff-necked will of the Israelites. God provided for their needs, but still they complained and wanted more.

How many times have I gone against everything I thought I wanted, everything that my family, my work, my Christian walk demanded so that I could “control” my situation.

Friends and family advised me to use will power and refrain from overeating. The truth was I had an unrelenting will I use every day.

My will power overcame every rational thought to say, “I will to eat what I like, and I won’t be controlled by anyone else in choosing what I eat.” The craziness of this principle was that my will power overcame my conscious goals and desires. Like turning on a tank of oxygen near the fireplace, my invincible will power/won’t power consumed my sanity and my life.

No power but God’s power is strong enough to overcome a stiff-necked rebellion. Are you a control freak? Has it ruined everything you hold dear?

*Prayer: Lord, help me to release my stiff-necked will power unto You.*

# January 3



## Desires of Your Heart

*Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desire of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will do this: Psalms 37:4-5 NIV*

God loves His children.

You are one of His children.

He wants to give you the desire of your heart.

Is your desire to have your compulsion not control you? God is stronger, His ways more sure than you can imagine.

Here's an actual example of how God helped me one morning:

I planned to stop by the donut shop on my way to work the next morning. I arose, rushed my preparation, and left early to have time for the extra errand.

But God's ways are infinitely stronger, more sure than mine. According to the habit I'd established, I prayed during my quiet time that God's will, not mine, be done. God heard and answered that request.

When I came close to the donut shop, I had this overwhelming desire to not feel stuffed since I had so much work to do. Where did I get that thought? It hadn't been there when I left the house. I arrived at my job astounded that I had failed to complete my mission to buy donuts.

God wants to give you the desire of your heart, but you must ask it of Him and then leave it in His hands to fix.

*Prayer: Lord, I truly want Your will today. Let it be.*



## January 4

### Weary In Well Doing

*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9 NIV*

Martyrs for Christ existed in the past and they still do in modern days. I'm not one of them, but sometimes I think I am.

We work hard doing things around the church. That's good, but is it what God wants?

An example tells my experience. Others may relate.

I do whatever is asked of me in church. I see others lauded for their work, but not me. Resentment springs up in my mind, poisoning my system until I'm physically ill. My body grows weary and susceptible to virus and infections.

I say, "God, I'm doing everything for You."

God says, "What have you done for Me? I asked you to spend time talking with Me this morning, but you couldn't since there was a church meeting at nine. I asked you to eat nutritiously so you would have more energy at the end of the day for your family, but you didn't. Instead, you made a cake for the class social and ate it. Because of that, you had to make another one to take in place of the first cake.

God tells us not to be weary. When we do something at church that He asks us to do, He will give supernatural strength, but first, be sure it's what He asks of you.

*Prayer: Lord, like Mary, who sat at Jesus' feet, let me today choose the best part.*



# January 5



## My Self-esteem is Dragging

*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

*Ephesians 2:10 NIV*

Compulsive overeating is a symptom of something wrong. As a rule, when we suffer low self-esteem, the extra weight we gain magnifies the problem. When we overeat, our esteem plummets. Common sense tells us that if we do what we like, we'll be happy. Instead, we sink lower into depression. Many of us excel at a host of challenges, but fail in how we eat. Then we accept failure as the theme of our lives.

I've lived for Christ since I gave my heart to Him in vacation Bible school when I was seven. I drifted, but came back to God while in college. I read verses like the one above and implemented self talk about being a creation of, and an example of, God's workmanship. There was always a but. But I don't follow Christ like I should. But I don't have enough faith.

Now I experience a miracle from Christ when I relinquish control to Him and give up the fight. He completes me. He adorns my days with peace. He gives me worth.

I used to be able to list ten things I hated about myself, but it took God's power to come up with a list of ten things I liked about myself. Now I can. Can you?

*Prayer: Lord, take control of me. In doing so, You make me worthy.*



## January 6

### It's Just Food

*Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.*

*Philippians 3:19 NIV*

Does this internal monologue sound familiar? "It's just food, not a serious problem. Everyone has to eat. It's not like being an alcoholic or a drug addict."

Our families reinforce that thought by saying we just need to cut back on food. Good Christian friends laugh about diving into that cake brought by Sister so-and-so. Friends giggle about starting their diets tomorrow. Every magazine and TV station offers the latest fad in weight loss.

To a compulsive overeater, this isn't funny. Compulsion in any form will destroy our bodies and our minds.

One night, my daughter phoned me. A thief had forced open her back door. She feared the intruder was still inside. She had called the police, but wanted a loved one with her. I told her I would come, but my food compulsion stopped me. I had binged on candy and muffins and lay in my recliner listless and nauseous. If her husband hadn't called, I might have left her alone. I would have hated myself for it, but the food had overcome my ability to function.

Has food ever immobilized you? Has it made you yell at your kids or your husband? Have you turned down a chance to work for the Lord because of how you felt or because it cut into mealtime? Is the problem "just food?"

*Prayer: Lord, heal my compulsion. Allow me to be used according to Your will.*

## January 7



### The Protection of the Wren Cactus

*To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy.  
Jude 24 NIV*

If food compulsion is part of our carnal life, danger lurks whenever we leave God's protection.

At a friend's country home, we noticed a cactus bush three to four feet high with a nest of wrens on one side. We commented.

"That's our wren cactus, our sanctuary for birds," our friend told us.

On the other side of the bush, we spotted baby mockingbirds. Instead of flying to high places to be safe from the coyotes and deer, birds make their home here in a small bush. On examination, we noticed birds fly into the cactus without touching the prickly thorns. A larger animal would be unable to do that, so the birds make their nests in perfect safety right under the noses of their enemies.

God is our wren cactus. He protects us from certain defeat and destruction while in the presence of food that would tempt us. His loving arms encircle us. The enemy can't get past His defense.

*Prayer: When I'm at a restaurant or party, a potluck, or another's home, I'm vulnerable without your hedge. Please protect me today, Lord.*



## January 8

### Are You a Sinner?

*If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar, and his word has no place in our lives. 1 John 1:10 NIV*

Look at your life. Have you given your heart to Jesus? I did at age seven in a vacation Bible school.

Have you lived a consistent Christian life, or was there a time when you strayed from God? After high school graduation, I rebelled. I came back to the Lord in college.

Do you attend church? Have you worked for Christ? Do you resent being called a sinner? I did. My only discredit was over-eating. During my thirties and forties, I prayed for the Lord to help me lose weight, but every time I stopped a diet, I gained more.

Have you faced your gluttony and admitted rebellion? That's what I did.

We are powerless to control our innate sinful nature. Only Jesus can save. Jesus can only take those sins that we release to Him. We hold out our problem with food for the Lord to see and touch, but we fail to put it into His hands and leave it there.

Think about your food compulsion. Does it cause other sins such as dishonesty or resentment, even anger? We might start with the sin of gluttony but add to it a myriad of other sins. They sap our desire to live for God. Without God, we face defeat.

*Prayer: I give up, Lord. I need Your forgiveness and your strength to overcome my petty rebellion. This time, I lay it in Your hands.*

## January 9



### Take My Life, My Will, My Choices Today

*Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.*

*2 Corinthians 3:5*

We go to our place of worship and pray, "Lord, help me stay on my diet and lose weight. Help me lose my cravings." When we walk away, we feel shame. That's too trivial a plea for God. He wouldn't answer a prayer like that.

However, when our children call and ask us to pray, nothing is too small. Are we more loving than God? He wants to hear about anything that affects His children.

Do we stay on our diets for days? A month? Three? With only our will power, we can last for a period of time, but, without Christ changing us, eventually, compulsions win. Carnal desire overwhelms. A gallon of ice cream calls our name.

We can identify with Paul's prayer. "Lord, that which I desire to do, I don't, and that which I want to stop, I do."

We might add, "Despite effort, sacrifice, and nutritional education, I remain powerless, with my life unmanageable. I give it to You. Though it's not much, here it is."

When we pray that way and mean it, what a surprise. Everything changes. God moves.

After walking the path with Christ, we can spot the difference when we forget and take the reins of our life once more. Disaster follows the wake of an emotional tornado, and we know what must be done.

We pray every morning "take my will, my life, and my choices this day." Then, put the steering wheel in His hands.

My control = disaster      God's control = power

*Prayer: Lord, take my life, my will, my choices today.*



## January 10

### Why Doesn't God Help Every Time?

*Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10:23 NIV*

Have your prayers been answered by God? Have you experienced His move on your behalf to solve a problem?

#### Personal experience #1

I craved one of my binge foods. I prayed but still went to the store to buy my drug of choice. Before I found it, I ran into a friend or found something else that engaged my interest. I walked out of the store without my treat. I never made a conscious choice to not buy the food, but God's will was done in my life because I prayed. The experience causes tingles even now.

#### Personal experience #2

I prayed, went to the store and bought the food. I then binged all afternoon.

What's the difference? Our spiritual condition.

Abstinence is dependent on OUR dependence on God. We can say the words, but God knows if it comes from the heart.

Think about it next time. Did you leave it in His hands or did you pick it back up after prayer? Relying on self doesn't work. Relying on God works every time.

*Prayer: Lord, teach me to depend on You as a toddler relies on his parent.*

# January 11



## Poor Me

*... for it is God who works in you, to will and to act according to his good purpose. Do everything without complaining or arguing ... Philippians 2:13, 14*

God gives you victory over temptation. He takes over your life and leads in a different direction. The weight lifts. Your self-esteem escalates.

Do you say, "I wish I had something sweet. I wish I could go to the restaurant and pick what I really want. I never get to relax and eat the good stuff."

Are you ducking your head? I am. After God works miracles for us, we throw ourselves a pity party. We should kneel and repent. God calls us to His good purpose. Our job is to cease complaining or arguing. God requires a cheerful spirit.

The next time we plan a pity party, we should decide to not participate. Throw a thank you party instead. Thank you, Lord for changing our focus and letting us rely on You when our strength is gone.

Gratitude replaces pity every time, and it's a lot more fun. Try it; you'll like it.

*Prayer: Lord, help me to have an attitude of gratitude. You are so good to me.*



## January 12

### FAR from God

*Do not be quickly provoked in thy spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools. Ecclesiastes 7:9 NIV*

Are you eating everything in sight? Are you restless in your thoughts and your worship? Do you feel empty and worthless? Are you FAR from God?

**F** – Frustrated

**A** – Angry

**R** – Resentful

Compulsive overeating invites other sins. It adds demons to harass your mind and turns you into a fool.

Only God's strength destroys those feelings and compounds worth to your life. Turn your powerlessness to God, and He will release HIS power into your life. First, you must draw NEAR unto God.

**N** – Newness of mind

**E** – Energized

**A** – Amicable

**R** – Restful

You will marvel at the difference.

*Prayer: Lord, help me take time for You today, so that I might feel Your closeness.*



# January 13



## Am I Crazy?

*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 2 Timothy 1:7*

Have you applied this verse to your life? Is your mind sound? Do you eat things you swore to yourself you wouldn't eat even though you feel terrible afterward? Do you keep eating until you're sick, knowing what's going to happen? Is your life out of control?

The devil seeks to destroy us. Compulsive overeating is one of his prized tools. He brings in his demons of depression, inactivity and worthlessness and has us doing and saying things we would have never believed possible. We might contemplate suicide. We might believe our families are better off without us.

That, my friend, is not a sound mind. You become afraid of yourself with no power to change, but, as the above verse states, "FOR GOD . . ." Only He has the answer.

*Prayer: Today, Lord, give me a sound mind to serve You.*



## January 14

### H.A.L.T.

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.  
Matthew 11:28, 29 NIV*

When we follow the Lord, He enriches our lives and leads us to peace of mind and joy of heart. We eat healthy, exercise and worship God with vigor because we're renewed. Then, we flounder again. What could be wrong?

Some of you have heard the expression to HALT and check yourself, but it may bear repeating.

**H** – Hungry – Have you not eaten enough, or are you letting yourself get too hungry before your next meal? Have you been in the heat or exercised more without food first?

**A** – Angry – Examine your thoughts. Has someone angered you, but you refused to let it bother you? Did you hide it deep in your mind? It may still be there, causing a desire to overeat.

**L** – Lonely – Have you spent too much time alone? Does it seem everyone's deserted you? Look around you. Who do you know that might use your help or your company? Let God lead you to the right person.

**T** – Tired – Have you become too tired, done too much, not gotten enough rest at night? Have you been sick? Have you restored your strength completely before running again?

We must examine our lives. Any and all of these things could hit us, and when it hits compulsive eaters, we want to eat. We may not understand the cause, but we know that's what happens. We should ask God to show us if we need to HALT and take His easier yoke.

*Prayer: Open my mind to see the problem, Lord, so I can turn it over to You.*

# January 15



## Beauty For the Meek

*For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Psalms 149:4*

What is the meaning of meek? Webster's says it means submissive. As we submit to God, He dresses us in beauty.

A young woman prayed at the altar last Sunday. I watched her walk down the aisle. I saw the furrows in her brow as she frowned, but after she prayed, her face glowed. Burdens were gone. She walked away a free woman. Though her eyes were tear-stained, she looked beautiful.

When we overeat, we neglect the mirror. Feeling ugly and fat, we turn away from any reminder of our size. We become the picture-taker, so we're not in the photos ourselves. After a time of following a good eating plan, we're not so conscious of the mirror or the camera. The battle is in your mind before it's on the body.

God tells us He "takes pleasure" in us. He loves us as a father loves his children. Through His eyes, we're beautiful. Drawing close through prayer and seeking God's will gives us His viewpoint.

*Prayer: Guide my mind to see my beauty through God's eyes.*



## January 16

### Who's Your Master, Baby?

*Everything is permissible for me—but, not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me—but, I will not be mastered by anything. 1 Corinthians 6:12 NIV*

Something or someone masters each of us. We dislike that thought. In verses nine and ten, Paul lists sins that can master us. He includes sexual immorality, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, prostitution, theft, alcohol, slander or swindling. All of these are things that hurt our body, our mind, and/or our spirit.

Some people can handle things that aren't sin, but others of us must be watchful. Paul indicated that he could eat meat given to gods. This same meat would condemn other believers. We could use the same excuse for eating a pan of fudge. That would be permissible to us, but not beneficial. The fudge would hurt us since it could overcome our walk with God. God protects us from overeating only while we follow His precepts and commands.

Remember, God gives us rules for our good.

*Prayer: Lord, help me remember some foods may be permissible, but let me know if it's not beneficial.*

## January 17



### **Thank God For the Curse of an Overeating Compulsion?**

*Always giving thanks to God, the Father, for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:20 NIV*

A friend, Linda, suffered a stroke three years ago. She struggles over simple moves.

“Are you angry with God?” I asked her one day.

Her eyes widened. “Why would I be angry with God when He saved my life and helped me walk and move and sent me a husband who stayed by my side?”

Would I be that gracious? Would you?

Compulsive overeaters tend to blame God. We ask why we were cursed with an inability to control food. We see others that eat candy (like my ex-sister-in-law), or always have dessert (like my mother) and remain slim. Even after receiving an emotional healing, we may fight a compulsion to binge eat because we think we’re deprived.

With God’s healing, He accelerates our compassion for the lost and addicted. He uses us to assist and pray for others. We travel different roads because we understand the addictive personality. How could we be mad that this curse happened to us when, because of it, God gives blessings?

God desires what’s best for His children. We must trust this even when our minds see only negative.

*Prayer: Help me trust You and watch for the good.*



## January 18

### Taste and Trust

*O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Psalms 34:8*

Several Scriptures speak of eating the Word. This one steers us to tasting the Lord. A standard joke, especially among women when we eat too much, is "I'll wear this cheeseburger on my hips tomorrow." Though said in jest, food that we consume becomes part of our bone, our blood, our muscle. Food provides the building blocks of our entire body.

Likewise, what we read, talk about, see on the screen, anything we take into our minds affects our thoughts, our actions, our responses.

What did you taste today?

Where did you place your trust?

The New International Version translates trusting God into taking refuge. That brings a vision of mean people shooting at us. We spot a cave and hide. God is our cave, our refuge from the temptation to overeat. When we can't trust ourselves to do what's right, we can trust God to make it right. Taste (Hide) yourself in Him. The bullets are flying.

*Prayer: Today, strengthen my trust and my desire to taste of God's protection.*

# January 19



## Fear of humiliation

*Do not be afraid, you will not suffer shame. Do not fear disgrace, you will not be humiliated. You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood.*  
*Isaiah 54:4 NIV*

Unkind words and prejudice in the work place can bring us humiliation. Have you been passed over for a job because you were fat? Has anyone asked you when your baby was due when you were not pregnant? Has bitter resentment or low self-esteem isolated you from friends?

God gives us the above promise. We can hold up our heads and forget the shame of the past. God's heart breaks because of our pain. He wants to hug us and tell us there is hope, but we won't let Him.

If you're plagued by feelings of disgrace or a desire to hide and eat, call on God. Instead of asking Him to stop the cravings, ask Him to take control. We tire of fighting the battle with little success. The fact is we're powerless. God has all power to "take away the shame of our past and cause us to forget the reproach of our weight."

*Prayer: Lord, I come to You today and lay my humiliation and inability at Your feet.*



## January 20

### **I Have the Answers to Overcome**

*May the Lord cut off all flattering lips and every boastful tongue that says, We will triumph with our tongues, we own our lips—who is our master? Psalms 12:3,4 NIV*

Most of us begin diets at a young age and then try every new plan that hits the market. We study pamphlets, read books, sit under every type of teaching about weight control. We learn to quote the nutritional value of most foods. Many of us consult psychiatrists or psychologists. Still, our emotional deficiency drives us to overeat.

Our conversation goes:

“I know it all. I can handle it.”

“I’ve lost weight, so I’ve proven I can do it.”

God warns in the Bible that pride is deadly. How many times have we failed because we trusted ourselves? In most nutritional ways of eating, newbies can lose weight rapidly, but those of us who’ve done it before lag, lose slowly, or not at all. Why? Because we think we know it all.

I am not the master of my fate, nor the captain of my soul. Only God can overcome the beast that food becomes in my life.

*Prayer: Lord, though I know a lot, I can’t do it. Take over my compulsive eating.*



# January 21



## Is God Enough?

*Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you, he will never let the righteous fall. Psalms 55:22 NIV*

Webster's dictionary gives the meaning of sustenance as food or nourishment. Is God enough nourishment to keep us alive? Not exactly. He made our bodies to require physical food, but only God can provide for the spiritual.

The spiritual and the physical are more closely related than one might think. Without adequate spiritual replenishment, compulsive overeaters eat the wrong things and eat too much, or binge and purge. Anorexics eat too little without God's help.

Clarity comes when we read the definition of sustain—to carry the weight of, or support, to endure and withstand. When we call on the Lord, He sustains (supports, carries) us. Interesting thought.

To a person whose thoughts dwell too much on food, the last phrase in that verse is like the cherry on top of a luscious dessert. God never fails. **He never lets us fall.** Oh, thank you, Jesus.

*Prayer: Today, I cast my cares on You, so You can sustain me without failure.*



## January 22

### Hypocrites

*Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander of every kind. 1 Peter 2:1 NIV*

Speaking of ourselves as hypocrites is the last thing we want to do. Hypocrites in the church can block seekers from salvation. Until I turned 16, my father remained unsaved because of them. He owned service stations and watched many who attended church cheat and lie in business. He didn't want any part of those hypocrites.

Upon examining our lives, we face guilt. Hypocrisy isn't something way out there. The more healing God brings to our emotions, the more we realize hypocrisy is in us.

Honesty and a genuine desire to serve God may permeate most of our lives. Occasionally, our minds build strongholds that we refuse to give to God. Do you find that after praying in church, you seek solace in food, giving it the place that God should have owned?

The devil fights our minds. It's his favorite and most successful battlefield. The Bible tells us he goes to and fro on the earth seeking to destroy. He knows each of our weaknesses. He knows we won't kill anyone, and we won't commit adultery. Ah, but he also knows if he causes our minds to obsess over a food product, God loses us as His true followers. If we replace God on the throne of our mind, the devil wins. Our Christian walk falters as effectively as if we had lied or cheated.

*Prayer: Lord, keep me from being a hypocrite and keep my mind on You.*

# January 23



## Take these Chains

*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.  
John 8:36*

A chorus we often sing in church goes “my chains are gone, I’ve been set free.” When we lay this compulsive eating disorder into God’s hands, that’s the way we feel. That’s the way it is.

Sin and addiction ties us in knots. Chains bind us, often for years, despite all our intentions to the contrary; chains of self-hate, resentments, inadequacies, and overeating. Our power, our will cannot break them, but Jesus, sweet Jesus, sets us free, really free.

As long as we rely on Him, our minds don’t labor over what to do. He chooses our path. We only need to lean on Him. Christ’s freedom grows stronger during our difficult periods.

His strength in our weakness—now there’s something worth rejoicing about, today.

*Prayer: Thank you for true freedom. Help me not to go back to the chains.*



## January 24

### **His Burdens are Light**

*For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matthew 11:30*

Jesus' words give hope. When we take over the control of our life, we become weighed down and overwhelmed. Burdens war in our minds. We become exhausted. Verse 28 of that same chapter starts with Jesus calling to all the weary and overburdened. That's us when we control our lives. But, when we lay our heavy load at Jesus' feet, we walk away under His yoke, and His yoke is easy.

Recently, day after day, my mind strained against a heaviness. Troubles wore me down with cares. I was bone tired. When I called on Jesus' name, He didn't fail me. He lifted that load and replaced it with peace. Why do I continue to forget that and allow myself to take over the control of life? I always fail.

Has this happened to you? Ask God for EASE. Remember.

**Ease my burden**

**Admit my attempted control**

**Submit to His will**

**Yoke – Mine is harsh, His is light**

*Prayer: Relieve my heaviness today, Lord. Take over the controls.*

**January 25**



## **My Strength is Gone**

*The Lord will judge his people and have compassion on his servants when he sees their strength is gone . . .*

*Deuteronomy 32:36*

An older woman with arthritic hands may have problems opening jars. Still, she works at it. She tugs and twists. She uses a rubber pad to grip the jar or heat it on a burner to loosen the top. That's me. When all else fails, I give it to my husband. He grins and says, "All you had to do was ask." Then he opens the jar.

We're like that with God. We lay awake at night trying to bring a solution for our child, our friend, or us. Trying several things that end in failure, we finally give up and go to God with our problem in our hands. Don't you envision him grinning and saying, "All you had to do was ask." Then He works out the problem.

Too often, we do this with compulsive overeating. We follow one diet after another. We count carbs, and points and calories, then we go on a binge of eating. We hold pain in our hearts.

"Lift our useless attempts and our heartache," we pray.

God says "All you had to do was ask." And, He releases us from the compulsion.

*Prayer: Lord, my strength is gone. I need Your compassion and help.*



## January 26

### I Will Wait

*I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion, therefore, I will wait for Him.' Lamentations 3:24 NIV*

Waiting is the hardest thing we do. Recently, while heating a leftover dinner in the microwave, I became perturbed that I had to keep putting it back for more seconds. When would it be hot? Laughter broke up my irritation when I thought how I used to heat leftovers on the stove or in a conventional oven. Those methods took three to four times longer to heat, and tasted worse.

We're an instant-type society.

Instant gratification—wanting what we want when we want it—not wanting to wait. That impatience creeps into our relationship with God. If financial problems don't come with an immediate resource, if our kids don't live the way they should, if we follow a diet to the letter and don't drop pounds in three days, we blame God. Why doesn't He answer our prayers?

What does "my portion" in the above verse mean? Webster defines it as one's fate or share. I think of it as hope, our future. God is our fate. He's who we want to shape our life. Therefore, we will wait.

Trust = hope = wait

*Prayer: Lord, one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit is patience.  
You are my fate. Help me to wait.*

## January 27



### Call Me A Mule

*Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding, but must be controlled by bit and bridle, or they will not come to you. Psalms 32:9 NIV*

Rebellion causes us trouble.

Why am I surprised that my children are rebellious? I've been their example. I have a healthy way of eating planned. When I turn away from it, the Lord has to put a bit in my mouth to bring me back to Him. Being a mule or a jackass isn't a pretty picture, but often I qualify.

Recently, family problems baffled my mind. I prayed and prayed, but things got worse. Anger crept into my thoughts. I quit praying. That lasted three days. I missed my daily spiritual meals.

I was miserable, so I decided to tell God about it. "Lord, I'm mad at you. I need help here, and You're not doing Your part."

God told me, "Well, when you get through having your temper tantrum, you'll be able to see my answers." He was right. My mulish ways blinded me to the truth. God was working. I needed to remove the bit and follow.

The Lord tells us to refrain from acting like a mule or horse. Rebellion creeps into all areas of our walk with God, but most of all in our eating. Observe the mule. Kick bad attitudes.

*Prayer: Lead, and I will follow. Feed me, and I will partake.*



## January 28

### **Resentment Destroys Peace**

*A sound heart is the life of the flesh; but envy the rottenness of the bones. Proverbs 14:30*

In the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous as well as Overeaters Anonymous, we read “resentment is the number one offender. From it stems all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick.”

The two men who started this twelve-step program in the 1930s received their wisdom from the Bible. Note in the verse from Proverbs, envy (resentment or jealousy) rots our bones. Only the Lord can remove these feelings from our minds and restore us to a sound mind and heart, but God will not free us without our consent. We must ask and be genuinely desirous to be free of the envy.

First, we ask God to reveal any bitterness or resentful attitude. Second, we release it to God. In some cases, we must apologize or attempt to reconcile with the person we envied or resented. Sometimes the first person we must forgive is ourselves. When we do our part, God rushes in with sweet peace and acceptance.

*Prayer: Lord, show me any resentments and remove them from my mind today.*



# January 29



## Helping Others Help Us

*Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. 2 Corinthians 1:4*

The twelfth step in the Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book states “Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

Alcoholics Anonymous saved our aunt and uncle from a lifetime of alcohol abuse. We watched while their lives were consumed with meetings and service. As the twelfth step says, they couldn’t stay sober without trying to help others to stay sober. Bill W and Dr. Bob, who started that organization in the 1930s, soon realized that the only way they could stay away from their own vice was by helping others overcome their addiction.

Christ told of this principle long before Bill W and Dr. Bob learned it. The verse above tells us that when we receive comfort (assistance, inspiration, salvation), we should offer it to others. No one can understand the problem of compulsive overeating like another bound by the problem. We’ve been there. We know the difficulty.

Notice that this isn’t a commandment to tell someone else how to handle their compulsion. What works for me won’t work for someone else. Our job to point them to the One who can advise them. Offer Jesus daily to needy souls.

*Prayer: Send someone my way today that needs Your comfort.*



## January 30

### Having Patience Is the Pits

*For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Hebrews 10:36*

God will always bring about His plan and fulfill His promises. God wants us healthy and in tune with Him. Our part is to give the problem to Jesus, ask for His strength, take baby steps toward nutrition. God will do the rest.

Ah, but patience—therein lies the problem. We hate to wait for anything. We are the generation of microwaves, fax machines and high-speed internet. During our journey of weight loss, patience and trust intertwine. If we trust God completely, if we believe we will receive the promise, all we can do is wait.

How long does it take to lose 100 pounds? Many accomplish this in less than a year. I lost ninety-five pounds, but it took me 2 ½ years. Patience grows through the process of trusting God when things look bleak. Have you had a trial in patience lately? Have you faltered and gained? Have you held in your angry words and instead stuffed your mouth with candy? Have you stayed on your eating plan, but not lost any weight?

God is faithful. He keeps His promises. Have you relied on Him?

*Prayer: Lord, help me to trust in You today and do my part.*

# January 31



## What's Right About Me?

*I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*  
*Psalms 139:14*

Consider listing your talents, your good points, your strengths. This assignment can change your life.

Near the beginning of my weight loss, my mentor asked me to list ten things I liked about myself. This was one of the hardest tasks I'd ever undertaken. Writing things I disliked would've come easily. I was fat, rebellious, stubborn, a control freak . . . I could go on and on.

For an example, here's how my process went:

1. I'm a good mother. No, I yell at my kids too much especially when I'm *drunk* with too many sweets. I marked that out.
2. I'm faithful to my husband. Yes, but . . . my husband suffers from my terrible mood swings. My husband entertains with a fat wife. It was hard. My teacher said start with physical attributes. All mine were bad.

"Well, my eyebrows are dark."

"Think harder," my teacher said.

Finally, I came up with a good list.

Try this today. God's works are marvelous, even our creation. The list will encourage you and lift your self-esteem.

*Prayer: Lord, when I get down on myself, remind me of the good things You ascribed to me.*