

Are You in Health?

Men's Conference

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All right. Welcome to Making the Most of your Health. And today we are going to talk about how to have a Bod4God. And that is the title of a book that I wrote Bod4God and you have an interest in that, you can get one of those today. But basically what we are going to do is we are going to be working thought this study guide here. We will just get as far as we can get and wherever we end, we end. But you will at least have all the Scriptures there. Maybe we will get all the way through this, but I do want to have Q&A time. So if you have any questions or anything you want to ask, feel free to do that.

But we are going to talk about a subject that most men don't talk about very often and that is their health. And one of my favorite passages related to this is 2 Samuel 20 verse nine. It says:

Then Joab said to Amasa, "Are you in health, my brother?"

Now why do I like that passage? I like it because here is two guys, two men talking about their health. I mean, you know, the ladies when they get together they talk about their health and they talk about their kids and all that stuff. And then the guys we get together we talk about our work and we talk about the, you know, the Redskins or whatever and, you know, it is very rare for two guys to say much about their health. But here is two guys and they are dealing with the question that we are going to deal with today and that is: Are you in health, my brother?

In 3 John verse two the Bible says this.

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things. Listen. Underline this if you have got a pen. And be in health, just as your soul prospers.

So the Bible says God wants our soul to prosper. We are to prosper in that sense, but also we are to be in health. We are to make the most of our health. And when it comes to this issue of health, one of the biggest things that many of us struggle with us our weight. And I want to take just a few minutes here and just kind of give you my background and help you understand kind of where I am coming from in this area and to give you a little bit of my testimony.

And basically my testimony is I have struggled with weight all my life. I actually weighed over 100 pounds in first grade. Now today it is not unusual for kids to be overweight, for kids to be heavy. One out of three children today are obese. In fact, I am going to be writing two more books and one of the next books is going to be Bod4God Family because I have a real heart for child hood obesity because I struggled with that myself and for most of my life did a lousy job raising our children and because of that they struggle with that.

And so that is a big issue close to my heart. So I know what it is like to be heavy all the way from the early years of my life. But I got involved in sports and particularly football and got involved in playing football from the time I was a child all the way through college. And I was fortunate enough to actually get a four year scholarship to play college football. I played at the greatest university in the world. Yes, you guessed it, Liberty University. Ok? And I knew that was what you were going to say, Ok? Go flames. And I was a four year starter, fully scholarship player. Now maybe you know about college football and maybe you don't, but let me just give you a little insight. It is not just something you do during the fall. They give you a scholarship, but I am telling you they literally take control of your life 12 months out of the year. And I particularly went to a school where our founder, our chancellor had this vision that Liberty, for evangelicals would be what Notre Dame is for Catholics and Brigham Young is for Mormons and even though it was a young school, they were pouring lots and lots of money into the football program, because they wanted to build this big time football program.

And so with that and there was lots of pressure, lots of intensity put on this part of the school. And good or bad, right or wrong, the reality is when I finished playing college football I was sick of exercising. In fact, I was done with exercising and I literally made a promise that I was never going to exercise again in my life, literally. And I have broken a lot of promises, unfortunately, in my life and I am sure you have, too. But I kept that promise until I was 48 years old.

So, but here is the deal. I quit exercising like a football player, but I never stopped eating like one.

Now about that time in 1982 I left southern Virginia, central Virginia and came up here to northern Virginia. In 1982 I started a brand new church. Nobody invited me here. Nobody asked me to come here. I didn't know anybody here. I just believed God had called me to this area to start a new church.

And so I started that church and the good news is that little church grew and I have been pastoring that same church now for 29 years. The bad news is I grew, ok? And I got up to 340 pounds. Four years ago I weighed 340 pounds. I had high blood pressure. I had high cholesterol and I had diabetes. I was taking eight pills a day for those health issues. Ok? Again, I was digging my grave with a knife and a fork and my number one addiction was ice cream.

And so there I was, you know, in that situation in my life. And as a man, I mean, you know, the thing I think that we can relate to is that we want to have a legacy. I mean, when our speaker today talked about the fourth quarter and making a difference with your life, I mean, for us guys, I mean, most of us resonate with that. When he talks about wanting to be around, I love that statement, he said, “To be around to serve...” How did he put it? His bride and his kids and God’s bride and God’s kids. I like that statement. Ok, that was a powerful statement.

I mean, that is where I was in my life. You know, I am looking forward to heaven. I am just not in a hurry to get there and I wanted to be here. Ok? I want to serve my bride and my kids and I want to serve God’s bride and God’s kids. And I didn’t want to dig my grave with a knife and a fork and an ice cream spoon.

So here I was saying, “Ok, you know, what are you going to do? You know, you have got to make a change.”

And so what I did was one day I said, “Ok, I am a pastor. I tell people the answers for everything are in the Bible. You just need to go to the Bible.”

So here is what I did. I looked up the word “body” in the Bible and I discovered that it is in the Bible 179 times. And out of that I crafted what I am going to share with you today, these four keys to a better body or these four keys to weight loss.

Now I still have a ways to go in my Bod4God. I still need to lose weight myself, ok? But with these four keys I personally have lost over 120 pounds now and in our church through what we call the losing to live weight loss competition, we have now lost over six tons of weight over 12,000 pounds.

And so what I am sharing with you today, I am tell you. It will work for you. And the biggest reason it is going to work for you is the Bible says Jesus said, “You know the truth and the truth will set you free.

And I am telling you. What we are going to do is we are going to look at the Bible, ok? We are going to look at God’s Word today.

So that gives you a little bit of my background and helps you kind of understand where I am coming from, but when you think about this, you need to realize that a lot of us are struggling. There is no... you know, I am not surprised every chair is filled. Ok. I am not surprised we had to put up more chairs. Ok. What I mainly is about that they didn’t give us the auditorium or whatever ok? Because, ok, the truth is Christians are the most overweight people group. That is an absolute documented fact. Ok, we are the most overweight people group in America. Ok? Well, you... why? Because, you know, we don’t smoke pot. At least we shouldn’t, but we do a lot of pot luck, don’t we? Ok, I mean, so we know all about that stuff. You know, that is all a part of the culture of the church, you know. You know, we both know gluttony is a sin, but we are not going to talk about it because we are going not talk about the, you know, don’t smoke, don’t cuss, don’t

chew, don't go with girls that do with gravy dripping down our chin. That is what we are going to do, ok? That is the Christian way, ok? That is the godly way or whatever, you know?

And so we are not surprised by that. Then among the Christians guess who the most overweight people group is among the Christians? The Baptists. I pastor a Baptist church. So that is why we are here in Reston Bible Church today, because this is a healthy, skinny group of people here. And that is why we came out here today.

All right, so the point is, I mean, you know, this is a big issue. This is a big need.

Now what disturbs me about that statistic and one of the reasons I am giving my life or the rest of my life to being the anti fat pastor as the media calls me is that I want to change that statistic. And one of the biggest reasons I want to change that statistic is because it is far from being like Jesus.

What do you think Jesus was like physically? Have you ever thought about that? What was he like physically?

Well, my friend Carol Lewis who heads up a ministry called First Place for Health wrote a book called *Choosing to Change* and in that book she talked about what Jesus was like physically. Let's read what Carol says here. She says:

“The pictures of Jesus that I remember from my childhood showed Him to be rather frail. However, the Jesus of the Scriptures is quite a different person. We know that Jesus was a carpenter by trade. Until He began his public ministry at age 30, He earned His living as a carpenter. He had to carry large pieces of wood and stone to build structures. His trade would have required great physical strength. We also know from Scriptures that Jesus walked from Sidon to Tyre, which would have been a 40 mile trip, in one day. Instead of comfortable tennis shoes, He wore homemade sandals as He walked over rough terrain.”

That is Jesus, fully capable of walking 40 miles in one day. And yet on the planet today we are the most overweight people group. That disturbs me. That bothers me. And it just shouldn't be that way. And so we need to realize that if we are going to be like Jesus, we talk about being like Christ, part of being like Christ is taking care of your body and honoring him with your body. And so that is what we are going to be talking about today during this time together.

Now all the passages I am going to refer to are in this study guide, but I am going to begin by reading one of those that is not there and you can just listen, or if you happen to have a Bible you can use it. It is Colossians 1:16. And I just want to mention that I have got Mike here, Mike Parks with me today and Mike is a member of Woodstream Church over in Maryland. They actually hosted the last event, the last [?] event over there and I had the privilege of meeting Mike over there and he got involved in this. He has lost a lot

of weight and they have now started their church and I... and he is going to give us a testimony here in just a little bit, ok? So I just want to throw that out for you as well.

But Colossians 1:16 says this.

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

Now let's notice that statement. We were created by him or through him, but also we were created for him.

So what does this mean? Your body is made, listen, through God and for God. We are to have a Bod4God.

Now notice there is two parts to that. The first part is that God is the creator of our bodies. Ok, that he made us. And he created us and we recognize and we honor him as the Creator. And for the most part in our churches we are really strong in that area. I mean, we believe in God the Creator God. But it doesn't just say we were created by God. It also says we were created for God, meaning he is not only to be the creator of our bodies, which he is. He is also, listen, to be the controller of our bodies.

We are to be controlled... we are to allow him to control us. We are to be for him. We are to be honoring him with our bodies. And this is the area where we are weak, ok? We are weak. We are big on Creator of our bodies, but we are weak on controller of our bodies. And because we are out of balance in this area, I mean, what has happened is we just kind of, you know, given ourselves away and we have allowed other things to take over our live. And so today what we are going to do is we are going to talk about, you know, what can we do? What can we do?

Now as I said, what I did is I went to the Bible and I looked up the word body. It is in there 179 times. And out of that I crafted these four keys. Now the bottom line is I never intended to preach about this. I never intended to teach about this. I never intended to write a book about this. I never intended to lecture about this. I never intended any of that. Ok, that was never my plan. All I was doing was I had a need in my life and I wanted to change my life in this area and I wanted to see what God's Word would tell me about it.

But since that time, I mean, God has allowed this to be a... just a huge ministry in my life. Just another opportunity, another platform for serving God. And the point I am trying to make to you is that, I mean, God is moving. God is working and he is opening up opportunities for us all and he is waning to work in our lives and I hope you will just allow God's Spirit to speak to you and you will allow God's Spirit to minister to you today.

But right now I am going to ask Mike to come and give us a word of testimony about

what he has experienced with these four keys and then also maybe share a little bit about what is going on at their church, ok? So let's welcome Mike as he comes.

[applause]

Change of Voice:

Thank you. I just ... the thing I want to do is just as I speak I would just like you to pray to yourself that God ... I will... and the Bible says that we should... when we speak we should speak as if God is speaking. So when I am speaking to you, I know that God is going to answer that. I know that it is going to be him speaking, because his Word says that anything you pray for in his will he hears us and we know he hears we know we have what we ask for. And so he is going to do that. You are going to hear God speak through me and I am just going thankful to be here. I am humbled to be here because just as pastor Steve just said, I never intended to write a book. I never intended to do all this. I met him less than a year ago. I never thought I would be here speaking about weight loss in front of people at a [?] conference.

So I was just going to his table last year because at my church [?] in Maryland his table was there with all of his stuff. And I went there looking for information because I had been having yoyo issues of my own. And I am just looking for a book. I saw Bod4God and I immediately wanted it. I didn't even really open the book. I just looked at it. I looked at the back. I want it. That is exactly what happened and unfortunately he wasn't even at the table. And I was a little irritated. I really was because I kept going back to the table and he was not even there and I am like where is this guy?

And finally I took his book. I did. I mean he had this up there. He had the DVD. He had the magnet. I just took it. You know, and, but the thing is, you know, the Holy Spirit convicted me, because I am not a thief or anything, but the Holy Spirit convicted me. I said I had to go back. And even when I went back I was getting irritated because I wanted... I couldn't find to tell him I took his stuff.

So finally at the end of the conference he is packing up and his little boxes and stuff going out and I was like, "Pastor Steve..."

And he was like, "Yeah."

I told him that I was the thief who took his stuff and he shook my hand and didn't hit me and then he told me, this is... I said, "Do this stuff cost?"

He said, "Of course it costs me."

Because you know sometimes you are at... you are at conferences and they have stuff for free, right? That is the reason I took it because I didn't think... I was hoping it wasn't free, because they I would have kept coming back and it would have been all gone and I would have missed out.

So, but he told me where to send it. He invited me and my wife out to the program. And it just so happened God knows what he is doing. It just so happened that he had another competition, a weight loss competition starting up in May.

So my wife and I, we came to the conference. And my wife is really great shape. My wife works out all the time. She is in very good shape. And so when my wife came, she was concerned that she wasn't going to lose any weight. I personally had lost some weight already because in the path that I was on but I knew I wanted to lose more weight. So when I went to the program it asks you: How much weight do you want to lose? On the form. And I just put 20 pounds. I just, "Ok, 20 pounds." And my wife put "Ten."

So as we are going through the program I started losing weight and I never doubted the program. I believed that it would work because I knew it was a biblical program and if pastor Steve... I came in a little late because I was at the table talking to some people, but he probably told you about the three elements of his program. It is biblical, it is personal and is incremental. All I needed to hear was biblical. That is a guarantee of success. Biblical is guarantee success. The other stuff is gravy. But the personal and incremental part is key because it is about your personal relationship with Christ.

This is not a weight loss program. You all might think it is, but it is not. God uses everything to draw people to him. It just so happens that this is a weight loss program and so when people come and thinking it is a weight loss program and really they find that they have a meeting with God and then you...as you are losing weight you realize that God is working with you. I found myself studying more, studying the Bible more. You know, and so, I mean, I studied the Bible, too, but I really study the Bible now.

And so it is personal. You make small, simple changes, incremental. Cold turkey is not bad, but unfortunately, a lot of us can't go cold turkey, ok?

So I went to the program. I lost over 26 pounds in the program in nine weeks. Ok? I am happy to say that I am less now than I was when I weighed in last at the program and I am still losing weight. The program ended this summer. My wife and I were so excited that we went to our church and we talked to the pastor and the pastor allowed us to bring the program out to the church. Right now we are going into our fourth or fifth week in the program. We had 50... about 55 people register for the program. It is a pilot program. It is designed to fully launch at the beginning of the year. So we are excited about that and I am humble and excited to be in front of you right now to share with you. So if anybody here is interested in taking a program, it definitely works. If you know of anybody, you know, anybody and that is really anybody, because it is not about looking like you need to lose weight. You know, it doesn't mater whether you look like it. Some people can look like it, but some people could look like it and still need it. So I encourage you to just, you know, get all the information that you can and take advantage of the program. And I appreciate your time.

[applause]

Change of Voice:

Ok. Thank you, Mike. That was great.

Pull that out, yeah.

Ok.

[off mic voice]

Yeah, ok. Thank you.

[off mic voice]

That is right. All right, very good.

Ok, thank you, Mike. I appreciate that very, very much. And ... and literally thousands of people have lost tons of weight through this program and, again, it... the big thing is it is the Word of God. I mean, God didn't just make us and say, "Do the best you can." He made us and gave us 179 times how to handle this body and what to do about this body.

So there I am, 340 pounds, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes and I will just go ahead and say it. I am medication free today. I don't have any of those health issues in my life, because of the weight loss. And so, you know, God has set me free when it comes to those different areas of my health. And so there I am again literally I am in closed doors here studying this stuff. I had no intention of ever talking about this. I mean, it was just nowhere in my mind set. I mean, I never heard of pastor preacher about weight myself and I grew up in the church and went to a fantastic church and, you know, a big school and I never heard anybody talk about this stuff. So I wasn't thinking, you know, I am going to get this together and I am going to start preaching about this, because I never... preachers didn't talk about that stuff. I was just something you didn't... you didn't talk about. In fact, the way I got started on this I had a reporter, I did... I took a post card... after I decided that God was leading me to preach on this, because so many people were asking me what I was doing, I decided to do a series and I did this post card mailing to the community and the way I got where I am today is a reporter with the *Washington Post* got this post card and it said, "Bod4God, you know, four keys to weight loss. Come and here pastor Steve Reynolds," and she picks up the phone and calls me and says, "Hey, I got your card." She says, "This is really interesting. Can I come hear these messages?"

And I am thinking, sure, you know, that would be great. Come on in, you know, whatever.

And so she shows up and bottom line is she ends up writing an article that was on the very front page of the *Washington Post*. And God used that article, God sent that article

to through the wire services all around the world and within 30 days, I mean, my life was totally turned up side down. I mean, I was now the anti fat pastor. And I had media every Sunday we had cameras at our church and I mean, I am having the *Today* show coming to spend 24 hours with me sometime here soon. They are going to follow me around. I have got to go... in fact, I have got to get home, clean out my kitchen because I... they are going to do this little... spend the day with me to see what life is like for the anti fat pastor and things like that. And God has just given me lost of neat opportunities like that to share this message.

And, again, I say that in no way to brag, ok? But to say, you know what? God has hope for us and God I sup to something. He is moving.

So what are those four keys that I have discovered? Well, number one, the first is D and that is dedication. That is honoring God with your body. Now you are going to know this as an acrostic here, D I E T, diet, D I E T. Now honestly if I knew I was going to be going public with this thing I probably would never have came up with that acrostic. I was just trying to come up with a way to remember what I was learning and that is how I got through school. I mean, I am not the brightest bulb in the room, I can assure you, ok? And I had to come up with all kinds of little things getting through college and seminary to help me remember stuff like, you know, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. Do you know how you remember the order of those books in the Bible? Go eat pop corn or if you are a big time guy, General Electric power company, ok? I mean, that is my life. I mean, I am not the most brilliant person in the world. A lot of you have a lot higher IQ than me. So that is just kind of how I get through life, you know, coming up with little systems like that. And so I am thinking, ok, I see what God is showing me here. How can I remember this?

And so I came up with this acrostic, D I E T. Now the reason I wouldn't have really chosen that, so to speak, if I knew where it was all going is because usually think two things when they hear the phrase diet. Number one they think of the first three letters. What are the first three letters? Die. I am going to die if I have to do this. If I have to drink another one of those shakes, I mean, you know, I think I am going to vomit, ok, whatever. I mean, you know, they are thinking all this negative stuff, you know? And the second people think short term. They think I will do this for a period of time, a month or two or whatever and then I will go back to my old lifestyle. But this is a diet plan, this is a live it plan.

See, you got to craft something that you are going to do the rest of your life. Did you hear me? You have got to craft something that you are going to do the rest of your life. Ok? As Michael mentioned, I didn't get a chance to say it yet, but the three unique things is it is biblical, as we already said. It is incremental. You do it what we call small steps t life. That is the best way to change. And then it is personal. And what I mean by that you have got to craft your own personal lifestyle. Why do one size fit all programs fail? Because they don't work because we are all different. Some of us are younger. Some of us are older. Ok? All of us in this room are men. You know, but sometimes there is women as well. Some of us are single. Some of us are married. Some of us have little kids. Some of

us have no kids. Some of us have teenagers. Some of us are empty nesters, you know? Some of us grew up in the south like I did in southern Virginia. You know, I was brought up to crave grease and sugar and, you know, that is just if you want to make something better, put more grease in it, you know, whatever. You know, you... that was just the lifestyle. But not all of us, you know, grew up around that. A lot of you grew up eating a lot of pasta. Maybe you are in an Italian family. I hardly ever had pasta. I just don't think anything about pasta. I mean it wasn't my background. So you train your cravings. Your taste buds are trained.

The reason about 10 o'clock every night I said it is time for some ice cream and when I say every night I mean every night because from the time I was a little boy in Alfred Reynolds' home, my dad's home when around 10 o'clock came, it was time to go to the refrigerator... actually he told my mother to go get it, but anyway, he would go, "Betsy, ready for my ice cream." Ok. And a lot of times my dad didn't use a bowl. He would just grab the whole half gallon. You know, he would sit there and eat it.

And so after we got married, you know, I figured as the spiritual leader in my family that is how a family is supposed to go and so I said, "Ok, in our home we are having ice cream every single night." And we did. And I craved, trained my taste buds that way. And so the point is, I mean, that is something unique to me, personal to me and I had to deal with that as an individual. So I had to come up with a personal plan that was going to help me to live a healthy lifestyle.

Usually the first thing people do when they pick up a book like this is they look at the plan. They will start flipping through it and saying, "Ok, there has got to be some menus in here. There has got to be eat this, do this," and they go through. What kind of book is this, you know? I don't even see a single menu in here. I don't... this is the most horrible book probably ever written here. I mean, what kind of idiot wrote this, you know?

It is not in here.

I am going to tell you how to come up with your own plan that will work for you, you know? And I will tell you how to find some menus in here, but there aren't any in there, ok?

The point is, I mean, it has got to be your plan.

All right, so with that in mind let's start with D. Now D is the most important one. Really all we need is D. And we will get to the others, but, honestly, we just take care of D it is all going to be fine. And D is dedication.

Now this is honoring God with your body. Now for me what that meant was bringing my belief system and my behavior together. See, I believed the right thing. My mind was correct. I never believed I should weigh 340 pounds. I never believed I should be a glutton. I never believed that. I knew that was wrong. I knew that was sin. You know, I was fine on my belief system. The problem was my behavior didn't match my belief

system and perhaps you are feeling that thing, ok? You are in this room. Obviously God has spoken to you in some form or fashion.

You know, by the way, some of you might be what is called skinny fat. Ok, what is skinny fat? Well, it means, you know, you look good on the outside, but you know the reality is your habits are that of an overweight person. You just happen to have this incredible metabolism or something is helping you out, ok, but you know, you are not having a Bod4God. Ok? So God is speaking to you, maybe, about some things like that in your life that you want to have improve your health in that way.

And the bottom line is, I mean, for me it was saying, “Ok, you have got to bring your belief system and your behavior together and that was called dedication.”

See I pretty much dedicated every area of my life to God except this area. Ok, I mean, honestly, I mean, I was sold out to God. I was fully 100 percent committed to God except for this area and it was a big except. It was a huge, huge issue in my life.

One of the reasons I feel like God has allowed me to have this platform is that honestly I couldn't care less about this stuff. I mean, I wasn't just neutral. I was not good. I mean, I... a guy like me, honestly. I was... you ask some of the people in my church for almost three decades. They will tell you. I would make fun of somebody like me today. I would mock that person. I mean if I was sitting in that auditorium and I heard a person like me got up and I would say, “Who let this jerk in the room?” I mean, we are at a men's conference where we are talking about eating. Good night. What kind of crazy deal have we got going on here? This is whacked out, man. I mean, I mean, you know, that was my mindset.

That is why, you know, I am never offended by anybody's reaction to me, never and there reason is whoever reacts like that, I mean, that was me. So it doesn't bother me. You can do whatever you want to me because I know exactly what you are like, because I was you. And so this is an area in my life where I was far from God, far from God.

And I just let myself go. I mean, I just said, “Ok, I am not worried about this. You know, I just do what I want to do.”

And so I had to come to the point where I said, “Ok, God, you know, I am going to dedicate this area to you. I am going to honor you with my body.”

Now one of the verses that helped me do that which is perhaps my favorite verse of all verses is Galatians 5:16 where it says this.

Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Now notice that verse talks about the lusts of the flesh. Now the lust of the flesh can be any and all sin. And we all struggle in different ways. You know, but for me the lust of the flesh which was so strong wasn't pornography, it wasn't alcohol, it wasn't tobacco. It

wasn't, you know, any of that type of stuff. It wasn't bitterness or anger or things like that. The lust of the flesh for me was I wanted to eat whatever I wanted to eat and I was never going to exercise again in my life. That was where my flesh was just totally out of control, just totally out of control.

And what I noticed was the Bible said if I would learn to walk in the Spirit I would not fulfill... ok, that word means fulfilling, give in to it. I would not give in to the lust of the flesh.

And so I said, "Ok, I am familiar with walking in the Spirit," but I never thought about walking in the Spirit when it came to eating and exercising. See, I was really mindful of the Holy Spirit. Let me just kind of share a little testimony with you. When I speak every Sunday, ok, I make up one of these study guides. This is my style. This is what I do, you know? This is kind of how I am wired. And it is a very... I mean, honestly, I have never seen a pastor put ... I have seen little study guides, but most of them aren't nearly this thorough, I mean, mine is detailed, laid out like this. I really think it is important so I put a lot of attention to it. And so I tell you that, because here is the deal. I try to take Friday off as much as I can as my sabbath. And so pretty much by Thursday night, because it has got to be copied, put in the program and all that stuff, I ... intellectually I can preach my sermon is the point I am trying to make here, ok? Ok? I could get up at any time from Thursday night on and to preach. Ok, I am ready.

But here is the deal, ok, we have three services, 8:15, 9:30 and 11. I get up at five o'clock on Sunday morning not to cram and get my sermon together, but to get me together. And here is my deal. I think about 1 Corinthians chapter two. I love it where Paul says when he preached he wanted to be a demonstration of the Holy Spirit and that the people would see God and not him and that is my part. God, use me today. God, fill me with your Spirit. God, anoint me. God, give me power to speak. Show me in my life what I need to do in these areas. And that has just kind of my routine. It has been my routine for many, many, many years. And then boom I am off to the church for that first 8:15 service.

Ok, now here is my deal, ok, 8:15, 9:30, 11. Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, now it is like 12:30. Things at the church have ended. It is time for Sunday lunch. Now make... just call me what you want to, but it never occurred to me the Holy Spirit had any interest in Sunday lunch. Practically speaking I was done with the Holy Spirit. It never occurred to me... see I... my flesh did pretty good at the church, pretty good, not all good, but most of the time, ok, most of the time it was good, ok? And my flesh was fine. The problem was my flesh wasn't having a problem with church. My flesh was having a problem over at KFC, you know, killing families consistently. I mean, that is where my problem was, ok? It was time for all you could eat. And literally it was time to do whatever you wanted to do. It was that time.

It never occurred to me that I actually needed the Holy Spirit more at Sunday lunch than Sunday church.

Now you might be more spiritual than me. But honestly it never crossed my mind that I needed the Holy Spirit when I sat down to eat. I never thought about it. And I had to learn to think about a menu in a restaurant as a spiritual choice. That is why when I go to the restaurant I pull out my phone.

Usually I know what I am going to get anyway, ok, but, see, I don't like to go in there just looking at the whole menu and getting all bent out of shape. But I pull out my iPhone and I have an app on there called fast food. It is a free app. It is like a cheese burger. And I will get my phone out and I will say, "Ok, let's see what they have got here, ok?" And this has... I don't know how many restaurants here maybe 75 restaurants, ok? And if it is a chain or whatever, I can look up and say, "Ok," and if I get that, you know, I know exactly what I got there. I know calories. I get all about the sodium. You know, in fact the other day I like Ruby Tuesday's so I like to eat salad and I like this salad and they have this chicken chili soup thing. And I would be... and I just assumed, you know, that is some good protein there. It is not that big a bowl or whatever. I never took the time to look it up.

So one day I said, "You know, I think I am going to look this up."

I found out that little thing there has as much sodium, almost, not quite, but almost as much sodium in that one little bowl of chicken chili whatever they call it, soup or whatever it is called as I need in a whole day, just that one little bowl. You know? I mean, I don't want to get high blood pressure again if I can help it, ok? So I don't need to be putting all that kind of junk in my body. And so I want to stay medication free as long as I can stay medication free. And I know I have got to surrender the fork to God if that is going to happen. I have got to be willing to surrender that fork to almighty God. And I might like that soup or whatever it is, but, you know, I just don't need to put that in my body. It is just that simple. I just don't need to put that in my body.

And the point was I had to learn that a trip to the grocery store is a spiritual thing. You know, when I was growing up I worked at Kroger's, a grocery chain. I worked there for many years, almost went into the management with Kroger as a career. And so I know a little bit about grocery shopping, grocery stores and all that stuff when we got married, so I told Debbie my wife. I said, "You know, one thing I will do is I will do most of the grocery shopping," and I have all these years. And I have learned that, you know, when those doors come open, I mean, I have got to walk in the Spirit as I walk around that grocery store. I have got to learn.

See, because here is what I have learned. I have learned that if food gets near me, it gets in me. Ok? So here is the deal. I have got to control what gets near me and the main, you know, I eat out every once in a while, but most of my meals are at home as evening meals. And I have had to learn, ok, if I am going to control what gets in me, I have to control what gets in that kitchen. And I have discovered, nothing gets in my kitchen unless I bring it in there. This is... I don't know if you remember the scope of this thin, ok?

So here is what I have learned. I have learned to place the deal with this stuff, the spiritual battle with obesity for me isn't in the kitchen. I mean, honestly, ok, here is the... if it gets in the kitchen one day it is getting in me. I mean, I can put those Oreos up there in the shelf and just say, "I am going to put those away up there," you know, whatever. And I can pray. You know, "Lord, you know those Oreos are up there and, Lord, I know they are up there and, God, I know you don't want me to eat that whole bag of Oreos today, Lord. I just..."

At some point you are going to say, "Forget it." You know? Grab the Oreos and watch the Redskins game and knock the whole bag out or whatever, you know? I mean, why? Because they got near you. So I have had to learn that here is how it goes, ok? I thought if I get in the store and I put it in my grocery cart and I check out and I put it in my car, then I bring it in my kitchen, it eventually gets in my stomach.

So I had to back that thing up and say, "Ok, this is spiritual grounds here, the grocery store and I am going to make spiritual ... and I am making spiritual choices in this grocery store."

And I have had to control that. Now sometimes we get urges, don't we, where we will really get in the car and go to the grocery store and buy, but most of us are too lazy for that. Let's be real. Ok? Most of us say, "Forget about it. I mean, I want the bag of Oreos, but they are not here at the house and I am just too tired of messing with it, ok?" And we get past the craving or whatever.

But every once in a while all of us know what it is like to get in the car and go get the... you know, we all do that deal sometimes, too. You know what that is like.

Does this make any sense to you? Have you ever heard anybody talk like this? I haven't, ok? You know, I had to learn to dedicate this area of my life to God.

You say, "Why is this the most important key?"

I was on a radio show in Chicago early one morning this week and it is a Moody station and they have 1000 people listening, a station right out of Moody which is where Moody radio is, Chicago. And it covers like a bunches of states. And they said to me, "What is the most important key?"

I know the answer. It is this one. Why? Because listen. We know what to do. Don't we? Most of you could get up here and you could give a whole lecture on nutrition, right? Because why? You live in America. You know what is right and what is wrong and you know what to do and what not to do. If I told you today, man, you are 71 percent water, ok, and you have got to drink some water to be healthy, most of you wouldn't leave here saying... you wouldn't go out and if you are married pick up your phone and call you wife and say, "Honey, honey, you ought to hear what I heard today. I heard that you are supposed to drink water to be healthy. This was one of those life changing days of my

life. I mean this has just been an incredible experience. Thank you for letting me go over to [?] today. I learned about water and, honey, you are just...”

No. You know you are supposed to drink water, ok? But you say, “I don’t like water. I don’t like it.”

Ok. I couldn’t care less whether you like it or not, ok? You have got to have this stuff to live. You know, the doctor told me if I drop you from a 10 story building, you... ok? Thank you, Michael. I appreciate you mocking that thing ok? I haven’t opened that up. I mean, if I drop you from a 10 story building, he says, you are going to splatter when you hit the cement pavement, splatter because you are mainly water. You are mainly water. So you have got to have water to be healthy. So it doesn’t matter whether you like it or not. It is irrelevant. Are you going to dedicate yourself to God? You know? Are you going to give God that area of your life or not? I mean, you know, just go ahead and just dehydrate yourself. You know, just go ahead. You know, you act like your brain doesn’t need water to function. You will be acting like that before long or whatever. I mean, drag your old brain out or whatever. Put a bunch of lotion all over your body and the lotion goes in your pores, goes in your bloodstream and all floating around your body. Maybe you ought to just drink some more water, ok?

Boy, we are having a good time, aren’t we? Ok.

Listen. If we all just agree to this one, we can walk out and leave. We are done, because we know what to do. We know we are supposed to exercise. We know we are supposed to eat right. We are just not doing it.

See, I had to learn that my body was not for the gratification of self. Philippians 3:19 is a verse that really convicted me. And it talked about a group of people in that first line it says they are described as whose god is their belly. That was a perfect description of me. I was an idolater. My belly was my god. I knew this was sin in my life. I knew this was wrong and I wasn’t willing to change. I wasn’t willing to repent. I wasn’t willing to do anything about it. That is nothing short of idolatry, nothing short of idolatry.

And I had to learn that my body wasn’t for the gratification of myself, but my body was for the glorification of God. I was created to glorify God. And Paul, like he said, he wanted to magnify Christ in his body. And he said, “For me to live is Christ, to die is gain.” Notice the connection between the magnify Christ in my body and for me to live is Christ and die is gain. You know, I never told till I got into this and really started thinking about it made the connection here. You know, he is magnifying Christ in his body and the next verse says he wants to live like Christ. Do you remember what Christ was like in his body? Forty miles in one day.

So, guys, the first thing is dedication. Just, you know, put yourself on the altar. Give you body to God. Say, “I am going to honor God with my body.”

Second key was inspiration. Motivating yourself for change. Now this is so important because it is not easy to change. Remember I said earlier we are creatures of habit. We have trained our taste buds. The reason we crave what we crave... see, here is what you have got to realize. Your taste buds can crave lots of things.

Do you know what John the Baptist ate? The Bible says in John chapter one he ate locusts and wild honey. Now how many of you eat locusts. Raise your hand? Google it. People in the world do eat locusts. Literally they do. Ok? They do. I don't eat locusts. I don't ever think about eating locusts. There is no locusts in my kitchen, ok? How could John the Baptist eat locusts when it sounds gross to me? How could people in the world eat locusts when it sounds terrible to me? Taste buds. We start craving things. We start wanting things.

Your taste buds are not stuck for life.

[off mic voice]

Exactly, amen. Amen for ice cream. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, we are going to... I am going to... I meant to stop after each key. But let me go and keep number one. When we go half way then we... I... I like Q&A a lot so just that we have time for questions.

But the point was, I mean, I am thinking, ok, this is going to be hard. You know, I have got some deeply seeded bad habits in my life, you know. I knew how out of shape I was. When I went to the gym the first time and jumped up on the treadmill, it wasn't any surprise to me I could only do five minutes. It didn't surprise me at all. I think I was really happy I could do five minute. I mean it didn't shock me like, oh man, you are really in bad shape, you fat thing. No, I knew. I mean... and I am thinking... you know, I am thinking of the gym. Everybody is looking at me like this crazy... but I didn't care. Ok? I didn't care. And as soon as I go to the gym now I have learned nobody looks at you. They just look at themselves. So it doesn't matter anyway, ok? They are looking in the mirror and all that stuff.

And the point was, I said, ok, I have got to figure out what is going to motivate me, because it is not going to be easy to make this change. And what I came across that helped me was John 10:10 and this is my motivation. It says, "A thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly."

Now look at this verse, ok? What is Jesus? Jesus is all about life, isn't he? He is pro life. And he has come to give me life. And that is what motivates me. I want to experience the fullness of life. Like I said earlier in my testimony, you know, I am looking forward to heaven. I am just not in a hurry to get there. You know, I want to do something with my dash in the middle. I want to make a difference with my life. And, guys, I think as men we can connect with this whole idea of legacy, legacy.

You see, I think about my grandfather. Let me tell you about my grandfather. His name was Homer Reynolds. Man, I have heard some great things about my grandfather, my dad's dad. I have heard he was a wonderful Christian. I have heard he was just a fantastic man and just a really super individual. But do you know what? He died when I was like three and, you know, I never had a relationship with him that I was aware of. I mean, I was three years old when he passed. But my grandfather had an issue in his life where he wasn't honoring God and it was called tobacco. He was actually a tobacco farmer down in southern Virginia. And he died, you know, of a heart attack, you know. And, of course, back then, I mean, you know, medical things weren't what they are today, but in my way of thinking there is no doubt in my mind those cigarettes—he was pretty much a chain smoker—those cigarettes contributed to his death.

Then I think about what if Homer Reynolds would have decided—because he was a Christian man—you know he went to a great church. What if Homer Reynolds would have decided to not smoke? Maybe he could have lived longer. I don't know. Maybe not. I don't know. I mean, but, you know, maybe he would have been around for me. Maybe I could have had some memories of my grandfather. Maybe I should... could have some thoughts about him. Maybe I could understand why people say so many nice things about him.

But, no, he decided, as far as I am concerned, to be selfish and just puff on those cancer sticks and to dig his grave with a knife and a fork, well, not with a knife and a fork, dig his grave with cigarettes and he robbed me of a relationship. And as far as I am concerned he robbed himself of having a relationship with his grandson. Ok?

Now I think about that with my kids. You know, I mean, I want to be here of them. I have got two grand dogs right now, but I don't have any grandchildren, you know, but, you know, but they are talking about percolating one there, my one daughter that is married and, you know, I look forward to that. And honestly I have a dream of not only influencing my grandchildren, but I want to actually influence my great grandchildren. So at 53, just do the math. You are talking about a lot there. But that is my dream. And when I... if I have great grandchildren I, honestly, I don't want to be, you know, drooling all over myself over the corner somewhere. I want to be able to play with them and be with them and do life with them. I mean, why not dream that way? I will get to heaven one day. Maybe today. I don't know. God might take me out of here today. But, you know, why I have a dream like that. Why not want that? And why not desire that? I want to live. I just want to live. I want to be here.

And I know if I am going to be here, if I am going to have a great fourth quarter and I don't... and with all those numbers I just gave out, I am probably just at half time. But anyway, not even half time yet. But the point is, I mean, I know I have got to take care of my health. I have got to take care of my body.

See, the other side of that is the thief, that is Satan, comes to steal, to kill and to destroy. So you have got competing agendas going on here. Jesus has an agenda for you and that

is life. Satan, the thief has an agenda and that is called steal from you, kill you and destroy you.

Now here is the deal. He will use, now listen to me, he will use whatever will work to accomplish that in your life. See, if he can get us hooked on porn and a number of us in this room probably are struggling with porn. You know, he will use porn. You know? If he can get you hooked on alcohol, if he can get you hooked on being bitter, you know, just filled with bitterness. He will use whatever will work. He didn't need to get me hooked on those things. I was fully hooked with food. I was fully hooked with being slothful, being lazy. You know, he didn't need all of that. He was stealing from me, killing me and destroying me without anything else needed.

That is why people a lot of times, you know, the culture of the church is we joke about it and, you know, our church... people wonder about our church. I mean, you will go on... we still have donuts around and all that stuff. I mean, you know, we are not... I am not a food inspector or whatever. I am not going around and... the church is not buying them, but they are around.

But, anyway, moving forward here. But the point is, I mean, what is the point? I am not even sure what my point is on that?

But, anyway, moving forward here the point is I mean he is going to use whatever will work. So I know what I was saying. Ok. So the point is that we... most people look at this and they say, "What is the big deal? We just... come on, man, just calm down. You know, you are just way out of limits here. You are just totally out of control."

But when you understand the spiritual dimension of what I just told you, you understand it is a big deal.

See those people believe somebody hooked on cocaine that is a big deal. They are hooked on coke. A person who is a drunkard, they are hooked on alcohol. That is serious stuff. You ought to, you know, eat too much or whatever, that is really not a big deal. You know, we are Christians. It is ok. You know, we are not going to talk about it. You don't talk about it, you know. Let's just do what we want to do.

Well, we understand what the enemy is doing to us, you know. I mean, there is not a... hardly any period of time that goes by in my life that people my age I went to school with and stuff don't die. I just had a pastor friend of mine a few months ago pass away and I went to him practically in tears telling him, "I can help you. Please, let me help you."

He laughed at me. He scoffed me. Again, it didn't offend me, because that is what I was like. He is dead now. Go to his Facebook. His birthday just came up. You know, [?] oh we still miss you. We still... you were a great pastor. He is dead. He dug his grave with a knife and a fork and a spoon. He is dead. He is gone. He is out of here. A great pastor, a great husband, a great dad gone. Why?

Satan did what he does. I mean, this is serious. And we have got to be inspired. What are some things that can motivate us? Number one is the spiritual benefit. This should motivate every one of us if as Christians. You will glorify God. I mean, 1 Corinthians chapter 6:19-20 is probably the most well known verse. Maybe you know it. Maybe you don't. It just talks about our bodies are the temple of God, the Holy Spirit. And then we are to, you know, honor him. We are to glorify him with our bodies.

And, you know, when you are trying to have a Bod4God and live a healthy life, you get to enjoy that benefit that you know you are glorifying God.

Page three. What are some other things? The physical benefit. You will maximize your body. That is what I am all about, ok? It is just getting the most I can out of my body.

Psalm 139 David says that we are wonderfully made. I like that statement, wonderfully made. And our bodies are miracles, just absolutely miraculous. I mean, just think about your body. It is just... I mean, who could not believe that there is a Creator. It is just stuns me that anybody could look at the human body and think anything but somebody other than, you know, evolution created this body. It is just amazing, our human bodies.

And we are wonderfully made. So what does maximizing your body look like? Well, number one, you will feel better. Now this is a big one here, ok? Let me talk to you a little bit about it.

Most of you that over eat are emotional eaters, even men, ok? I say it is almost equal, men and women. I have talked with hundreds and hundreds of people. Ok? Maybe thousands. And emotional eating is a big deal.

Now when it comes to this area of my life, this is where I am the most inadequate, because I have never been, to my knowledge, people try to psychoanalyze me and tell me it is not true and they are wrong, ok? I never ate for emotions to my knowledge. I was a pure glutton, ok? Three cheeseburgers with lot's of Duke's mayonnaise and lots of fries and a big bowl of ice cream. It just tasted good. I mean it wasn't real complicated. I mean one cheese burger tasted good. Two tasted better. Three tasted even better. Now I think I was with one of our staff guys the other day. He says we went to a conference together and I stuffed up and I ordered, there was there of us, ok? You know, and I was going to the church was going to be paying because we were at a conference and I stepped up and I ordered three cheeseburgers. He though I was ordering for the whole group. He says he will never forget. He was stunned when I said, "Ok, guys, what do you want?"

That is a true story. I said, "Well, I believe you. I am glad you finally worked up the courage to bring that to my attention."

But anyway, I mean, that was my life. You know, that was just, I mean, you know, people say to me, though, man, you know, it is my friend, it is my companion. You know,

I had one lady say to me it is my lover. I said, "Baby, step back two feet." [?] Ok? It is my lover, she said, it is my lover.

People, we have gone through a lot in life, most of us. Life hurts. And people turn to food a not of times to heal the pain, you know? And there is an emotional attachment to food. There is a comfort in it.

So I honestly, I don't know much about that stuff, but here is what I know. I know that I am not carrying around 480 sticks of butter. Now I still... I need to get rid of some more butter, ok, but I am not carrying around 480 sticks today. That is 120 pounds. You think I feel better? Yep, I feel better. But the difference is I feel better all the time. And if you are an emotional eater and probably 90 percent of you are, I mean, you have got to make a choice. Do you want to feel better for a half an hour, an hour or two hours? You know, then you have got to go back and get your next fix. Or would you like to feel better all the time? It is going to be hard to make the transition, but if you can just have that to motivate you and say, "You know what? I want to feel better all the time."

And then you will look better. And I say look better not just for vanity's sake, but testimony sake. Because most of us, let's face it, no matter what we do we still look ugly when we look in the mirror, ok? So I mean, you know, so the older you get, the more ugly you look, ok? But the point is, you know, I mean, I am never going to be this, you know, whatever, ok, in the mirror. And just, you know, so I do want to look as good as I can, but the point is I am also thinking about my testimony. See, when I say be like Jesus I want to make sure that somewhere... now I can't walk 40 miles in one day, so I am probably not like Jesus when I should be, but the point is I want to have a testimony of being a person that is honoring God with my mind. So that is a good reason I want to look about it.

Then more than likely you will live longer. And, you know, maybe you won't, maybe you will. But statistics tell us the better we take care of our health, the longer we live. So there is D and there is I. Ok? We have about 14, 13 minutes left. Would anybody like to interject a couple of questions here? Anybody got a question? Our D or I or anything else? Yes, sir.

[off mic voice]

Right.

[off mic voice]

Right.

[off mic voice]

So the question is: Basically as far as eating habits go, you know, or just some people just like eat a lot at one time and then some people eat...

[off mic voice]

Yeah, well, most... I eat six times a day. Most people who lose a lot of weight eat regularly, ok? But it is all about, you know, your stomach is about the size of your fist so why are you eating the size of your head, ok? You have got to get that in your mind.

So the point is that who wants to be hungry? That is no fun, ok? So it is just better to have portion control. And I still love... I struggle with a heavy evening meal because that has just been my lifestyle for so long and it is still the biggest meal, but it is not like anything close to what it used to be. So it is... you have got to start with breaking the fast. Breakfast is about breaking the fast. Most people that struggle with weight will choose to not eat breakfast thinking that is helping them when it is hurting them big time. Your body has been... while you have been sleeping your body has been working all night long. It has been preparing things. It has been fixing things. It has been correcting things. It has been healing your body. You wake up and you say, "Forget you, you know? I have got to get skinny. So I hate that...that, you know, that big steak last night, that big bowl of ice cream. So I think I am just going to, you know, eat at lunch time and lose some of the weight."

You know, your body is going, "Whoa, baby. Man, I haven't been eating for like six hours, eight hours, 10 hours. I am not letting lose to this fat. I might not get anything later on. Ok, so I have got to hold on to this fat."

It doesn't work. Breakfast is about breaking the fast. It should be... I don't practice this, but the truth is it should be the biggest meal of our day, you know?

And the point is, you know, we have to realize the importance of that in getting the day started in a good way. And if you can combine like some carbs and some protein together, that will get you through the morning in a really good way. So you just need to kind of keep that before you. But don't think about starvation. That doesn't work, ok? That doesn't work.

Yes, sir.

[off mic voice]

Yeah.

[off mic voice]

Yeah.

[off mic voice]

Sure.

[off mic voice]

Absolutely.

[off mic voice]

Yeah.

[off mic voice]

Yeah.

[off mic voice]

Oh, yeah, definitely.

[off mic voice]

Well...

[off mic voice]

Sure, of course.

[off mic voice]

Absolutely.

[off mic voice]

Absolutely. Yeah, ok, so a great question and that is, you know, we are Christians. We believe in family values that, you know, food is a big part of that and that, you know, a lot of times our wives will fix us a good meal and we don't want to disappoint them so how do we handle all of that, ok?

A couple of things. One is my... you know, my mother was that in my life, ok? I mean, I... I... I mean I am the... my big thing as a husband is the food section, ok? I buy the food. I cook most of the meals. I clean up most of the meals. Other than that I am... I get the award for the worst husband in the room, ok? Literally, I mean, my... you know, I am 50. I won't go into all that.

Anyway, moving forward, ok? I am good in the food area, you know? And that is... I nailed that down, you know, and so, you know, I cook a lot of stuff for them. But my mother, you know, good typical southern mom, ok, and it was hard, you know, when I started making these changes and what I have just started to telling her was it wasn't that

she necessarily wanted to feed me that, it is that she thought I wanted that. And when my want to changed and I started telling her I didn't say, "Mom, don't cook me anything." I said, "Mom, I really have started liking this. Would you mind learning how to cook that or whatever?"

And she started doing that and she ... it still brought the joy to her life. You know, I mean, she still enjoyed it the most. And then my mother now has lost a lot of weight herself and they have a losing it program down at the ... their church, Congersville Baptist Church in Lynchburg. And so I think we ought to think about that. You know, but, I mean, but, ultimately we have got to realize that, you know, we need to work our people skills, ok, but a big area for me is I am still old fashioned pastor. I actually make home visits. I go in people's homes. I love it. I have got to do it constantly. You know, you learn so much about a person when you go to their house that you don't learn otherwise. So I am still at least one night a week I am in somebody's house. So it used to be like when I pastored, I could get up. I used to like the big Hershey bars with the almost, not like a Hershey like that. I am talking about like the 99 cent ones. And I could get up in my church. This is true. They say, "Man I love those things. You know, you want to get me something or whatever, I love them." I would... I could do that and I would end up with 25, 30, 40 of those suckers within two days, ok? It was fantastic.

Now back when they had the Y2K I got up and talked about I read this article about spam, that spam was flying off the shelf. All the computers were going to go crazy and when the year 2000 came. I got up and I made jokes about spam giving me worms and I grew up eating spam and prayed to God I would never have to put it in my body again and then they started buying me cases of spam, you know, as a joke.

But, anyway, that is kind of the life of a pastor. But the point was, I was used to going in and people say, "Oh, the pastor is coming." Most people would never had a pastor in their house. Most of us never had, particularly in this area most people are from a Catholic background. They never had a priest come to their house. And, oh, boy, it is a big deal. Ok?

So, I mean, so they typically will try to have some cake or pie or whatever and, you know, I... at first I had to get adjusted to... you know, I even offended some people and said, "Hey, you know, I am sorry. I just... I am just... you know, I am just ... I am making a change here, you know?"

And I had to retrain people. And now I will come they will have fruit there and I like these cliff bars. Now I have cliff bars laying on the table. And it is amazing. You know, just... I think we have to work with people, ok, and communicate with people and things like that.

So that would be my answer to that and realize, you know, in Daniel chapter one when the king asked him to eat the food that was offered to idols didn't say, "I won't eat food." He said, "Hey, let's do a test. For 10 days I am going to drink water and eat this vegetable

mix and let's see how it turns out, ok?" It wasn't he said, "No, no, no." He said, "Can we have this instead?" And that worked for him.

Ok, one more question and we will wrap it up. Anybody else got a question, comment, snide remark? Yes, sir.

[off mic voice]

I ... pretty much my life is high protein, low carbs. So I am definitely a meat eater. So, but... but... it is... I think it is great and I know a lot of [?] a lot of them. The guy I was talking to about the one I ordered three cheeseburgers and [?] dairy. It is fine. I just... you know, the... the [?] fast going around right now that people are doing that. And that is fine for a spiritual perspective, but if you are going to do this a life time. It is all about the lifestyle. So I can't say anything bad about it. And the truth is probably it is the best thing, you know, probably don't have guts enough to do it. So, you know, ok.

All right, let's go ahead and hit E and we will wrap it up. E is for eat an exercise, managing your habits. And here is the deal. The secret to weight loss... You say, "What is the secret?" I mean, I saw a magazine I picked up this week, checking out the grocery store. It says the diet plan you have prayed for has finally arrived, the diet plan you have prayed for has finally come about.

What are they saying to us? There is a secret out here, ok? We have just got to find out the secret and we order all this junk that is supposedly the secret and we spend billions of dollars on the secret, disappointed yet once again. What is the secret? Well, it is eat and exercise. It is advantaging our habits. And the secret is very simple. We have to eat less and we have to exercise more.

Now I personally have held in my hands... I will put myself up against anybody. When I say anybody I mean anybody. People all the time are trying to ... I get stuff just shows up in my life. Boxes, you know, pastor, you know, have you heard about our secret? You know, we want you to endorse this secret. We want you to tell everybody about the secret, you know, that to lose weight they have got to have this powder. They have got to have this pill, they have got to have this potion. They have got to have this. And I am all ... I take supplements and stuff. I am all for that as part of a health program, ok, but when it comes to losing weight, here is the deal.

Steve Reynolds has held in his hand many, many of these boxes and one day I spent almost a whole day going from store to store just going and looking for these boxes. And you look at them. It says, [?] I call it the diarrhea diet. You take this pill and you will poop yourself skinny, ok? Just you have got to have the [?] diet or whatever, ok? I have held up these boxes, ok, and here is what I have done. I turn it over to the back and on the back, do you know what it says? It says, "Why are you taking a pill," ok, this pill here, ok, you probably are going to need to eat less and you ought to also start an exercise program.

And do you know what I say to them? That is right. I like the back of your box better than the front of your box, ok? In fact, I don't need your box, ok? Because a calorie is a calorie and I know I am not a medical doctor and I know there is, you know, one two percent out there that maybe have some deal going on with their body and metabolism or something. I don't know. I don't have all that figured out, ok? But I can tell you most of us here if we will just quit eating so stinking much and start moving our bodies we are going to lose some weight. That is the secret which is not such a secret. I mean a calorie is a calorie. It is an amount of energy, ok? You burn it, you lose. If you don't burn, you gain. It is not rocket science.

So you have got to eat less. Now eating less also means eat for your health, not your happiness. So you have got to get over whether something makes you happy or not.

Well, I don't like broccoli. I just don't like it.

Well, who could care less what you like or not? Ok, you see? I mean, listen. I mean, do you put, you know, diet Coke is a lot cheaper. You can get it 99 cents for a two liter bottle of diet Coke and put it in your car. That is cheaper than gasoline. You put diet Coke in your car? No. You put gasoline in your car. Why? Because you know your car works better and works only with gasoline. So you know what your body needs, but you are not fueling it properly. You love your car more than you love your body. You live your stinking car more than you love your body, because you know what your body needs. And you have got to get over whether it makes you happy or not. You know, food is for fuel. It is to fuel your body. That is the purpose of it. And if you start eating more of the good stuff, you will start wanting the good stuff. You will put an apple or a Hershey's bar in front of me today I am going to want and choose the apple. I am not even...

You say, "You really want that Hershey bar, didn't you?"

No, I didn't. I really didn't. If you put me on a deserted island all by myself and you are never going to find out what the anti fat pastor eats, ok, and I am out there all alone. I promise you I am going to pick up the apple, because that is literally what I want.

Has it always been that way? Nope. Ok? I has not. You know, but I have learned that I have got to eat for my health and not just my happiness and then exercise more. God made you to be physically active. And this is where most of us, because we live such busy lives, struggle the most, ok? You know, it is harder. Exercise is harder. Ok, you have got time to eat. You already have time to eat, right? I mean, so you know, you start to say, "Ok, I need some time to exercise." That is hard, particularly in northern Virginian, Washington metro area, ok? We have energy need, right? I mean, you know, you hear people say, "I am so tired. I think I am going to eat and go to bed."

Do you ever? You hardly ever hear people say, "I am so tired. I think I am going to just go to bed."

No they say, somehow or another you get enough energy to eat. I mean, you just somehow push it through. Whatever, ok? You know, you somehow make room for it, you know.

But when you talk about exercise you are already so tired, you know. And where am I going to get energy for that?

See, it is a bigger change. Budget. You all have got money for food. But sometimes you think you have to spend some money on the other things.

Speaking of food, it is time for lunch, right?

But T is for team. Ok? Building your circle of support. You have got to have a circle of support. We have a ministry in our church called losing to live. It is in lots and lots of places now. I can help you. We can help you start a group in your church. Or if you ... we meet on Sunday nights at Capitol Baptist Church. We are just right off the beltway there at Gallow's Road. And we would love to have you go through a competition with us or even more so we would love for you to take it to your church and get it started, you know, and we will help you. It is an awesome ministry. And God can do some great things through it.

But you need a team. See, every Sunday night I sit down with a team. My team this time is called pumped up pomegranates. And I sit down with them every Sunday night. They are my team. They are my support. You know, they help me. And so you have to understand the value of your team, understand the value of your team. Team work produces three things: mutual success. It says two are better than one. They have a good reward for their labor. Mutual support. It says if you fall you have somebody to lift you up and we all fall. There is mutual strength. It says two is great, but a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

And then participate in losing the weight loss competition. Participate. And so our motto is don't try to lose weight alone. Join a team of losers.

Deuteronomy 30:19, we will close with this, says, "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore," God says, "choose life." And I love this part, "That both you and..." and I love this next part. This is what legacy is all about, guys. "Both you and your descendants or your family may live."

And so our choices have impact not just on us, but our families and I would... oh, I wish I could rewind the clock. I wish I could rewind the clock and raise our children differently. I blew it as a dad. And any of you guys that have got younger children, I just... I beg you. I just plead with you, you know, not to do what I did. Train them according to the Word of God and show them a dad that is honoring God with his body and not some horrible

example like I was, ok? Thank God, God is doing a work in our family in that area these days, but I should have done better.