

**WEIGHT!**

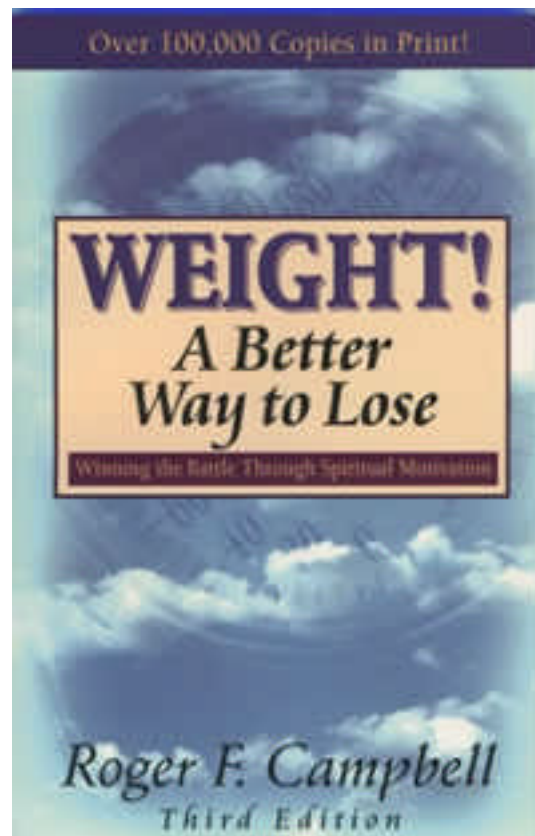
**A Better**

**Way to Lose**

**Winning the Battle Through Spiritual Motivation**

**Roger F. Campbell**

**Third Edition**



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## *Does God Really Care?*

If you're down today because your weight is up, you are not alone. Unfortunately, the mood swings of many overweight people are controlled by the bathroom scales.

Millions of hurting people in this weight-conscious world are pursuing some kind of diet or exercise plan, fighting the battle of the bulge. This passion to scale down has not gone unnoticed. The cry for success in weight control has given birth to a publishing bonanza and a weight-loss business boom.

Articles about weight loss are regular fare in most major magazines, and uncounted books have been written on the subject, many of them becoming bestsellers. Weight loss and exercise classes are multiplying, as are reducing resorts. And the public appetite for this kind of information and help seems insatiable.

Perhaps you've tried some of these programs in an effort to solve your weight problem. You may have even enjoyed temporary success. Then, because you did not make a permanent lifestyle change, those unwanted pounds returned, causing you to be more discouraged than ever.

## **Does the Bible Have the Answer?**

Here you are opening a book about achieving weight control through applying principles of living found in the Bible. And this raises an important question: Does God really care about your weight problem?

Some think not.

While being interviewed on a call in radio talk show, I was scolded soundly by a listener who called to complain about my biblical approach to weight control. She accused me of using valuable time and effort to teach biblical concepts on a subject in which God has no interest.

At one time, I would have agreed with this angry caller. I had been in the ministry for nearly twenty years before realizing that a sizeable segment of my congregation was struggling with a serious problem that I had thought to be unrelated to biblical truth. I knew that alcoholics could be made sober; drug addicts could be delivered; those tempted to immorality could gain strength to overcome their temptations. But it never occurred to me that God might be concerned about people being overweight.

Now I know that I was wrong.

God cares about all our needs.

Anything that troubles us concerns our Lord, including matters of health and appearance. His love provides this kind of all-encompassing interest in our deepest and most personal needs...because that's what love is all about.

## **The Circle of God's Love**

We become defeated in any effort when despair leads us to conclude that some areas of life lie outside the circle of God's love. This kind of thinking compartmentalizes God and limits expectation of His care.

What a mistake!

God's love extends to every part of life and even employs each experience we face to prove His goodness to us: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His Purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

When it became clear to me that God wanted to meet overweight people in their need, I began a study of Bible texts that seemed to offer hope to those longing to lose weight. Soon I had enough evidence to present my case to a class, and from that small beginning grew a book entitled *Weight! A Better Way to Lose* and a cassette series that have made their way around the world, helping many achieve their goals in weight control.

An atheist in France surprised his overweight wife by saying, "If your God can enable you to lose eighty pounds, I will go to church with you."

Her pastor wrote for my book and cassettes on weight control, and his last letter assured me that the atheist will soon have to start attending church with his wife or eat his words.

But was this doubting husband's challenge a valid expectation of his wife's Christianity?

Absolutely.

Why shouldn't the world expect our faith to work wherever it is needed?

If you have been taking your weight lightly, it is time to get serious about your problem and realize that God cares about this very personal part of your life.

Test this truth by thinking about your feelings toward those you love.

Do you care when they hurt?

Of course you do...even if you might sometimes prefer to shut their problems out of your mind. When you love people, you care about their difficulties. Indifference and love are incompatible.

And God loves us: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins”(1 John 4:10).

The death of Christ on the cross ought to settle any insecurity we might have about God’s love: “But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”(Rom. 5:8).

We may be sure then that our Lord cares about all of our hurts and understands them. If you are distressed about being overweight, you can be certain that God wants to meet you in this very sensitive area of your life and there demonstrate His love.

A Christian weight control class member wrote to me saying the group had lost a total of 1,000 pounds, using my book and tapes as study guides. Later, another card came saying the group had lost 2,000 pounds. Finally, a third message arrived boosting the total class losses to 4,000 pounds. Needless to say, I was pleased to accept an invitation to speak at one of the meetings of this thriving class.

When I entered the church basement room where the class held its meetings, I found it decorated with tokens of their successes. Photographs of members were posted, which showed them before and after their discovery that a biblical lifestyle could make a difference in conquering weight problems.

Clothing displays on the walls demonstrated the changes in size of successful class members. The general atmosphere of the class was positive and enthusiastic. But most moving to me was the personal story of a woman whose search for a way to lose weight had ended in one disappointment after another until she learned that God cares about all of her needs and desires, even her longing to be thin and trim. She had found her new look in the Old Book and this changed her life. If you are troubled about being overweight, that same discovery can make it possible for you to

lose those unwanted pounds and become the person you want to be.

## **God's Love Is Shown in His Creation**

I begin each day by quoting the following Bible verses:

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? (Matt. 6:26)

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? (Matt. 6:28-30)

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matt. 6:33).

Quoting these faith-building verses reminds me that God's love is revealed in all of His creation and that nothing in my life escapes His view. The smallest problem I face is important to him.

If God cares about the appearance of lilies that are seen for a few weeks and then wither and die, my appearance must be important to Him.

If I mean more to my Heavenly Father than fowl or flowers, He must care about my success in achieving sensible weight control, an issue that can affect me both physically and emotionally, possibly either shortening or lengthening my life.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company issued this stern warning to those who have thought being overweight doesn't

really matter: *“For every inch your waist measurement exceeds your chest measurement, subtract two years from your life.”*

**SUBTRACT TWO YEARS FROM YOUR LIFE!**

That’s a loss you can do without.

A missionary who was overweight received a letter, from one of her superiors in the mission, that quickly changed her lifestyle and appearance. The letter simply expressed regret that the maximum missionary would have such a brief time to serve her Lord on the mission field since her life would be shortened by her excess weight.

The dangers of obesity are well-known and will be emphasized later. For now, just remember that being overweight makes you a more likely candidate for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, strokes, gallbladder problems, complications during childbirth, and even cancer.

## **Our Bodies Created as His Temple**

God’s love for us is revealed in the special care He took in creating our bodies. Everything in the universe, except the human body, was simply spoken into existence: “And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after its kind’: and it was so” (Gen 1:24).

Not so the body of man. Here our Lord’s creative method was modified to show His love and care:

And God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” (Gen. 1:26).



And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul ( Gen. 2:7).

The Psalmist David also acknowledged the miracle of creation revealed in our bodies and wrote: “I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps. 139:14).

When Christ came to earth to bring us salvation, He chose the human body as His vehicle of redemption. He was “made in the likeness of men”(Phil. 2:7). He referred to His body as His *temple* and said the resurrection of His body would be the proof of His deity (John 2:18-22).

Christ was resurrected bodily from the grave, just as we shall be at His return. This coming resurrection reveals divine regard for our bodies.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they are Christ's at His coming (1 Cor. 15:20-23).

When that day arrives, our bodies will be perfect without the need of diets or doctors.

Till then, calories count.

Most encouraging to the Christian should be the fact that his/her body is the temple of God. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit actually lives within every believer. Jesus promised:

And I Will pray the Father, and He shall give you a another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world Cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you (John 14:16-17).

Paul confirmed the fulfilling of our Lord's promise by writing: "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"(1 Cor. 6:19-20).

Think of it! Your body is the house of God.

A group of teens broke into a church building in a Michigan city and vandalized it. They poured paint over the organ and pulpit and generally desecrated this house of worship.

The community was outraged, demanding justice.

But many Christians regularly mistreat their bodies, forgetting that each one is God's sanctuary.

Pastor Knute Larson of "The Chapel" in Akron, Ohio brought this important teaching home to his congregation through the following pastoral note in the church bulletin.

Thank you for bringing the sanctuary...into the church building today. If you are a Christian, that Is exactly what has happened.

We have brought our sanctuaries, God's dwelling places, into the building set aside for the church to meet.

So now you have a divine dimension to a disciplined lifestyle. Since your body is the Lord's temple, it should be kept in the best possible condition at all times.

Some Christians miss this truth. They seem to think it carnal to be concerned about personal appearance. Weight control is something relegated to "the flesh." They leave the impression that their goals are higher.

These same people will work long and give sacrificially to make the local church building attractive. After all, it is the Lord's

house. Yet, nowhere in the New Testament is this title given to a meeting place for the church. Instead, your *body* is called the temple of God.

The principal reason for not conquering your weight problem may be a mistaken separation of the physical and spiritual. To you, spiritual dedication has to do with singing in the choir, going to church services, praying, reading your Bible, and witnessing to your neighbors about their need of receiving Christ as Savior.

While these acts of service and worship are certainly important ingredients of the Christian life, they do not rule out taking proper care of your body. If your health fails, your opportunity for sacred service will be severely limited.

Besides, to the Christian, everything is to be sacred:

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:17-18).

Commitment to Christ calls for a complete surrender of all--including our bodies: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).

Since your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, it is logical to conclude that His power is available for the purpose of keeping it in a condition that is pleasing to Him. It is His property.

You can claim God's power in your effort to take proper care of His temple. Recognizing this, a number of Christian weight control classes have included the word *temple* in their class name.

Many who have started giving attention to keeping their temples trim have been surprised to find that a new appreciation

for God's temple has brought many other positive changes in their lives. This is what happened to Judy Kurnik.

### **Judy Kurnik's Surprise**

Judy had attended Bible college, intending to enter Christian service, but her future did not unfold as she had planned. Frustrated and depressed, she finally sought help from her pastor. He saw her overweight condition as a Key to her problem and gave her my book, *Weight! A Better Way to Lose*. When good things began to happen in Judy's life as a result of facing up to her need of a new lifestyle that would enable her to achieve weight control, she sent me the following letter:

*I cannot begin to thank you enough for the book **Weight! A Better Way to Lose**. The impact that it has had upon my life has been tremendous! I was in counseling with my pastor ( in a seemingly futile attempt to establish a Christian life after 18 years of running from God) when the Lord laid it on his heart to give me your book. The poor man must have done so with much fear since my temper and depression were my greatest problems!*

*I took the book home, totally humiliated that anyone would think that weight was the basis of my spiritual problems. After reading a few pages I realized that the weight was my way of punishing myself for having turned my back on full-time Christian service.*

*The Lord spoke to me on every page of that book! Many "talks" followed with the pastor and with each God revealed new areas of my life to deal with. Each area was covered in your book, and over the months it has been a constant source of help to me. I have gone from being a totally depressed person with a terrible marriage to a*

*happy, submissive Christian woman who adores her husband and children and finds it increasingly difficult to remember what the “old person” was even like.*

*Jesus has become more than my Saviour-He is my sweet and precious Lord! He loved me when I couldn't love myself.*

*At this point, I have lost 92 pounds with 98 more to go. I have the Christian home and family that was always my dream, and the Lord has led me into areas of ministry where the agony of my past is helping others.*

*I have a long way to go in repairing the extreme physical damage I caused myself (Pastor refers to it as my “rebuilding the temple!”), but each day in that way is precious to me. Gone are the hatred and bitterness, and love has taken their place.*

*I guess in all this, my greatest moment of joy came when I looked into the mirror one morning and realized that I had totally forgiven myself for my past and that I really liked--no, that I really loved the person that God has allowed me to become!*

*Sincerely in Jesus,  
Judy Kurnik*

## **Our Compassionate Lord**

A woman who attended one of my Spiritual Life and Weight Control seminars said she felt that I had a genuine concern for those who were trying to lose weight and that this had been of help to her. I hope she was correct for there would be no way to project the compassion of Christ for those in need without feeling it.

To be compassionate is to feel the pain and distress of another.

Have you noticed the many Bible references to the Lord's unfailing compassion?

Consider some of them.

The Prophet Jeremiah revealed that the Lord's compassions are

proof of his faithfulness and that they are new every morning: “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness” (Lam. 3:22-23).

Jesus was often moved with compassion because of the needs of the multitudes He met along the way: “But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd” ( Matt. 9:36).

Lepers were cleansed (Matt. 8:2-4).

The blind received their sight ( Matt 9:27-31).

Little children were blessed (Matt. 19:13-15).

The lame were made to walk (Matt. 11:5).

The dead were raised to life again (Luke 7:11-15).

Our compassionate Lord wept at the grave of Lazarus ( John 11:35) and mourned over the sorrows that would come to the people of Jerusalem because of their rejection of His offer of salvation ( Luke 19:41-44).

And here you are wondering if He cares about a problem that eats away at you continually, a problem that robs you of peace of mind and the power to achieve your full potential in life.

Of course He cares!

The Bible guarantees it.

But there is another who must care if you are to achieve your goal of consistent weight control.

You must care!

## **It’s Your Move**

You are the foot soldier in this weight war. Without your full participation, the battle will be lost. Help is available, but you must

reach for it.

So the ball has just been passed to you.

What are you going to do about it?

Do you really want to lose weight?

Is your appearance important to you?

Do you believe that your weight may be adversely affecting your health?

Is weight robbing you of the joy of living?

Do you envy people who always seem to look just right?

Are you spending money to take off pounds? Have you ever done so in the past?

Could weight be affecting your Christian testimony?

Have you been neglecting god's temple?

Now for the most important question of all: Are you willing to change the way that you live? If not, the biblical instruction on weight control that I am about to share with you will be little more than a reading exercise.

Five years from today you will probably be starting another grapefruit diet, or some other fruity fad. You will have bounced your way through a score of yo-yo experiences on the bathroom scales without getting one ounce closer to the answer you have been seeking. And you will still be looking for some effortless way to become thin and trim.

On the other hand, you may finally be tired of the gimmicks and false promises of the quick-fix diets. You want the real thing, even if it involves a revolution in your way of life. If so, you may be ready to embark on a great adventure in self-control and positive living that will enable you to shed those unwanted pounds and taste the joy of living every day on higher ground.

## **Questions for Application**

- 1: What are the benefits of having a “trim temple”?
- 2: How is the approach to dieting suggested in this chapter different than other methods you have tried?
- 3: What characteristics of God assure you that He cares about your struggle to lose weight?

-From the book: **WEIGHT! A BETTER WAY TO LOSE**

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