



This is the *Health Matters* podcast.

God, Gluttony & You by Brenda Wood

I'm your host Kimberley Payne and this is the show for women who want to improve their spiritual and physical health.

In this episode, we'll be talking about how gluttony is the 'permissible' Christian sin. Our lack of self-control is a blemish on our call to holy living. Our guest wants to bring us to an awareness of our responsibility in this area.



This week we're going to be talking with Brenda Wood. Brenda is an internationally known motivational speaker, a former TV hostess, and a recovered bulimic who has gained and lost thousands of pounds. She's actually fought the food fight and won the battle. Brenda lives just north of Toronto, Ontario and loves to write, read, and walk. You can learn more about Brenda at her website <http://heartfeltdevotionals.com>. Welcome Brenda.

Brenda

Hello there, how are you Kim?

Kimberley

Wonderful.

Brenda

Good, that's good news.

Kimberley

The title of our session today is God, Gluttony and You. This was taken from the title of your book, “God Gluttony and You”. Tell us a little bit about what prompted you to write the book.

Brenda

Well, I struggled with my own weight all the time and I was teaching Bible studies and I had this young gal in my class. I kept talking about fat and we’d come across a verse in the Bible or something and she’d say, “If you would write a book about gluttony, I would buy one.” Actually I dedicated the book to her when I did it. And I think if you—this is actually one of my tips for the end of the show for Bible study—if you have a particular problem I think you should research it to death in the Word of God and study it all and make those verses part of your life so you can conquer whatever your problem is. That’s basically how it came to be. Partly because of my own self.

Kimberley

Now what would you say would be the definition of gluttony?

Brenda

Well, I think first of all we should talk about the definition of sin which is separation from God. The definition of gluttony, according to me, is eating more than my body needs. The dictionary says gluttony is an excess in eating. It’s extravagant indulgence in the appetite for food. Luxury of the table. Verosity of appetite. Filling beyond sufficiency. Plenty even to loathing. And just plain old greedy. And I think a lot of us, at one time or another, have fallen into one of those categories. So that is basically it. It’s eating more than our body needs. Some people will say—if you go to some fancy buffet and there are people there that are 475 pounds—and they’d say, “Look at them. They’re such a glutton.” But then there’s a guy who’s 110 pounds and his plate is piled a foot and a half high and he goes back eight times, he too is a glutton. He’s eating more than his body needs. And that’s the basic thought for that.

Kimberley

Yeah, so you’re saying that a glutton isn’t always overweight or the overweight aren’t always gluttons?

Brenda

No, no they’re not. They’re hard to tell which is which until you see them at a table. I remember going to my Granny and Grandpa’s 60th wedding anniversary. Big dinner, big event. All kinds of goodies and sweets for the people who came after. Big event. And we came back to her house and I’d taken fancy tarts and they hadn’t been served so I asked, “Does anyone want a tart?” And they all said no, and I ate three or four of them. That’s the difference. I think gluttony doesn’t have anything to do with how full you feel. I think we use gluttony like people use drugs or alcohol or whatever to deal with pain that we’re not ready to face.

Kimberley

That leads us into a number of topics in your book like love, discipline, attitude, time, goals, food, obedience, stewardship and failure and victory. Can you tell us something about each one and why you included them in the book?

Brenda

Let me ask you these questions. The Bible clearly assumes that we love ourselves. Would you say that? Because you know it says to love the Lord your God, love your neighbour as yourself and all that kind of stuff. So the Bible assumes that we love ourselves. And if I asked you these questions: Do you try to protect your body from harm? What would you say?

Kimberley

Yes.

Brenda

Do you feed your body and care for it in many ways?

Kimberley

Yes.

Brenda

Do you clothe your body?

Kimberley

Yes.

Brenda

Do you have certain rights and stand up for them?

Kimberley

Absolutely.

Brenda

Do you clean and care for your body?

Kimberley

I do.

Brenda

Do you look in the mirror on a regular basis to see if you're presentable or not?

Kimberley

Yes.

Brenda

Do you play an important part in your church and your community? People would miss you if you weren't there?

Kimberley

They sure would.

Brenda

So yeah, we do—and the Bible assumes that—we live our lives as if we love ourselves. And so it would be kind of us to love ourselves in every way which I don't think we do. The way we treat ourselves, for instance with food and the kind of food choices we make. Like if we know all the statistics that talk about taking care of our body and if you eat this you live longer blah blah blah. We know all that. But most of us don't do it. So it's kind of pointing out that we really don't love ourselves in that area. And that's kind of a sad thing.

Kimberley

Very sad. You also have a section in your book on bulimia. Why did you add that in?

Brenda

Well because I was bulimic for 16 years and struggled with it. I don't struggle with it anymore. I struggle with being a glutton some days. I'm a member of a very famous weight loss club (and I know you go there as well). We make choices.

One of the verses that was key to me was Philippians 4:8, "Finally brethren, whatever things are true and honest and just and pure and lovely, whatever things are of good report. If there be any virtue, any praise, think on these things." And we say things like, "My arms wave for a week after I stop" or "I have the biggest hips in the world." "Elephants are smaller than I am." "I can't stick with a diet." "I'm hopeless." "I'm doomed to be fat for the rest of my life." The Bible says that we have self-control. Second Timothy 1:7 says, "God did not give us a spirit of timidity but of power and love and a common well balanced mind and discipline and self control."

I remember a speaker once talking. I was a little nervous for her as she was speaking. She was a very big lady and she was giving all this spiritual advice and she said use this verse. I said, "Oh no don't use that verse. Do you know what you are getting yourself into?" And she read the verse and she said, "Just so you know, self-control is the last gift you get." And I thought, oh no no no. We do have self-control. We just don't really care to use it. We don't do 100 miles an hour on a side road. We don't steal from the

grocery store. We don't do any of that stuff. But when it comes to having four crackers or fourteen we don't think twice about it.

And I think we don't understand how much God loves us either. Part of the chapters that are in the book we don't understand the love that God has for us. I wrote this little poem that kind of explains that. This is me speaking, "My body is blubber, my dieting weak. I'll never be model thin like that size 3 I seek. Oh God how can you love me? I'm concerned about myself. I'm disgusting the way I gobble food off the shelf." And God says in return, "No, you don't understand child. My son died for you. He demonstrated a love that is beyond self and true." Me speaking, "What's that you say God? Jesus died for me? But you don't understand I'm not up to much. I fail, and fall and falter and such. You surely don't want me. I'm worthless. I sin. I'm human. I'm weak. I'm not even thin." And God says, "No, you don't understand child. You're not worthless to me. I'll give you the reason to live and to be." Me, "Look up to you and know my own worth? You love me that much no matter my girth? Why God is it possible that you died for me but now I see. Now I see, now I see."

I used to have a cartoon on my desk and it was this lady and she was at the gates of heaven and St. Peter met her and he wouldn't let her in. And she said, "It's because I have fat thighs, isn't it?" Somehow we feel we're not good when we're fat. We feel we're less than. And we act like it and then we eat worse than we did before.

Kimberley

That poem, I absolutely love it. Is it in the book?

Brenda

It's in one of the books. There's a poem in every chapter of the books because sometimes it's easier for me to write poetry than it is to say my feelings.

A lot of people say we'll start our diet on Monday, right. That's part of our problem. We should tell people we've been on a diet for 84 years or 32 years or whatever it is because it's not that I've only been on a diet since Monday because we keep starting and never finishing. Some people play it safe—and I've done this a million times—you go the first mile of your diet. You join a club, you join a class, you fill out the trackers. But then you're down 5 pounds the first week and after that you're into the cookies and blah blah blah, and the third week you quit. And 6 months later you're 10 pounds heavier and you go back and you join again. And we never really finish the job. And that's kind of sad.

Kimberley

I understand that you have a gift for our listeners today. A one-page PDF on excuses or reasons. Can you tell us a little bit about it?

Brenda

Yes, it's a little bit more than just that one it. That's just the basic name. Because there is intentional and unintentional sin. For example, if you go to a restaurant and you're trying to eat very well and you have cottage cheese and pineapple off the buffet. You're doing your very best, right? But—I don't know if you knew this—a lot of chefs don't like the look of cottage cheese so mix it with straight cream so that's unintentional sin. You ate that food but you didn't mean to.

Intentional sin is buying yourself 8 chocolate bars and sitting down and eating them all. It's like that. And there's a couple of poems on there as well. It's to help people decide if they are excusing themselves or having reasons like "I am depressed". I am depressed is not a reason to eat. Or I am lonely is not a reason to eat. We all do but it's not a reason to eat. We have to start deciding. I think the big thing is deciding whether we're going to be healthy or not. And that's important to make that choice.

Kimberley

We're going to move on to the BEEP round. Brenda will give quick tips on the four disciplines of Bible study, eating healthy, exercise, and prayer or BEEP. So what do you have for us for a quick tip for Bible study?

Brenda

For Bible study, I already mentioned that one. If anger or temper is your problem, look up every verse in the Bible that talks about it, memorize them, and learn what to do with them. Have them prepared. Maybe even make a list of them and have them ready to look at them. Bible study is more than reading your Bible. You have to spend time. Other people write Bible studies but you can write your own. It's a verse by verse slow reading and looking up what the words mean and then applying it to your life.

Kimberley

I like that. And what about a quick tip for eating healthy?

Brenda

Eating healthy? Make changes one at a time. One of the basic things you can do is add fruit and vegetables to every meal. That is the standard Canadian health guidelines right now. It's really important to have fruit and vegetables. Everybody knows that. Just to add a banana, and an orange, and a cup of green beans to your day. That's something right. And it'll help fill you up as well.

Kimberley

Yes, I love to eat at least one banana a day. What's your quick tip for exercise?

Brenda

It's very simple, move every day. You don't necessarily have to belong to a club. You don't have to do jumping jacks. I'm approaching a delicate age and there are certain things I don't want to do anymore

but I can move. Because if you don't move you will lose it. You have to actually move your body in some way. Just a walk to the corner store. It's not that bad. Half a block.

I had a friend who had terrible arthritis and she said to me, "I can't walk at all. My feet hurt, I can barely walk in the store". I said, "This week walk to the end of your driveway." And she did that every day. And the next week, we talked and she walked another 20 feet. And now she walks about 8 miles a day. She started small, walked through the pain and the pain actually went away when she moved and exercised.

Kimberley

Yes, you just need to get over that hump basically.

Brenda

It helps if you have a walking partner or something. That's not always possible but if inside of you you are convicted and you want to take care of your body and you want to do something with yourself that would be the choice. Move.

Kimberley

And your quick tip for prayer?

Brenda

Oh, people are so hung up on prayer. It's just talking to God like I'm talking to you. Don't worry about the position you're in, whether you're standing or speaking in Latin. I always think it's interesting if you're at some prayer rally or something and the prayers get longer, and deeper, and more complicated. God just wants a, "Hi, how are you? Let me know how things are going today." Just be simple with Him and He will treat you with decency and listen in return.

Kimberley

Thanks again to Brenda Wood for her expert advice and thank you for joining us today.

This interview has been brought to you by the [Flex Your Spirit e-course—stretching techniques to escape stress and journal writing to achieve a sense of health](#). You can discover more about this online course and other health programs at www.kimberleypayne.com.

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This has been the Health Matters Podcast, believing that prayer & Bible study are to the spirit what exercise and healthy eating are to the body.

Blessings on your journey to health.

About Kimberley Payne

Kimberley Payne is the host of the *Health Matters – Healthy Spirit Healthy Body* podcast. She is author of *Fit for Faith – a 7-week program to improve spiritual and physical health* and is a motivational speaker offering workshops and online courses based on her book. She hopes to inspire women to live happier, healthier lives that glorify God. She is happily married and lives with her husband in a village east of Toronto, Canada where she hikes and bikes. Visit her website at www.kimberleypayne.com

