

Feel Right

I started this journey in 2006, and more than a decade later I'm faced with the same questions I answered when I started this journey.

WHAT – Initially, I desired weight loss. Now I treasure sustained health and wellness for my lifetime.

WHY – Before, I longed to look great, feel great, and enjoy a great life. Now I choose wellness to honor God, which allows me to serve Him for as long as He has me on earth.

WILL YOU – For decades I responded, “No, I won't. I can't. I've already tried.” Then I recognized God's unimaginable love for me and responded “yes” when prompted to embrace my body as the temple of His Holy Spirit.

HOW – I surrendered to God's supernatural power. In obedience I relinquished my time and desires as I changed to a healthier lifestyle one day at a time and one pound at a time. I relied on help and prayers from others. Now as the journey continues, I still need help. First Place 4 Health provides the help and accountability I need.

I've discovered my feelings have an impact on my commitment level. Commitment to track my food choices, exercise my body, prioritize my daily time with the Lord, practice my scripture memory verses, as well as find time to encourage a friend or group member. When I start thinking, “I don't want to,” my heart isn't in the right place and I'm focused on what I'm sacrificing. I may still follow through with the correct choice however I might also give in and choose to forgo the healthy choice.

1 Samuel 15:22(b) states, *“Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice. Obedience is my new love*

language. It's easier to say to myself, "Lord, I love you and choose to eat the fruit instead of sweets." In obedience I've made a healthy choice. I feel successful and thankful for the opportunity to love God. Instead of the sacrificial thinking, "Lord, I gave the sweet up for you."

Don't get me wrong, when it comes to obedience, I am a work in progress. Jimmy Seibert, in his book, *The Church Can Change the World: Living from the Inside Out*, he says that a common question he and his wife would ask their children was, "How do we obey?" The couple taught their children to respond cheerfully, quickly and completely. I love the days I'm cheerful, quick and complete in my obedience to whatever the Lord has planned. I'm not always quick but I am often cheerful and complete. God astounds me with His never-ending grace and patience with me.

How are you feeling? Are you overwhelmed with your love for God or self-pity because of your sacrifice? Feel right and focus on loving God with obedience.

May your success be measured by your obedience to God's way.

Helen Baratta is an author, speaker, coach, group leader, triathlete and nationally certified fitness instructor. She serves as Director of Development for First Place 4 Health. Her new book *Restored! Embracing Weight Loss God's Way* will be released later this year.