

Burdened? Lose the Weight, for Good!

By Lucy Ann Moll

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WE WOMEN WEIGH a ton. Yep, we're burdened with excess pounds.

And yet are clothes fit just fine, thank you.

What gives? Our peace of mind. When we allow burdens of everyday life to weigh us down, we pack on stress. Our joy flits away. We feel crummy.

Years ago I thought life would be a breeze (or should be!). Ha! I learned the hard way that life happens. You know, when stuff gets tough: a flat tire but no spare [ANGER], a sick kid at 2 a.m. [FRUSTRATION], a flooded basement [MORE FRUSTRATION], a loss of a friendship [SADNESS], a new car in your neighbor's driveway [JEALOUSY].

We can't choose our circumstances, but we can choose our attitude. Not easy! So often we women put on the weight of guilt, comparison and — yes — self-rejection. Even though we are daughters of the King.

Do you relate?

There's hope for overweighted women like you and me.

What *Not* to Do

When my husband and I adopted our first child — she's now 19 and in college — we were beyond excited. We pictured a happy baby who sometimes pooped, occasionally cried and always wanted snuggles. And for the first three weeks of her little life, Laura did just that.

But then, on DAY 22, Laura has not the happy baby, and Steve and I were not happy parents. Laura had colic. But we didn't know that at first. When she screamed (out of nowhere!) Steve glared at me and gave me advice. (Aren't guys good at that!) He said I might be holding her wrong or giving her too much milk, or too little, or providing her too much stimulation or not enough.

I just thought I was a bad mother.

My real problem: a bad attitude. My focus was on me, me and me. Yet the Bible says, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). I had read this verse but didn't put it into action. I held tight to selfish negativity.

After Julia and John joined Laura, I continued to have thoughts like:

"Why is her baby so easy and mine so fussy?"

“Why is my kid the “clingy” one who cries when I drop her off at preschool?”

“How come my little guy can’t keep up with the other toddlers? They can set one block on another, they can string beads. Why can’t mine?”

My pity party partied on.

“What about me? When do I get a break? From spilled juice to mounds of laundry to unfinished baby albums to you-name-it! I never get it right, it seems.”

I focused on me. Me. And me. I very rarely chose a Christ-like attitude. I was selfish, stubborn and burdened with weight.

Why Life Weighs You Down

You may be weighted down too. You may have tons of debt or a bad marriage or no marriage and you want a husband. *Yesterday!* You may have health problems or endure nasty office politics. Or worse.

Or your pain may come from the inside, as mine did. Ever feel inadequate? Overwhelmed? Confused? Does loneliness cling to you like a wet wool blanket? Yeah, I know these feelings. Every woman does.

Unfortunately, we often fail to identify our real need: Jesus. Instead, we may play the martyr and get busy. Busyness at church can sure look so super-spiritual, can’t it? The distraction of busyness is among Satan’s prettiest temptations and ugliest lies.

A No-Fail Weight-Loss Plan

While my life like yours has crazy-busy days, I’m learning to sit at the feet of Jesus. Remember the story of Martha and Mary of Bethany? Jesus stopped by to visit, and Martha felt burdened to make a feast. She made quite a fuss in the kitchen. Imagine banging pots and pans, huffs and puffs. She grumbled, telling Jesus to have Mary help her.

You see, Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, hanging on to his every word. She really wanted to know him. Martha chose busyness, she chose distraction, she chose a bad attitude. And how did Jesus answer Martha? He said, “Leave Mary alone. She has made the better choice.”

While I don’t have this all figured out, I remember Jesus’ invitation: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Rest. Don’t you just love this word and all that it means? To me it means calm and contentment. It means peace.

Jesus wants to give us rest.

To receive it:

First, let go of the weight. Stop trying to figure things out. Talk to Jesus. Tell him your burdens. Say you're sorry for your messes and agree with him to make a change.

Second, trust him to carry you. This means that when life happens — and it will — resist the temptation to get busy. Instead look upward. Compared to God's glory, your burdens will seem tiny. . .light. . .of nothing.

Third, commit to having a Christ-like attitude. How? Next time life happens, ask yourself, How would Jesus respond? Don't believe me? Try it and find out for yourself.

Yes, you can lose the weight. For good. :)