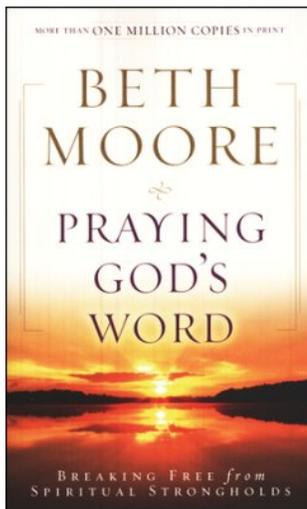


## Overcoming Food Related Strongholds Beth Moore.



What a relief to know that we'll never battle anything out of God's jurisdiction. God can as easily defeat His opposition on Mount Carmel as Mount Zion. It's all His turf. The same is true in regard to our own battlegrounds. God created us to be whole creatures made of three different components: body, soul, and spirit. As long as we see God as Lord of our spirits alone, we will continue to live in areas of defeat. God is surely Lord of our souls and bodies as He is our spirits. It's all His turf. In fact, take a refreshing look at **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24**. "May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who called you is faithful and he will do it." First of all, please celebrate the fact that God Himself is the One at work in you and through you. He hasn't just assigned you a mighty angel. God is thoroughly interested and involved in every single part of you: body, soul, and spirit.

Second, notice that the verse identifies God specifically as the God of peace. The Word of God is perfectly inspired; therefore, every identification of God, every name He is called, is in perfect context. In this case, the inference of the title is that the believer will be awash with God's peace when every part of the life—body, soul, and spirit—is surrendered to His wise, loving, and liberating authority. I know far too well how distant the peace of God is when we refuse to bow a part of our lives to His rule. Peace is the fruit of authority, God's authority. As **Colossians 3:15** says, "Let the peace of Christ rule...." Christ brings His peace where He is prince. That's what the title "Prince of Peace" represents.

Third, don't miss what God Himself desires to do. **1 Thessalonians 5:23** proceeds to tell us that this glorious God of peace wants to sanctify us "through and through." The original Greek word for "sanctify" is *hagiazō*, meaning to make clean, render pure,...to consecrate, devote, set apart from a common to a sacred use,...to regard and venerate as holy, to hallow." In other words, God deeply desires for us to grant Him total access to set apart every single part of our lives—body, soul, and spirit—to His glorious work. Always keep in mind that anything to God's glory is also for our good. The two concepts are never at odds. God's inclusion of the physical body is proof among many others in Scripture that He cares deeply what happens to these tents of flesh in which we dwell. Indeed, our physical bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit in this dispensation of God's kingdom calendar. (**1 Corinthians 6:19**)

Before we get started with our Scripture-prayers, I'd like you to see one more very important truth encased in **1 Thessalonians 5:24**. Thank goodness the Word says, "The one who called you is faithful and he will do it." You and I cannot get our bodies and souls under continued control. Cease trying to "get yourself together" in your own strength. It is useless. We might make it work for a little while, but failure is imminent, and when it comes, it is very destructive. The King James Version offers some interesting wording in **Colossians 2:20-23** that applies to our subject.

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to

perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body: not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.”

Notice the phrase will worship. You see, if man could truly subdue all his fleshly appetites by the pure power of his own determination, he would simply worship his own will. If the Word of God is about anything at all, it is about God’s will rather than ours. Our liberty is paradoxically discovered through the will of God rather than our own. God will never allow us continued success through our pure fleshly determination to “touch not, taste not, handle not.” He knows we would end up worshiping our own wills and methods. Through the might of His Holy Spirit released through the authority of His Word, we are empowered to say no to the things we should—to our excesses, withholdings, compulsions, and harmful consumptions—and say yes to freedom, moderation, and better health. When we bow to God’s authority, we invite Him to take control, and He is the one who does it, as **1 Thessalonians 5:24** tells us.

So, are you just about to give up? Good. Give yourself up to God, to the authority of His Holy Spirit. Both **Galatians 5:22** and **2 Timothy 1:7** tell us that self-discipline is a work and a quality of the fruit of the Spirit. Stop feeling guilty because you don’t have any self-discipline on your own. Neither does that together-looking person next to you. None of us can master ourselves. Some yokes may be more obvious than others, but all of us have had them. God is the only One who can sanctify and make every part of us whole...”and He will do it.” All He wants is our trust, our belief, and a little time.

Overeating, compulsive undereating, anorexia, and bulimia are all food-related strongholds. No matter how long any of these may have had a believer in its grip, he or she can be free. You never have to wonder if God’s will is for you to be liberated from these strongholds. The answer is yes, so begin praying His will over your life with confidence. Again, please remember that the method through which God applies His truth to set you free is up to Him. You can use these Scripture-prayers in conjunction with any method God designs for you.

I am indebted to my dear friend, Carole Lewis, and the wonderful staff at First Place, a Christ-Centered Health Program in Houston, Texas for many of the Scriptures I’ve reworded



into the following prayers. Their unwavering commitment to daily Bible Study as the Holy Spirit’s propelling force toward victorious living is undoubtedly the reason why God has blessed them with such an outstanding success rate. For without Him, we can do nothing (**John 15:5**) and with Him, we can do anything (**Philippians 4:13**)

Use this in the way it works best for you. It’s suggested that you avoid rushing through it. Take your time. Focus on each word or phrase. If a prayer seems to speak to you, linger on it. Make note of it. Read the full scripture and personalize it yourself. Add other meaningful Scriptures that spark prayer.

This can serve as an introduction to praying Scripture on your own. Experience power in your prayer life that may have become stale and repetitious.

“If I try to pray for people or events without having the Word in front of me guiding my prayers, then several negative things happen. One is that I tend to be very repetitive. I just pray the same things all the time. Another negative thing is that my mind tends to wander.” (John Piper)

"When you pray the Bible, you will understand how God views you and how He views others. In a culture distorted by negative media images, we all need to be founded on what God thinks of us. David's self-image came through prayer. He saw himself as God's anointed, as the apple of God's eye. David knew that God loved him, and that he was favored when the wicked were not. Therefore, we need to pray the Bible until we receive the same attitude that David did." (Debbie Przybylski Intercessors Arise)

Lord, according to Your Word, if I wholeheartedly commit whatever I do to You, my plans will succeed. (**Proverbs 16:3**) Lord, I acknowledge that the heart of committing any plan to You is seeking Your plan. Show me the right path, Father!

Lord, please help me not to merely listen to the Word, and so deceive myself. Please help me do what it says. (**James 1:22**) Your Word works, but if I am to experience it personally, I must be obedient. I need your help, Lord.

When Your words come to me, help me to eat them; make them my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear Your name, O Lord God Almighty. (**Jeremiah 15:16**) Increase my appetite for Your Word, my Sufficiency!

O Lord, like David, help me to rejoice in Your strength and say of You, “How great is my joy in the victories You give!” Father, please grant me the desire of my heart to be free from this stronghold and do not withhold the requests of my lips. (**Psalms 21:1-2**) Through the victories You give, may Christ's glory be great! (**Psalms 21:5**)

For I know that my old self was crucified with You, Christ so this body of sin might be done away with, that I should no longer be a slave to sin—because anyone who has died has been made free from sin. (**Romans 6:6-7**)

Father, the false teachers of this world promise freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him. (**2 Peter 2:19**) I acknowledge my slavery and deep desire to be mastered by You alone. Only Your mastery brings liberty.

“Satan's ultimate lie is that you are capable of being the god of your own life, and his ultimate bondage is getting you to live as though his lie is the truth.” Neil Anderson, The Bondage Breaker

“Everything is permissible for me”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me”—but I desire not to be mastered by anything. (**1 Corinthians 6:12**) Lord God, help me to recognize and discern what is not beneficial for me. Help me to see that authentic liberty is being free to do certain things and free not to do others.

Lord God, I acknowledge that it is for freedom that Christ set me free. Your desire is for me to stand firm, then, and not let myself be burdened again by the yoke of slavery. (**Galatians 5:1**) Help me, Lord. Empower me.

God, according to Your liberating Word, I was called to be free. Help me not to use my freedom to indulge in the sinful nature; rather, I should serve others in love. (**Galatians 5:13**)

Help my soul to find rest in You alone; my hope comes from You. You alone are my rock and my salvation; You are my fortress, I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honor depend on You; You, God, are my mighty rock, my refuge. Help me to trust in You at all times. Remind me to pour out my heart to You, for You, God, are my refuge. (**Psalms 62:5-8**)

You know the plans You have for me, O Lord. You have declared that they are plans to prosper me and not to harm me, plans to give me a hope and a future. (**Jeremiah 29:11**)

You are the Lord, the God of all mankind. Nothing is too hard for You! (**Jeremiah 13:27**)

In view of Your mercy, Lord, I offer my body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to You, God. This is my spiritual act of worship. I desire not to be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. Then I will be able to test and approve what Your will is—Your good, pleasing, and perfect will. (**Romans 12:1-2**)

Lord, though I live in the world, I do not wage war as the world does. The weapons I fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. Your power can demolish arguments, and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of You, God, and take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ. (**2 Corinthians 10:3-5**) Enable me, Lord! Help me not to just read it and say it, but to believe it and do it!

Lord, I have too long given the devil a foothold. (**Ephesians 4:27**) Please help me to stop offering him so many opportunities to bring defeat into my life. Your plans for me is victory.

Now unto You who are able to do immeasurably more than all I ask or imagine, according to Your power that is at work within me, to You be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen (**Ephesians 3:20-21**)

God, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which you have called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (**Philippians 3:13-14**) Help me to forget all past failures or even achievements and to focus on pressing forward with You now.

“Perhaps one of the unforgivable sins is to give up on ourselves and God. Hold a cup under an open faucet and it will quickly fill. The process is slightly more difficult when you hold your cup upside down. So, turn your cup right side up.” Tim Hansel, Holy Sweat

Lord Jesus, I can do everything through you because You give me strength. (**Philippians 4:13**)

You, Lord, will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to Your heavenly kingdom. To You be the glory for ever and ever. (**2 Timothy 4:18**)

Lord, I can find great encouragement in knowing that many believers, weak in their natural selves, have walked faithfully and victoriously with You. (**Hebrews 11**) Therefore, since I am surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, help me to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and help me run with perseverance the race marked out for me. Help me to fix my eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of my faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of Your throne, O God. (**Hebrews 12:1-2**)

In a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize. Lord, help me to run in such a way as to get the prize. (**1 Corinthians 9:24**)

Lord, please help me not to miss the grace of God. Help me to see to it that no bitter root grows up in me to cause trouble and defile many. (**Hebrews 12:15**)

Lord God, help me not to allow the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desires for other things to come in and choke Your Word, making it unfruitful in my life. (**Mark 4:19**)

Dear God, as one of your own, please help me to flee from sin and pursue righteousness., godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. (**1 Timothy 6:11**)

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (**Psalms 139:23-24**)

Lord God, according to Your Word, everyone born of You overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? I do, when I truly believe that Jesus is the Son of God. (**1 John 5:4-5**)

My faithful Father, whether I turn to the right or to the left, cause my ears to hear a voice behind me saying, "This is the way; walk in it." (**Isaiah 30:21**)

Lord God, according to Your Word, where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint. (**Proverbs 29:18**) O, Father, help me to understand that I have no power of restraint or self-control without Your Word made alive in me by Your Holy Spirit.

Father God, help me to put on Your full armor so that I can take my stand against the devil's schemes. (**Ephesians 6:11**)

Lord God, Your divine power has given me everything I need for life and godliness through my knowledge of You who called me by Your own glory and goodness. (**2 Peter 1:3**)

"Our hearts beat excitedly over stories like Abraham and Moses, yet we fail to recognize that they were as frail and nervous as we are. We stand in awe of Moses at the burning bush: "Now there is a bush that burns," we say. "I would like to be a bush like that, but I'm just a heap of ashes." And that's as far as we get. We discuss the phenomenon of what God can do in a life, tell amazing stories about it, praise it—but resign ourselves to being nothing more than what we think we are, a mere bystander, resigned to sitting in the balcony among the spectators. But it is not the bush that sustains the flame. It is God in the bush, and so, any old bush will do!" *Tim Handel, Holy Sweat*

My Father in heaven, please help me to live a life of love, just as Christ loved me and gave Himself up for me as a fragrant offering and sacrifice for to You. (**Ephesians 5:2**)

Thank You, God, for choosing me in Christ before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in Your sight. (**Ephesians 1:4**)

By Your grace, Lord, I have been saved through faith—and this not from myself, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that I cannot boast. (**Ephesians 2:8-9**) Therefore, as it is written: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord. (**1 Corinthians 1:31**)

Christ Jesus, You Yourself are my peace, who has...destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in Your flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. (**Ephesians 2:14-15**)

Lord God, help me to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that I may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (**Ephesians 3:19**)

Lord, continue to teach me with regard to my former way of life, to put off my old self,...and to put on the new self, created to be like You God, in true righteousness and holiness. (**Ephesians 4:22-24**)

Lord, what You are commanding me today is not too difficult or beyond my reach. (**Deuteronomy 30:11**)

Lord, according to Your Word, it is better not to make a vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it. (**Ecclesiastes 5:5**) Please help me to realize that the power to be victorious does not come from my ability to make and keep a vow out of pure determination. Sooner or later, I will fail if I am only trying to fulfill a vow. The power to be victorious comes from realizing the vow You have already made to me when You gave me Your Spirit and Your Word. As Your Word says in **Zachariah 4:6**, success won't come by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord Almighty.

Lord, help me to be self-controlled and alert. My enemy, the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (**1 Peter 5:8**)

If I call to You, You will answer me and tell me great and unsearchable things I do not know. (**Jeremiah 33:3**)

Lord, I make it my goal to please You whether I am at home in the body or away from it. (**2 Corinthians 5:9**)

God, I am so thankful there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (**Romans 8:1**) If You do not condemn me, I have no right or place to condemn myself. Help me not to get caught up in a defeating cycle of self-condemnation.

Those who know Your name, will trust in You, for You, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you. (**Psalms 9:10**)

Lord, the fruit of Your Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things, there is no law. (**Galatians 5:22-23**) Please fill me with Your Spirit and eclipse my personality with Yours.

Father God, help me not to grieve, for Your joy, Lord, is my strength. (**Nehemiah 8:10**)

Father God, please help me to keep in mind that my struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (**Ephesians 6:12**)

“You don’t have to outshout him or outmuscle him to be free of his influence. You just have to out-truth him. Believe, declare, and act upon the truth of God’s Word, and you will thwart Satan’s strategy.” Neil Anderson, The Bondage Breaker.

Lord, I come to You in prayer, and I ask You now to let Your peace, God, which transcends all understanding, guard my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus. (**Philippians 4:7**)

Powerful Lord, help me not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time I will reap a harvest if I do not give up. (**Galatians 6:9**)

I am one of Your chosen people, O God. I acknowledge and accept as fact that I am holy and dearly loved. In response, help me to clothe myself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. (**Colossians 3:12**)

Help me, Lord, to take Your yoke upon me and learn from You, for You are gentle and humble in heart, and I will find rest for my soul. (**Matthew 11:29**)

Lord, according to Your Word, the key to not gratifying the desires of the sinful nature is to live by the Spirit. (**Galatians 5:16**) Teach me to live by the Spirit, Lord!

Lord, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—help me to make the choice to think about such things. (**Philippians 4:8**) Lord God, help me to feed the Spirit, not the flesh! Changing the way I think will change the way I feel!

God of hope, fill me with all the joy and peace as I trust in You, so that I may overflow in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (**Romans 15:13**)

Merciful God, restore me to the joy of Your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. (**Psalms 51:12**)

Lord, Help me to be very careful not to think more highly of myself than I ought, but, but rather think of myself with sober judgement, in accordance with the measure of faith You have given me. (**Romans 12:3**) Help me also not to think of myself as anything less than a child of Yours, God, dearly loved by You. (**Ephesians 5:1**) Your deep desire is for me to possess both humility and security.

Lord, I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I want to learn the secret of being content in every way and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through You, Lord, who gives me strength. (**Philippians 4:12-13**)

I have been crucified with You, Christ, and I no longer live, but You live in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in You, the Son of God, who loves me and gave Yourself for me. (**Galatians 2:20**)

Faithful, loving Lord, according to Your Word, two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man

who falls and has no one to help him up! (**Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, 12**) Please help me to form healthy relationships and find support in those who encourage me to get back on my feet and walk with You when I fall. Between You, me, (when I'm willing) and a good friend to hold me accountable, a cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Lord, in Your infinite wisdom, You warn us that "He who separates himself seeks his own desire,/ He quarrels against all sound wisdom." (**Proverbs 18:1** NASB) Help me to be very careful not to isolate myself.

### Danger: Traveling Alone

"God created us all to be a part of His body. We function together. Fellowship is a precious gift the Lord gives His children. To neglect fellowship or refuse to draw near those who can make our journey all that it should be is to make ourselves vulnerable. Anytime we withdraw from wise friends who will hold us accountable, we seek our own desires. We become resistant to "all sound wisdom." (**Proverbs 18:1**)—and that is a precarious place to be. If we are committed to travel toward the heart of God, then we need to move toward the wise friend, of any age, who can help us stay on the journey."

*Cynthia Heald, A Woman's Journey to the Heart of God*

Lord God, Your Word tells me that one handful of tranquility is better than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind. (**Ecclesiastes 4:6**) Please set me free from the false security that comes from having more of anything than I really need.

Jesus, according to Your Word, if I truly desire to come after You, I must deny myself and take up my cross daily and follow You. (**Luke 9:23**)

Lord God, You have humbled me to teach me that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. (**Deuteronomy 8:3**) Please develop in me a hunger for Your presence and Your Word that exceeds any physical cravings I could ever experience.

"To give emotionally wounded people only a weight-loss plan is like putting a band-aid on a cancerous legion. *Carole Lewis, First Place*

O, God, You are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen You in the sanctuary and beheld Your power and Your glory. Because Your love is better than life, my lips will glorify You. I will praise You as long as I live, and in Your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods! (**Psalms 63:1-5**)

Lord God, help me to remember You when I go to bed. Occupy my thoughts through the watches of the night. Because You are my help I sing in the shadow of Your wings. My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me. (**Psalms 63:6-8**)

How long will I turn Your glory into shame, O Lord? How long will I love delusions and seek false gods? (**Psalms 4:2**) Expose the delusions and false gods in my life, O Lord, and set me free!

Lord, You beckon me in Your Word to come to You when I am thirsty, to come to the waters: I can come to You when I have no money. I can come, buy, and eat! Why do I

spend money and labor on things that don't satisfy? Your Word tells me to listen to You and eat what is good and my soul will delight in the richest of fare. (**Isaiah 55:1-2**)

Lord, you fill the hungry with good things! (**Luke 1:53**)

Lord God, if I do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if I spend myself in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then light will rise in darkness, and my night will become like noonday.

You, Lord, will guide me always; You will satisfy my needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen my frame. I will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. (**Isaiah 58:11**)

Lord God, like Your people Israel, you will ransom me from the hand of those stronger than me. I will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion; I will rejoice in the bounty of the Lord—the grain, the new wine and the oil, the young of the flocks and herds. I will be like a well-watered garden and I will sorrow no more. I will dance and be glad. You will turn my mourning into gladness; You will give me comfort and joy instead of sorrow. You have declared that You will satisfy Your people with abundance, and we will be filled with Your bounty. (**Jeremiah 31:11-14**)

Lord, You will refresh the weary and the faint. (**Jeremiah 31:25**)

Lord God, I acknowledge to You, like the ancient Israelites, I eat by I am often not satisfied. (**Leviticus 26:26**) Help me not to confuse the hunger of my soul with the hunger of my body. If I eat physical food and am still not satisfied, help me to discern a far greater need and bring it to You, O Lord. You are the only one who can truly satisfy the soul.

Father God, according to Your Word, if physical things were allowed to completely satisfy us, our hearts would become proud, and we would forget the Lord our God, who brought s our of slavery. (**Deuteronomy 8:12-14**)

Lord, when you bring this captive completely back to You, I will be like those who dream! My mouth will be filled with laughter and my tongue with sounds of joy! The Lord has done great things for me, and I am filled with joy! (**Psalms 126:1-3**)

Lord God, I know that my body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in me, whom I have received from You. I am not my own; I was bought at a price Therefore I desire to honor You with my body. (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**) Since I am a temple of Your Holy Spirit, cause Your glory to fill this temple of God like You did in days of old! (**2 Corinthians 5:14**)

You, O Lord, have filled my heart with greater joys than when my grain and new wine abound! (**Psalms 4:7**)

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. For they will be filled.” Jesus Christ, **Matthew 5:6**