

**The following testimony was written in 2012 and chronicles my journey of fasting that began in February of 2010. My weight loss as of 2016 totals 65 pounds and has been achieved through fasting, portion control, and exercise. (See a new program that was birthed from this journey at the end of the testimony!)**

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He saw right through me and I thought I had been hiding it so well...self-doubt, self-loathing, self-defeat...and the list goes on and on. Yep, I had it all and thought I had been masking it all. I was wrong. Agenda in hand, I sat before my pastor for what had been an intended planning meeting. I was organized and ready to discuss women's ministry. He was having none of that. He stopped me even before Item #1 could hit the discussion floor. *"Wait, he said. Before we proceed I need to know what is bothering you. I've been noticing that you seem down. If you can, tell me what is troubling you."* With quivering lips, I finally blurted out, *"I have a stronghold!"* (Trying to at least put a Biblical spin on the issue.) Here I sat with not only a *man*, but a man of God. Here I sat with not only a *man of God*, but a very *trim* man of God. How could I share my problem with someone like *him*? If not for his compassionate expression, I never would have. *"It's food,"* I cried out. Full-out blubbing at this point; I am surprised he could even understand what I said. I felt ridiculous and stupid. I was sixty pounds overweight and had been trying for years to fix it. Why couldn't I get a handle on this? Head bowed in shame, I began to share with him the turmoil I had been in for a very, very long time.

I left that meeting (yes, we finally did make it through the actual agenda) knowing that my pastor understood and would be praying diligently for me. I was banking on it. I felt prayed out on the subject. No action on *my* part over the years had me believing I deserved no action on *God's* part. Surely, HE was tired of hearing about it by now. Of course, I was wrong...He NEVER gets tired of hearing our cries for help...*fast forward a few weeks...*



I love to read. I had been collecting books on the “*how-to’s*” of weight loss for years. *How to* kick the sugar habit, *how to* eat less and feel full, *how to*, *how to*, *how to*. At my fingertips was an arsenal of information, seemingly testifying against me. So, what was I doing standing at a Christian bookstore, staring at, and considering purchasing, yet another *how to* book on weight loss? None of the others had orchestrated a change, why should this one? Frankly, this one caught my eye because it was visually appealing on a number of levels. It was purple, shiny, not overwhelmingly thick, and had an intriguing title, “*Fit for My King.*” I wanted to be “*fit.*” I knew “*my King.*” I turned the book over to see a picture of the author. Wow! The “before” and “after” shots were amazing! I sheepishly looked at my husband and said, “*Can I get this book?*” After no small amount of eye rolling, he nodded. Don’t blame him for his mocking response. I deserved it. He had heard it all before. My past spoke volumes. My volumes spoke volumes!

I took the book home and began reading it in my master bedroom closet. Yes, in my closet. If failure was an option, and my past told me that it was, I was going to make sure my failure...this failure...would be in private.

As I read through the introduction and purpose, I felt a quickening in my spirit. There began to be hope where only hopelessness had resided. Then, one word appeared on Page 17 that changed my life. That word was “*fast.*”

Sheri Rose Shepherd was asking her readers to sign a Covenant Letter to care for their bodies, their “temples,” by committing to a thirty-day fast off of certain foods. A fast wholly committed to the Lord. She wasn’t asking her readers to do anything that *she* had not already done. After all, her photos and testimony radiated with success.

Over the next week, I combed the pages of the book. I read Sheri’s testimony, the devotions, and the fasting plan. As I read, I knew that this was not a book that would later join the ranks of those on my bookshelf testifying against me. I knew that *this* was a concept to which I could relate. I knew that *this* time success, not failure, was in my future. And so did He.



On February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010, sitting in that bedroom closet, I signed my fasting *Covenant Letter*. I believe with everything that is in me, that God intended all along for me to pick up that shiny, purple, not too thick, well-titled book. You see, this time, the glory would be His...right where it had always belonged. You see, the “magic weight-loss potion” wasn’t the purple book at all, turns out. It was learning to *finally* lay my burden at the feet of the Lord...for real. I had been attempting to tear down a stronghold all by myself. I had been fighting back using all the world’s weapons. Once I laid down the world’s weapons and picked up the Lord’s weapons, my battle was already won! Now, don’t think it was all easy-peasy. I fought hard. I read Scripture **DAILY!!!** I prayed **DAILY!!!** I stuck to my fasting list with everything that was in me!!! I carried snacks in my purse. I carried food on my vacations in a cooler. Because I was fasting for the Lord, I did not waiver...this was serious. I meant business.

Then, a funny thing happened. I began to feel so great that my “thirty-day fast” turned into a two-year journey! YES, a two-year journey!! Now, my overweight, out of shape body is 40 pounds lighter and I exercise regularly. Oh, and that husband who began a skeptic? Well, he’s now turned believer and is my biggest cheerleader!

And that pastor who prayed for me? When women come to him with a food “stronghold,” he simply smiles and says...“*I know someone who can help you.*”

I am living proof that you can *do all things through Christ who strengthens you....*

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**In 2013, First Fruits Living Ministries introduced the**  
**Fit for GOD** Fitness Program and kicked off the sister program,  
**Fueled for GOD** in 2016. Want to start fasting for the Lord?  
**Go to First Fruits Living Ministries for information and documentation.**  
**Click on the FUELED for GOD Tab.**

