

chapter three

You Can't Save Yourself

*Where Can I Find the Power to
Change?*

I once read the true story of a duke named Raynald III, who lived during the fourteenth century. His sad life illustrates how giving in to our lustful desires—the very thing we often equate with freedom—actually robs us of freedom and true joy.

Raynald III had lived a life of indulgence and was extremely overweight. In fact, he was commonly called by his Latin nickname, Crassus, which means “fat.”

After a violent quarrel, Raynald's younger brother, Edward, led a successful revolt against him. Edward captured Raynald but did not kill him. Instead he

built a room around him in the Nieuwkerk Castle and promised him he could regain his freedom as soon as he was able to leave the room.

This wouldn't have been difficult for most people since the room had several windows and a door of near-normal size, and none was locked or barred. The problem was Raynald's size. To regain his freedom, he needed to lose weight. But Edward knew his older brother, and each day he sent him a variety of delicious foods. Instead of dieting his way to freedom, Raynald grew fatter. He stayed in the room for ten years, till his brother died in battle. But by then his health was so ruined that he died within a year—a prisoner of his own appetite.

Many men and women today are prisoners to their appetite for lust. Like Raynald, they look free, maybe even happy. They're doing what they want. They're doing what feels good. But the sad truth is that every bite of lust's delicacies only makes them more of a prisoner. When we indulge in a life of sin and do whatever feels good, we're not free. We've slaves to our sin.