

Ed Chavis, Biggest Loser update

Augusta, GA

On November 2, 2009, Ed Chavis, associate pastor of Lumpkin Road Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia, was chosen to participate in a weight-loss competition sponsored by the local NBC affiliate, a fitness club, and a professional weight-loss center. In the January edition of the *Tribune*, Chavis reported that he had lost 33 pounds; he has now lost over 100 pounds, well on the way to his goal of losing 140 pounds by the end of the competition in May.

“Augusta’s Biggest Loser” is roughly modeled after the hit reality television show *The Biggest Loser*, with the notable exception of no eliminations. Although the fitness component is not as intense as the six-to-eight hours of daily training on the show, it is still a grueling schedule of daily workouts, twice-a-week nutrition counseling sessions, and weekly weigh-ins.

When asked about the difficulty of the food plan, Chavis says, “There are some things I miss from time to time — I’m a meat-and potatoes, burgers, fries, and pizza kind of guy. But I have come to understand that food is supposed to be fuel for the body. In our culture, we have assigned too much emotional meaning to pleasure foods.” His current diet consists mainly of lean protein (chicken, tuna, and turkey breast) and dairy proteins (eggs and fat-free cheeses). Vegetables and fruits round out the food choices.

Chavis’ journey has not been without some obstacles. At times, scar tissue from two previ-

ous back surgeries has caused both pain and numbness, making it difficult to exercise (or to even walk.) When difficulties arise, adjustments are made in his exercise routine in order to avoid further injury. He is also participating under the watchful eye of his physician, who makes suggestions and recommendations in getting through the tough times.



Ed Chavis has lost 100 lbs

In terms of the competition, which will culminate in one male and one female winning the top prizes, Chavis grabbed the lead in week three, and has not surrendered the top spot since then. His goal is to complete the competition in May without ever giving up the lead.

The impact of Chavis’ experience has been far-reaching. Inspired by his success, over 20

members of Lumpkin Road are participating in a weight-loss challenge of their own called “Healthy Again in 2010.” Thanks to the internet and the age of instant communication, Chavis is advising and encouraging people in places such as Texas, Wisconsin, and even Korea. He is eager to pass on the things that he has learned in an effort to help people, and, in that spirit, writes two blogs — one recounting his personal experiences and another containing nutrition, exercise advice, and motivational tips.

“Food abuse and addiction is quite possibly the most widespread form of addiction plaguing people today,” Chavis said. “Even ministries such as Reformers Unanimous are realizing the absolute hold that food has over people’s lives. And to make matters worse, it’s the only sin or addiction that we preachers joke about from the pulpit on a regular basis. Now that I am getting these issues under control in my own life, I want to help others find the freedom that I have found.”

Ed Chavis is the associate pastor at Lumpkin Road Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia. He is blogging about his weight-loss journey at <http://echavis64.blogspot.com>. His “Healthy Again in 2010” blog is at <http://healthyagain2010.blogspot.com>.

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