

Theme: Gluttony is a disordered love that excessively craves food and drink, attempting to fill spiritual hunger with material fare.

I. Intro - Edmund and Turkish Delight

- A. Edmund gets into Narnia, meets White Witch
- B. At last the Turkish Delight was all finished and Edmund was looking very hard at the empty box and wishing that she would ask him whether he would like some more. Probably the Queen knew quite well what he was thinking; for she knew, though Edmund did not, that this was enchanted Turkish Delight and that anyone who had once tasted it would want more and more of it, and would even, if they were allowed, go on eating it till they killed themselves.
- C. Unfortunately, the Garden of Eden shows food does not need to be enchanted to lead us to ruin!
- D. What is gluttony? Is it a problem? How do we fight it?

II. The Problem of Gluttony

- A. Gluttony - desiring food more than God & eternal life
Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Jo 6:26
 - 1. They wanted Jesus - just to get more bread and fish
 - 2. Gluttony - desiring food even more than eternal life
 - 3. Ultimately it is a preference for food over God
- B. Gluttony - excessive focus on food over God & eternity
Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” John 6:27

- 1. Their focus and labor was for temporal food
- 2. This eclipsed hunger for God & eternity

C. The proper focus - Jesus!

Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” ²⁸ Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” John 6:27–29

- 1. They were focused on bread and this life
- 2. Jesus said they should be focused on Him!
- 3. He can provide True food - Himself (John 6:35)
- 4. The Gospel - they are called to believe on Him!
- 5. There is a contrast between those whose focus is on fulfilling their temporal cravings and those who develop a hunger for eternity, between those who eat only earthly bread and those who feast on the Bread of heaven

III. The Root Vice of Gluttony

A. Defining gluttony

Gluttony is a disordered love that excessively craves food and drink, attempting to fill spiritual hunger with material fare.

- 1. Gluttony excessively craves food and drink
 - a. The problem is not wanting food and drink - we are created with a need for them
Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.” Genesis 1:29

b. God commands us to eat and drink before Him
Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the Lord your God always. Deut 14:23

1. This was a celebration - lots of food, wine
2. Part of Israel's worship before God!

c. God does not want ascetics who won't enjoy food
Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³ They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. ⁴ For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. 1 Timothy 4:2–5

d. The problem in gluttony is not needing or desiring food - it is the excessive craving of food

2. Gluttony attempts to fill spiritual hunger with material fare

a. Physical food is meant to point us to spiritual food
He humbled you, **causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna**, which neither you nor your fathers had known, **to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.** Deuteronomy 8:3

1. This is the lesson of physical hunger pangs - we need God and the Food He provides
2. Israel was taught this - but forgot and failed
3. Jesus faced the same temptation and obeyed! (Matthew 4:4)

4. But the people in John 6 acted like Israel in the wilderness - craving physical food more than God

- b. Gluttony feels and responds to physical hunger, but stops short and never recognizes true spiritual hunger
- c. Consequently, gluttony tries to feed spiritual hunger with physical food
A glutton is one who raids the icebox for a cure for spiritual malnutrition. - Frederick Buechner,

B. Gluttony's misplaced identity

I seek to find my identity in physical desires, attempting to fill my spiritual hunger by material food and drink rather than by God.

1. Gluttony is so focused on physical desires - especially hunger and thirst - that it cloaks and misses spiritual hunger
2. Ultimately gluttony causes us to look to food to fill our spiritual, emotional and relational needs
Gluttony is the sin of looking to food to satisfy the craving of our souls for security, a sense of well-being, comfort, and control over our lives....Gluttony is a hunger for earthly things as a substitute for God himself. - John Mabray
3. Unbridled gluttony turns our stomach into our god
For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. Phil 3:18–19

C. Five ways to eat like a glutton

1. By what we eat

- a. Sumptuous - too much rich or junk food; eating the wrong kind of food that tastes good but has little nutrition

- b. Fussy - it has to be made just the right way; like a child who must have the crust cut off (see Screwtape Letters, XVII)

2. By the way we eat

- a. Hasty - consuming food whole, hardly chewing; not giving any enjoyment to eating; 'wolfing it down'
- b. Ravenous - not waiting for others; eating more when it means others will not be able to get much
- c. Excessive - just eating too much food, either at one sitting or by non-stop snacking; nervous or depressed eating

3. The acronym FRESH

D. Gluttony's fruit

1. Ingratitude - consuming rather than being thankful for food and drink
2. Lack of self-control in other areas - constant practice of giving in to physical desires regarding food and drink makes it hard to resist in other areas
3. Drunkenness - overindulging in alcohol
4. Openness to sexual and other sins - ancient orgies contained both food and drink (Exodus 32)
5. Because food is so central to human existence and to the drama of redemption, its proper use opens the door to holiness and its gluttonous abuse opens the door to further sin.
6. Listen to After Hours for more on the importance of food in Scripture

IV. Applying the Word

A. Grow in the virtue of temperance

1. Gluttony is at its heart about excess; temperance is at its heart about moderation
2. Temperance does not refer to abstaining from alcohol or any particular food or drink, but rather learning to eat and drink in moderation
3. Practices to cultivate temperance
 - a. Fasting - key practice; all or specific types of food; regular practice
 - b. Feasting - the cycle of fasting & feasting is important; quality food; family and friends; savor the food, drink and fellowship

B. Cultivate self-control

1. Gluttony is a lack of self-control with regard to food and drink
2. Seek to let the Spirit cultivate self-control in us
3. Practices to cultivate self-control
 - a. Physical exercise & exertion - gluttony is giving in to physical desires; physical exercise disciplines our physical bodies and desires
 - b. Paul commends bodily discipline (1 Corinthians 9:27)

C. Renew a passion for God

1. Gluttony attempts to feed spiritual hunger and needs with physical food and drink
2. To combat, we must recognize, encourage and feed spiritual hunger

3. Practices to renew passion for God

- a. Lord's Supper - means of grace; spiritual food for spiritual hunger
- b. Both renews our hunger for good and fulfills it

D. The Table of feasting

1. Confess gluttony - trying to fill spiritual hunger with physical food
2. Ask God to renew and fill spiritual hunger

Gluttony

John 6:26-29

March 18, 2018

Communion

Numbers 6:24-26

Teaching keywords: Lent; fasting; passion for Christ; Lord's Supper; self-control; sin; character; sanctification

The Lord bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24–26

Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. ²⁷ Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” ²⁸ Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” John 6:26–29