



SEVEN • Gluttony

Sometimes Bible Studies can make you hungry. So go order a few pizzas, and unravel some logs of cookie dough, and we'll look at this week's Deadly Sin: gluttony.

Check this out, from etonline.com:

"The Glutton Bowl"? Gastronomic Gold! February 21, 2002 Tonight, the biggest and fastest "gastronomic athletes" from around the world are lining up for the most outrageous, gut-busting fest to hit the small screen – "The Glutton Bowl: The World's Greatest Eating Competition." This two-hour eat-'til-you-drop mouth-off, which is running against the Olympics in its bid for viewers, pits 40 competitors in various face-stuffing challenges. Winners get, what else? A big cash prize and tons of free food! Some of the Glutton Bowl's buffet busters are members of the International Federation of Competitive Eaters. According to FOX, these chowhounds will compete in front of thousands of spectators for the coveted "champ of the chomp" title. Earlybird-special amateurs will want to steer clear – or get gobbled up along the way! In the first round, contestants will be judged on how fast they can down huge quantities of food – bowls of mayonnaise, beef tongue, sticks of butter, and other edibles. Winners in each round earn a spot in the finals, which, as expected, is an all-out gorge-fest. In true reality-show spirit, the final championship round throws in some surprise delicacies – definitely not for the faint of heart or weak of stomach. The competition ends when only one pro glutton is left standing. "The Glutton Bowl: The World's Greatest Eating Competition" airs tonight, February 21 at 8 p.m. ET, on FOX. And you thought the family picnic was exciting..

Divorceinfo.com:

My Struggle with Gluttony: I use the term "gluttony" on purpose, because it helps remind me of the sinful and disobedient nature of my struggle with food. Unfortunately, for too long, I have allowed food (or rather, my own pride and selfishness) to win. I hope that's over now. I've spelled out my struggle in all its sickening detail here so you will help to hold me accountable for dealing with it aggressively.

I am a battle-scarred veteran of the diet wars. I have used, at one time or another, at least six different diet regimens. I have tried fasting, Weigh Down, PermaSlim, Sugar Busters, and several others. A couple of them actually worked, but then I would lose control and my weight would rise again.

I haven't actually tracked my gains and losses over the years, but I'm confident that I've lost and regained at least 100 pounds. Because of this, my wife and family are sick of my declaring "victory" over my gluttony. I won't do that again, at least not for a very long time.

How Did We Get to be Such Gluttons?

Gastronomy, is the art of using food to create happiness. There are three traditional ways of finding happiness in food. Eating until one is full up and cozy is the first. The second is treating food as an amusement: a caress of the senses, an aphrodisiac (along with wine, candlelight and music.) The third is exploring variety: enjoying different cultural and exotic foods. For example, the menu in Ghana, a poor community, contains 114 species of fruit, 46 kinds of seeds and 47 types of greens. In the Andes, a peasant can distinguish between 300 varieties of potatoes.



America seems to have avoided these three traditional categories and opted for a fourth: gluttony – eating ‘till one has to waddle.

1. Which of these forms of eating is most attractive to you?
2. How much thought do you give a day to food?

Insight from Spacefem.com

“Popcorn: The Epitome of Gluttony.” by Big Hed:

Is it just me, or are most people who eat popcorn sickening? Im not talking specifically about the people eating the popcorn, but the manner in which they do it. First off I want to say that I am guilty of doing what I will later describe.

A prime example of how gluttonous popcorn is would be the container it comes in. A bucket! An extra-large overflowing bucket of popped corn, butter, and salt. The next step in being a popcorn glutton is how it is eaten. Open your hand. Shove it into the bucket. Scoop up as much popcorn as you can. Shove it all into your mouth and start chewing. Is this grossing you out yet?

I have actually seen people get a handful of it and literally vacuum it all up with their mouth starting at their palm and working their way to the fingers. Im not perfect at etiquette when it comes to eating, but shoving your face full of this yellow, greasy stuff is repulsing.

3. While “Big Hed” from Spacefem.com lacks in the area of compassion, he brings up an interesting observation: people can be gluttons over specific types of food, even if they’re not always gluttons. Do you have a glutton food?
4. Why do you think Americans have become such gluttons?

From loki.stockton.edu:

Gluttony, is one of the Seven Deadly Sins, which was made popular by the movie Seven. It is usually associated with overeating, but can take many other forms such as drinking, smoking, gambling, sex, etc. It is debatable whether gluttony is indeed a sin or not.

5. This woman brings up two interesting issues. First, gluttony and consuming to excess can apply to other areas. Is there another area where you are prone to excess? What areas of excess often go together and how are they connected?



6. The second issue is whether gluttony is a sin. The category of the “Seven Deadly Sins” is not from the Bible, so is gluttony a sin, or simply an unhealthy lifestyle?

Understanding the Problem

While many problems factor into compulsive or over-eating, the Bible focuses on the spiritual dimension of the problem.

Read. Ephesians 5:17-20:

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

7. While the subject here is drinking, some principles seem to apply. Why might over drinking/eating keep us from understanding the will of God?
8. What is debauchery?
9. What is drinking, or food, taking the place of?
10. What do you know about the Holy Spirit? Who is He? Where is He?
11. From the passage, it seems that at the core of gluttony, we are looking to food to meet needs it was not designed to meet. What are some of those needs?
12. In what ways do you turn to food to meet emotional needs?



Solutions

Gluttony has been around, well, since there was eating. Here are some time tested solutions.

Wisdom from Rushman.org:

More Pleasure Than It Was Made For: The world is full of good things, from the beauty of the stars to the ever-changing and never-changing oceans to the pleasure of human company. We are free to enjoy these things without becoming focused on any one of them to the exclusion of all else. It is possible to become so caught up in a pleasure, whether food or fun, that we can no longer enjoy other things, and would be willing to sacrifice other pleasures for the one. We enter into Gluttony when we demand more pleasure from something than it was made for.

The cure for Gluttony lies in deliberately reducing our use of pleasurable things, not in eliminating them. When eating, quit before feeling stuffed. When snacking, don't just keep stuffing, but quit after a while. With people, allow some quiet time together, and also get some time alone. Of course, if time alone is very pleasurable, get out more often. And if the toast is a bit too brown, eat it anyway.

13. It has been long held that the cardinal virtue that battles over gluttony is the spiritual discipline of moderation. As a discipline, it can be cultivated and practiced in many realms and brought to bear on the problem of gluttony. In what areas could you practice moderation?

14. The Ephesians passage mentions that the control and power we seek can be found in God's Spirit. Have you ever heard this?

15. What do you know about the Holy Spirit?

Summary

When Jesus left this earth He promised to send the Holy Spirit to indwell His followers, and help them to live a life that's pleasing to God. Read over the booklet *Satisfied?* to better understand how God's Spirit can empower you.

End 

The Compass is the discipleship curriculum for Campus Crusade for Christ's Campus Ministry. It was created by Centerfield Productions, the field based division of CruPress. We'd love to hear your feedback on this lesson. Please write us at centerfield@uscm.org

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