

Gluttony

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.”

Luke 21:34

Introduction:

1. We have been studying the heart, for we want to have David’s heart and walk perfectly before our God.
2. The Lord introduced this sin to me several times in the past, but He has now convicted me to preach it.
3. I intended to preach about the war against our souls (I Pet 2:11), but the Lord showed me a specific lust.
4. For us to have perfect hearts and lives before Him, we must be broken and contrite about this matter.
5. Surfeiting, or gluttony, can overcharge our hearts by burdening, distracting, stealing, or occupying them.
6. There is no one here who by nature loves to eat more than I do, but we must set our hearts spiritually.
7. Do you fully believe the Word of God? So whatever it says about your lifestyle you will gladly obey?
8. Is Jesus Christ Lord? Is He the Blessed and Only Potentate of your life? Is He the Lord of your fork?
9. Will you come before the Word of God with me and tremble with poor and contrite spirits (Is 66:1-2)?
10. Will we esteem all His precepts regarding all things to be right, and hate every false way (Ps 119:128)?

I. The WARNING

- A. Eve was tempted to the first sin by a combination of lusts regarding food (Genesis 3:6).
- B. Esau was profane by honoring his belly above his birthright (Gen 25:30-34; Heb 12:16).
- C. God restricted the men of Israel to a set portion of manna – an homer (Ex 16:13-18,36).
- D. Gluttony is a sin of stubborn, rebellious, disobedient, and drunk young men (De 21:20).
 1. **Gluttony.** The vice of excessive eating. **Glutton.** One who eats to excess, or who takes pleasure in immoderate eating; a gormandizer. **Gormandizer.** To eat like a glutton; to feed voraciously.
 2. The word only occurs here and Proverbs 23:21; Matthew 11:19; and Luke 7:34.
 3. Gluttony is not obesity necessarily. Most young male gluttons are not obese.
- E. Israel lusted after meat and brought great misery on themselves (Ps 78:29-31; Num 11).
- F. Fine dining is a seductive temptation leading to compromise (Pro 23:1-8; Psalm 141:3).
 1. Fine dining is indicted here by “dainties” and “dainty meats” and the rich host.
 2. We have the saying, “The fastest way to a man’s heart is through his stomach.”
 3. Salesmen and bank loan officers are experts at using meals to flatter and seduce.
 4. A strange woman and David used fine food sinfully (Prov 7:14; II Sam 11:8,13).
 5. Putting a knife to your throat – strong language - shows Solomon’s seriousness.
 6. If you love to eat, it is better to put a knife to your throat, than to sin by food, for there are more dangers in fine dining and much food than just a deceitful host.
- G. Solomon warned that an intemperate love of fine food brings poverty (Proverbs 21:17).
- H. Solomon warned his son against undisciplined and wild eating of meat (Prov 23:19-21).
 1. Read the godly concern of a father appealing to his son for his heart (23:19,26).
 2. Gluttony is here defined as the riotous – wild and undisciplined – eating of meat.
 3. **Riot.** To live in a wanton, dissipated, or unrestrained manner; to revel; to indulge to excess in something.
 4. See also Prov 28:7; Luke 15:13; Rom 13:13; Titus 1:6; I Pet 4:4; and II Pet 2:13.
 5. Gluttony – riotous eating of meat – is connected very closely to drunkenness.
 6. They both bring poverty and drowsiness by their expense and dulling effects.
 7. Dullness or heavy sleeping is a horrible problem in life (Prov 6:9-11; 24:30-34).
 8. Strictly, the wise man warns his son against even associating with such men.
 9. Fools engage in such excess and riot, but wise men will avoid it altogether.

- I. Solomon warned very practically that moderation in sweets is wise (Prov 25:16,27).
- J. Solomon warned about foolish sons who are companions of riotous gluttons (Pro 28:7).
- K. Solomon warned of national woe when gluttony is part of the culture (Eccl 10:16-17).
 - 1. Large breakfasts, which by my sinful nature I love, can be gluttonous excess.
 - 2. Farmers who work hard early in the morning are one thing, but princes another.
 - 3. There is a huge difference between continental breakfasts and breakfast buffets.
 - 4. There is a huge difference between a bagel and the typical business breakfast.
 - 5. There is a proper **time** and **purpose** for eating – when hungry and for strength.
- L. Isaiah warned against a careless attitude and heavy eating and drinking (Isaiah 5:11-13).
- M. Isaiah warned Judah against riotous living in light of God's judgment (Isaiah 22:12-14).
 - 1. Assyrians were surrounding the city, and Israel should have soberly repented.
 - 2. Instead of such sobriety, they continued in feasting, gluttony, and drunkenness.
 - 3. This is gluttony as indicated by the riotous activity and arrogant spirit of it.
 - 4. America is guilty of similar presumption and arrogance after the fear of 9/11/01.
 - 5. God promised Isaiah He would not forgive such pleasure until they were dead.
- N. Isaiah warned against the wicked of Israel for their gluttonous eating (Isaiah 56:9-12).
- O. Ezekiel warned Judah regarding Sodom's sin of fullness of break (Ezekiel 16:49).
 - 1. The fullness of bread should be understood wisely as eating too much bread.
 - 2. Observe also that Sodom was proud and too idle, just like America in 2002.
- P. Amos warned those taking their ease and eating their full without fear (Amos 6:1-7).
- Q. Jesus warned about an evil servant presuming on His delayed return (Matt 24:48-51).
 - 1. We must be always vigilant, regardless of His delay, lest He judge us hypocrites.
 - 2. The eating and drinking with the drunken in this place must include gluttony.
- R. Jesus told of a rich man who foolishly chose a life of eating and pleasure (Lu 12:16-21).
- S. The prodigal wasted his inheritance with riotous living, including gluttony (Luk 15:13).
- T. It is the selfish rich man in hell, who once fared sumptuously every day (Luke 16:19).
- U. Jesus warned His disciples to be very vigilant as His judgment drew near (Luke 21:34).
 - 1. Hearts can be overcharged – loaded or burdened – with distracting activities.
 - 2. Surfeiting = gluttony, so our Lord warned the disciples against overeating.
 - 3. **Surfeiting.** To feed to excess or satiety; to sicken or disorder by overfeeding. To eat or drink to excess of; to feast gluttonously or over-abundantly upon.
 - 4. Three things here can occupy and distract our hearts from godly vigilance.
 - 5. Though living on the other side of 70 A.D., we must be vigilant with these three.
 - 6. The Lord greatly used this text, word by word, to convict me on this subject.
- V. Paul calls us to wake up, leave sin's darkness, and put on holy honesty (Rom 13:11-14).
 - 1. The armor of light we should be wearing in our war (I Pet 2:11) rejects gluttony.
 - 2. There are three clear connections here – wickedness of diet, sex, and attitude.
 - 3. Chambering is sexual indulgence, which was often done in private chambers, and so is connected to wantonness, which is lascivious and luxurious excess.
 - 4. Strife and envying, sins of the spirit, are very connected (James 3:14; I Cor 3:3).
 - 5. The rioting here is connected to drunkenness, so we assume it includes gluttony, by seeing the connection elsewhere (Deut 21:20; Pr 23:20-21; 28:7; I Peter 4:4).
 - 6. Paul warns further against even making provision or opportunity for these lusts.
- W. Paul indicts the character of the wicked as eating and drinking foolishly (I Cor 15:32).
- X. Paul warned against numerous works of the flesh that God cannot abide (Gal 5:19-21).
 - 1. Revellings are riotous feasts, festivals, or parties, implying undisciplined eating.
 - 2. **Revellings.** Riotous or disorderly merry-making or festivity; a revel.
 - 3. Revellings are connected to drunkenness, so we assume it includes gluttony.
- Y. Paul warned of belly-worshipping enemies, who minded earthly things (Phil 3:18-19).

- Z. Paul told Titus to rebuke the Cretians, who were known for their gluttony (Tit 1:12-13).
- AA. Paul told Titus to teach young men to be sober, as this is a great deficiency of male youth – who are often gluttons because of it (Titus 2:6; Deut 21:20; Pro 23:19-21; 28:7).
- BB. Peter calls us to follow the Lord by denying ourselves former pleasures (I Peter 4:1-5).
 - 1. Denying ourselves the lusts of our flesh is suffering, but Jesus suffered for us.
 - 2. These former lusts included excess of wine, revellings, and banquetings.
 - 3. **Revellings.** Riotous or disorderly merry-making or festivity; a revel.
 - 4. **Banquetings.** Indulgence in luxurious entertainment, feasting, carousal.
 - 5. These things – excess of wine, revellings, and banquetings – are excess of riot.
 - 6. **Riot.** To live in a wanton, dissipated, or unrestrained manner; to revel; to indulge to excess in something.
 - 7. These words clearly include wild and undisciplined feasting and eating of food.
 - 8. If we modify and temper our conduct in these areas, we will be counted strange.
 - 9. All who continue in such activities shall soon give an account to the holy Judge.
- CC. Jude and Peter warn of fearless, riotous eaters in the churches (Jude 1:12; II Peter 2:13).
- DD. It is an excludable sin, by virtue of being like drunkenness (I Cor 5:11; 6:10; Gal 5:21).
 - 1. It is a twin sin by frequent connection (De 21:20; Pr 23:20-21; Luk 7:34; 21:34).
 - 2. The demonstrative word “such” includes any similar sin to these three lists.

II. The PROBLEM

- A. Our bodies need and desire food without sin (Gen 2:8-17; I Pet 2:2), but our natural man includes a lust of the flesh – sinful eating – that is not of God (I John 2:15-17).
 - 1. God made everything good and for a purpose, but we make it sin by abusing it.
 - 2. God made wine good and for the purpose of cheer, but drunks drink too much.
 - 3. God made food good and for the purpose of strength, but we desire it our way.
- B. It is the perilous times of the last days, and carnal Christianity reigns (II Timothy 3:1-5).
 - 1. Men have a form of godliness, but they deny His authority in areas like eating.
 - 2. Men are lovers of pleasures more than God, which obviously includes eating.
 - 3. They are incontinent, which undisciplined lifestyle includes unrestrained eating.
 - 4. They love themselves much, which leads to eating according to their own heart.
 - 5. Our culture is the most undisciplined – incontinent – we can easily imagine. We are addicted to immediate and full gratification of our sensual desires and lusts.
 - 6. This cultural incontinence and riotous living is reflected in little hard preaching.
 - 7. When the subject is broached, fat people are condemned rather than the true gluttons – the foolish young men who eat riotously often, though staying slim.
 - 8. Sobriety or temperance are neither taught nor practiced, making an honest hearing of this subject difficult. Few are serious or disciplined about anything.
- C. America has an excessive amount of food, prosperity, and leisure time to fuel gluttony.
 - 1. Advertisements are everywhere to encourage us to eat more, and more often.
 - 2. America is obsessed with eating and eating a lot – inordinate affection (Col 3:5).
 - 3. We have buffets of many different foods, which can easily lead to overeating.
 - 4. We have super grocery stores with an almost unlimited assortment of foods.
 - 5. Our high level of prosperity and extensive leisure time allow for much eating.
 - 6. We have super-sized everything to extreme measures unheard by our parents.
 - a. The standard soda used to be 10 or 12 ounces, now it is 20 or 32 ounces.
 - b. Hamburgers were 2-ounce patties, now they are 6 ounce or more patties.
 - c. French fries were served in a tiny paper bag, now a cardboard trough.
 - d. Plates and portions are larger, and meals have appetizers and dessert.
 - 7. Waiting until mealtime is a forgotten rule that was inviolate one generation ago.

- D. Hardly anyone is raising a voice against this sin in pulpits or homes. It is ignored.
 - 1. Many Baptist preachers will yell loud against drinking and drunkenness, but you never hear them, except for fat preacher jokes, even mention the problem.
 - 2. A “Gluttony” search in GOOGLE yields *Divine Gluttony, Sinful Delicacies*.
 - 3. The word “gluttony” is used far more in light speech and jokes than seriously.
 - 4. Have you ever heard food being referred to as “so good it is sinful”?
- E. Young men, whom God believes need sobriety the most, are particularly vulnerable to this sin due to their lack of gravity and seriousness (Tit 2:6; Prov 23:19-21; Deut 21:20).
 - 1. One of the things the earth cannot bear is a fool filled with meat (Prov 30:22).
 - 2. Surely you have heard or seen eating contests to see who can eat the most.
 - 3. Surely you have heard or seen eating that is perfectly “riotous eating of flesh.”
- F. Older men are also vulnerable to this sin by youthful habits, incontinence, and pride.
- G. Habits are horrible. Appetite, stomach capacity, and the “full feeling” are conditioned.
 - 1. Our bodies expect to be bloated with 2-3 thousand calories at a sitting, when that should be more than enough for the entire day’s caloric intake of most men.
 - 2. A few days of reduced portions or fasting will cause small portions to fill you.
 - 3. Nervous habits lead to “the munchies,” which leads to a pound of chips and dip.
 - 4. Afternoon cravings result from over indulgence in processed carbohydrates.
 - 5. Binges in the kitchen or with sweets make up for emotional problems or stress.
- H. We know God limits sex and alcohol, but we presume eating has unlimited freedom.
 - 1. This is due to a lack of teaching in the church, the home, and the media.
 - 2. Smaller portions and disciplined eating for health reasons misses the point.
 - 3. While depriving ourselves in these other areas, we make up for it in appetite.

III. The DEFINITION

- A. The Bible condemns many sins that require a great degree of wise and sober judgment.
 - 1. What is effeminate (I Cor 6:9)? Wearing a dress and wig? Or enjoying art?
 - 2. What is modesty (I Tim 2:9)? Mennonite apparel? Or longer and looser?
 - 3. What is forsaking (Heb 10:25)? 5 years? 5 weeks? One time after warnings?
 - 4. What is long hair (I Cor 11:14-16)? On a man? On a woman?
 - 5. What is drunkenness (Eph 5:18)? Breath test? .15? Vomiting? Staggering?
 - 6. A godly attitude does not contend foolishly by asking, “But how long is long?”
 - 7. Since these things are sinful and condemned, holy saints move far from them.
 - 8. They consider the Lord’s warnings and choose to move in the right direction.
 - 9. Do we define gluttony as vomiting after meals? Or do we limit food to survival?
 - 10. These two extremes are inadequate, we can do much better with little effort.
- B. Here is where most conviction, teaching, or rules on gluttony are destroyed by evil men.
 - 1. Some will rebel and say since they have not heard it from others I am extreme; but this subject is part of sound doctrine no longer popular in this generation.
 - 2. Some will rebel and show hard hearts by accusing me of preaching against food; but they ignore that I am the only preacher they have ever heard on Deut 14:26.
 - 3. Some will rebel and show hard hearts by accusing me of preaching against America; but they ignore my Bible basis and Paul’s warning of perilous times.
 - 4. Some will rebel and say they don’t feel any conviction about their eating; but that only means they have an untaught conscience like polygamists in Kuwait.
 - 5. Some will rebel and say the definition of gluttony is too vague for it to have meaning; but the word does have some meaning, and we are fools to reject it.
 - 6. Some will rebel and say that I must have a personal problem with gluttony; but though I have had a problem with it does not excuse you from your equal sins.

7. Some will rebel and say without specific rules of gluttony I don't have a case; but this subject like many others in the Bible has degrees of wisdom and faith.
 8. Some will rebel and say they get hungry and headaches unless they eat their present amount; but this is carnal rebellion based on natural reasoning and their foolish habits, like a drug addict opposed to quitting cold turkey or a polygamist arguing against monogamy due to its "boredom."
 9. Some will rebel and say God gave them their enormous appetite; but the sodomite often uses this line of reasoning when told he must give up other men.
 10. Some will rebel and say since they are less than 200 pounds overweight they are not gluttons; but this is no better than saying only vomit proves drunkenness.
 11. Let me remind you that the Holy God – Jehovah – gave the strong and repeated statements about gluttony found in the first section of this outline.
 12. True saints and sons of God will receive the word with all readiness of mind and search the Scriptures to see if these things are true (Acts 17:11; I Thess 5:21).
- C. Let us begin with the definition of the Bible words by the Oxford English Dictionary.
1. **Gluttony.** The vice of excessive eating. **Glutton.** One who eats to excess, or who takes pleasure in immoderate eating; a gormandizer. **Gormandizer.** To eat like a glutton; to feed voraciously.
 2. **Riot.** To live in a wanton, dissipated, or unrestrained manner; to revel; to indulge to excess in something.
 3. **Surfeiting.** To feed to excess or satiety; to sicken or disorder by overfeeding. To eat or drink to excess of; to feast gluttonously or over-abundantly upon.
 4. **Revellings.** Riotous or disorderly merry-making or festivity; a revel.
 5. **Banquetings.** Indulgence in luxurious entertainment, feasting, carousal.
- D. Let us continue by making comparisons within the Bible as Paul directed (I Cor 2:13).
1. God gives food for health, strength, and maintenance primarily (Ps 104:14-15).
 2. Gluttony is riotous – wild and excessive – eating of meat (Prov 23:19-21), which everyone in here has witnessed numerous times, especially among young men.
 3. Honey, representing sweet dainties, is to be greatly limited (Proverbs 25:16,27).
 4. Gluttony is not eating for strength – but for wild pleasure only (Eccl 10:16-17).
- E. Gluttony is comparable to drunkenness in its nature and abuse of God's good creation.
1. God created wine for good (Psalm 104:14-15), but drinking too much is sinful.
 2. Drunkenness is drinking wine to excess, where wine clouds the heart (Eph 5:18).
 3. The Bible often connects the sins: De 21:20; Pr 23:20-21; Matt 11:19; Lu 21:34.
 4. Drunkenness is not caused by wine, as Jesus argued brilliantly (Matt 15:1-20).
 5. Drunkenness is caused by a sinner not ruling his heart and drinking too much.
 6. Gluttony is an excessive eating of food in an ungoverned way for lustful ends.
- F. Obesity does not necessarily mean gluttony, due to glandular and metabolic genetics and health; but obesity is often the result of gluttony, and it should be examined soberly.
- G. I am not going to give you absolute specific rules, for I would be going beyond Scripture. But a general definition is far better than no definition or consciousness at all.
1. Godly eating has a purpose – primarily strength (Psalm 104:15; Eccl 10:17).
 2. Godly eating has a time – when it is needed for strength (Eccl 10:16; Is 5:11).
 3. Godly eating has a manner – temperately with control (Pr 23:20; I Cor 9:24-27).
 4. Godly eating has an amount – less than truly full (Pr 25:16; 30:7-9; Ezek 16:49).
 5. Godly eating has a discipline – not being under its power (I Cor 6:12; Pro 23:2).
 6. Godly eating has a spirit – thanksgiving in truth (I Timothy 4:3-5; Deut 28:47).
 7. Godly eating has a priority – spiritual is better (Pr 15:16-17; Lu 4:4; Job 23:12).
 8. Godly eating has seriousness – with sobriety (Tit 2:6; I Peter 5:8; I Cor 15:32).

9. Godly eating has a goal – the glory of God (Col 3:17; I Cor 10:31; Luke 24:30).
10. Godly eating has a content – limited dainties (Pr 23:1-3; Ps 141:3; Pr 25:16,27).
- H. Consider some other rules for righteousness to keep us godly in our approach to eating.
 1. There is godliness in fasting – which is very neglected (Matt 17:21; I Cor 7:5), so don't chafe about a little self-denial, when true saints often forsook all food.
 2. There is no room for eating contests, personal records, or riotous single meals.
 3. There is no room for loud, boisterous, foolish, and unrestrained party eating.
 4. There is no room for joking or jesting about gluttony, gorging, or other sins.
 5. There is a place for feasts, which justify more than your ordinary daily diet.
- I. By wisely comparing drunkenness, bishops are bound tighter (I Tim 3:3,8; Tit 1:7; 2:3).
- J. Temperance in eating will result in weight loss, more energy, better sleep, better health.
 1. The single factor contributing most to sickness and disease, after sin, is obesity.
 2. It is a fact that modest food deprivation is the single best route to life extension.

IV. The CURE

- A. This sin requires mortification – putting to death – of our fleshly appetites, just like other lusts of the flesh (Colossians 3:5-7; Proverbs 23:1-3; Matthew 5:29-30).
- B. Our moderation must be well known, which is temperance, or self-discipline (Phil 4:5).
- C. Dare to be a Daniel! Choose the conviction of Daniel to restrict your appetite (Dan 1:8).
 1. Daniel feared defilement and refused the king's meat and wine for four reasons.
 - a. The meats included unclean animals forbidden by Moses' law (Lev 11).
 - b. The meats and wine were offered to the Babylonian god Bel (De 32:38).
 - c. The meats and wine might seduce his soul by such dainties (Pr 23:1-3).
 - d. He could not easily justify such luxury (Heb 11:24-26; II Sam 11:6-13).
 - e. Daniel did eat much better – at least wine – later in his life (Daniel 10:3).
 2. **Pulse.** Edible seeds of legumes cultivated for food, as peas, beans, lentils, etc.
 3. **Water.** Abundant free liquid satisfying thirst and not making you fat or dizzy.
- D. We should not allow any provision or opportunity for this common sin (Rom 13:13-14).
 1. If you have severe temptations with abundance, then avoid food buffets.
 2. Tell your wife your intentions and limit yourself to wise portions or one plate.
 3. Split an entree with your spouse in restaurants. It will save you much money.
 4. Don't purchase snack foods or candy, or make them available between meals.
- E. Godly understanding of temperance and sobriety will make this subject easier, so get some outlines, meditate on these two related subjects, and ask the Lord for strength.
- F. Fast periodically, by the Bible, and for the Lord. The discipline will build self-denial.
- G. God gives us richly all things to enjoy (I Tim 6:17), but not for intemperate gluttony.
- H. Yes, you may eat whatsoever thy soul lusteth after with your family (Deut 14:26), but this neither included unclean animals nor wine and meat to an ungodly excess.
- I. Too much leads to forgetting God, so learn the wise perspective of seeking only food convenient for yourself (Deut 32:13-15; Proverbs 30:7-9; Ezekiel 16:49; Hosea 13:5-6).
- J. Substitute spiritual "eating" (Bible reading, prayer, memory) for some physical eating.
- K. Eating is pleasure, but godly contentment can occur even with hunger (Phil 4:11-13).
- L. God's Word should be more important than food (Job 23:13; Luke 4:4; Psalm 19:10).

Conclusion:

1. Our whole duty is to fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl 12:13). Eat to live, rather than live to eat.
2. As there are degrees of drinking wine among the members in a church, eating should also have degrees based on responsibility, so I will gladly take the lead in this matter (I Timothy 3:3,8; Titus 1:7; 2:3).
3. Having reviewed David's mighty men with our men, here is opportunity to be greater than Joab (Pro 16:32).