

GLUTTONY
Seven Deadly Sins Series - 2
1 Samuel 2:12-17; Philip. 3:18-21
March 17, 2019

Eli's sons were wicked men; they had no regard for the Lord. [13] Now it was the practice of the priests with the people that whenever anyone offered a sacrifice and while the meat was being boiled, the servant of the priest would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand. [14] He would plunge it into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot, and the priest would take for himself whatever the fork brought up. This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh. [15] But even before the fat was burned, the servant of the priest would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, "Give the priest some meat to roast; he won't accept boiled meat from you, but only raw."

[16] If the man said to him, "Let the fat be burned up first, and then take whatever you want," the servant would then answer, "No, hand it over now; if you don't, I'll take it by force."

[17] This sin of the young men was very great in the Lord's sight, for they were treating the Lord's offering with contempt.

1 Samuel 2:12-17

INTRODUCTION:

The Law stipulated that the priests were to be cared for.

And part of their support involved

giving a portion of the animal offering to the priests.

So, it would be perfectly acceptable

for the servant of the priests to come seeking

a portion of the meat.

But . . . only *after* the meat had been used as a sacrifice to God!

**Eli's sons, who were serving as priests,
demanded their portion of the meat
before it had been offered to God!**

**In other words,
they were putting themselves *ahead* of God!**

**And that captures the very heart of our subject for today:
gluttony.**

GILLIGAN THEORY:

**Today we continue our series of sermons on
"The Seven Deadly Sins."**

**And the character on *Gilligan's Island*
who most closely represents gluttony is Gilligan, himself.**

**It may seem really odd
that the skinniest castaway on the Island represents Gluttony.
However, food was his prime motivation;
it was the currency in which he dealt.**

**Whenever anyone needed Gilligan to do something for them,
they just dangled food in front of him.**

**Oh, Gilligan could be tempted with Mr. Howell's money,
Ginger could tempt Gilligan with an innocent kiss,
the Skipper could hit Gilligan with his hat and get results.**

**But it was Mary Ann's coconut cream pies
that turned him into a mindless slave drone.
Fetching water, cutting down trees,**

helping Mary Ann do the laundry.

DEFINITION:

So, let's begin with a definition.

Gluttony can be defined as excessive or indiscriminate eating; characterized by a voracious, greedy appetite that propels a person to devour food.

Gluttony is the over-indulgence and over-consumption of food, drink, or intoxicants to the point of waste.

Although gluttony is usually associated with eating too much, it has a broader connotation of trying to consume more of anything than you actually need.

The Early Church leaders took a more expansive view of gluttony, arguing that it could also include an obsessive anticipation of meals, and the constant eating of delicacies and excessively costly foods.

Thomas Aquinas made a list of five ways to commit gluttony, including:

- eating too soon
- eating too expensively
- eating too much
- eating too eagerly
- eating too daintily

Thanks to both Nathan's Hot Dog Stand in Coney Island, Brooklyn, and ESPN we can witness gluttony first-hand every July 4th.

That's when Nathan's hosts the International Hot Dog Eating Contest -

- an annual competitive eating competition.

**Last year, the event drew over 30,000 spectators
and an additional 1.5 million households watched it live on ESPN.**

**Joey Chestnut managed to eat 74 hot dogs – with buns –
in 10 minutes!**

Want another example?

How about Wimpy, Popeye's friend.

**Wimpy loves to eat hamburgers,
and is usually seen with one**

but is usually too cheap to pay for them.

**So, he is constantly trying to con other people
into buying his lunch.**

His famous line is

"I'd gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today".

Both those examples -

**- and even the example from Gilligan's Island -
- are humorous and somewhat interesting.**

But there is a darker side to gluttony . . .

. . . a much, much darker side.

We would all agree

that gluttony is harmful to our physical health.

At least in the United States,

food has become the god of millions.

We obsess over food

and then we obsess over diets

to reverse the effects of overeating.

We mistakenly have made Jesus "Lord of the Fork."

And it is costing us.

As the nation's scales are going up. . . up . . . up

. . . and it's clear that we have an obesity health crisis.

Many illnesses that are robbing us of our health

stem directly from unhealthy eating habits.

- obesity

- high blood pressure

- heart disease

- Type II diabetes

the list continues . . . as lives are quietly destroyed.

There are those who argue that gluttony

is harmful to our mental health.

There is strong evidence that over-eating

is often a symptom of some other psychological problem.

Diving into a bag of potato chips

in order to compensate for feelings of

inadequacy/depression.

It would be so easy to blame our gluttony

on the culture of Western civilization.

The "all you can eat" buffet;

the half-pound hamburger;

the "biggie" fries

the unlimited availability of "fast food" and snacks.

However,

can we shift the blame for our own lack of self-control to others?

We cannot!

GLUTTONY AS A SIN:

There are also those who would say

gluttony harms our spiritual health.

The question before us remains: is gluttony a sin?

According to Matthew 15:11, Jesus said:

“What goes into a man's mouth does not make him 'unclean,' but what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him 'unclean.' ”

Does this passage therefore mean

that anything which we take into our bodies is not sinful?

Obviously not.

Since the eating of food is absolutely necessary to sustain life

can the eating of food ever be considered a sin?

“YES!”

Gluttony is a sin - take my word for it!

It interferes with God's original intention of Creation!

It destroys our health...

...it clouds our reason and judgement

...it calls us away from the discipline of fasting.

Paul said this in Philipians 3:18-19:

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.

**As long as we continue to feed our appetites
and long for earthly delights and pleasures
we will remain “enemies of the cross of Christ!”**

**Just as the sons of Eli put their appetites ahead of God,
too often we put our need to consume too much food
ahead of God.**

**When we reflect on our own eating habits,
there are two factors to be considered:**

- 1. the primary reason for eating
- and -**
- 2. the quantity of food consumed.**

So, there are two questions to be asked:

- 1. Am I eating to sustain life?
Or to satisfy a craving?**
- 2. Am I eating just enough to maintain good health?
Or am I stuffing myself?**

**I wish I could say the primary reason I eat
is to sustain life.**

**I eat because I enjoy eating -
- not because of the quality of the food so much
because I would almost always choose quantity over quality!**

**So both the reason I eat
and the quantity of food I eat
are to be considered morally wrong - and a sin!**

In short,

**I stand before you today
guilty of the sin of gluttony.**

I am not alone in my sin.

**In our cleverness, we “spin” gluttony
and offer it as an “alternative lifestyle”
By calling it “Gourmet eating,”
“Having a real food interest,”
“Living the good life.”**

IS THERE AN ANSWER?

The major question is: is there an answer?

Is there hope?

How should Christians eat?

What can we do about America's obesity epidemic?

For one thing,

**it's not just a case of telling people to eat fewer doughnuts
and walk around the block each day.**

Although that would certainly help.

**My dad, who was a physician for over 50 years, used to say:
The key to losing weight is simple:
eat less - exercise more.**

**That may be really good advice on losing weight -
but I really don't think it addresses the problem of gluttony.**

**You see, I am convinced it's no longer a problem with appetites -
- it is a basic separation from God!**

**We have allowed our insatiable appetites to transform us into
“. . . enemies of the cross of Christ . . . our destiny is destruction,
our god is our stomach, and our glory is in our shame. Our minds
are on earthly things.” Philipians 3:18-19**

That passage continues . . . and it holds hope for us all.

**In the same passage in Phillipians, Paul said:
[20] But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a
Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who, by the power
that enables him to bring everything under his control, will
transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious
body.**

**Want to know how to escape the sin of gluttony?
Put God ahead of our appetites!
Ask Jesus to remove any and all barriers
which separate us from God!**

**Place ourselves under the Lordship of Jesus Christ -
- ask Him to be our nutritionist - our “personal trainer!”**

You see, as in everything else in this life

when you put God first

Everything else just sort of works out!

CONCLUSION:

Thomas Costain wrote a book called *The Three Edwards*, describing the life of Raynald III, a 14th century duke.

Grossly overweight, Raynald was called by his Latin nickname: Crassus which means “fat.”

After a violent quarrel, Raynald’s younger brother, Edward, led a successful revolt against him.

Raynald was confined to a room built for him in Castle Nieuwkerk. He was promised pardon and freedom as soon as he was able to leave the room.

For most of us, this would have been an easy task.

However, Raynald was so big he simply could not fit through the door. The solution: a simple one - lose weight.

Edward knew his older brother.

Each day he sent a variety of delicious food for Raynald to eat.

Each day, Raynald was faced with a choice:

- eat the delicious food or eat only enough to survive.

Instead of losing weight,

Raynald just got fatter.

And he remained a prisoner of his own appetite.

There were those who accused Edward of extreme cruelty - whereupon he replied:

**“My brother is not a prisoner -
- he may leave whenever he so wills.”**

**Raynald spent the next 10 years in that room -
- a prisoner of his own appetite.**

**When he was finally released upon the death of Edward,
his health was so ruined he only lived a year.**

**How long are we going to remain prisoners of our sin
before we turn to God?**

PRAYER:

Most Awesome and Wonderful God, as we travel through the season of Lent and we examine ourselves, let us also look to the health of our bodies. You created us to be wholesome and hearty. Help us make those decisions that would bring us even closer to that which You created us to be. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen.