

"Gluttony"

These Days Gluttony is Everywhere

Obesity is in the news

- The federal government is earmarking stimulus money to fight obesity
- Airlines are taking flak for charging obese people more to fly.
- Insurance companies debate charging premiums for obesity
- Everyone is trying to figure out how to get kids to exercise more.

Wellness is a national buzzword.

Gluttony is debated in the church.

What is the Biblical Attitude Toward Food?

The Bible teaches the importance of living healthy lives

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

The Bible warns about being ruled by our appetites.

For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 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. (Philippians 3:18-21)

It even warns about association with those who let the love of food control their lives.

Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags. (Proverbs 23:20-21, NIV)

On the other hand, throughout the Bible there is a celebration of food.

- The Bible begins with a feast.
Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:8-9, NIV)
- The Bible ends with a feast
Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!' " And he added, "These are the true words of God." (Revelation 19:9, NIV)

- The central acts of worship in both testaments are meals.
- The best loved images of both Father and Son are as feast givers
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. (Psalm 23:5, NIV)
Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. (Matthew 14:19-20, NIV)
- Fatness was seen as a sign of God's blessing.
He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat. (Proverbs 28:25, KJV)
Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. (Isaiah 55:2, KJV)
- Jesus himself was always eating
The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners." ' But wisdom is proved right by her actions.' (Matthew 11:19, NIV)

How Do We Make Sense of It All?

In the Bible, food and feasting served very important purposes.

- It reminds us of our dependence on God (the soul as nephesh, throat, one who hungers and thirsts, and finds it's satisfaction in God alone.)
- It becomes the context of community (fellowship happens around the table)
- It becomes the occasion for celebration
- It is the way we provide for the needs of others (Jewish laws about charity)

Gluttony is not so much a matter of an unusual amount of food but a disordered relation to food.

- We sin when eating (or not eating) becomes an exercise of our own power (and so one of the healthiest meals, a single apple, becomes the wellspring of sin)
- We sin when eating becomes a opportunity for division rather than inclusion
When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk.(1 Cor 11:20-21, NIV)
- We sin when we take our supply for granted
- We sin when we eat with no consideration for others

The tradition of the seven deadly sins:

Seven Deadly Vices

Seven Heavenly Virtues

(Sermon yet to be preached)

Anger

Patience

(Sermons already preached)

Greed

Charity

Lust

Chastity

Envy

Kindness

Sloth

Diligence

Pride

Humility

Gluttony

Temperance

Seven Deadly Sins

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1 Peter 5:5-7

"Gluttony"

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