**Gluttony**

**Introduction**

1. One has said, “If the Bible calls it sin, it is sin. Your opinion does not matter.”
   1. **1 John 3:4** – sin is lawlessness.
   2. **James 4:12** – there is One law giver – God.
   3. **Romans 7:7** – God’s revealed law defines sin, exposes it, and warns about it.
   4. **1 Timothy 1:9** – law made for lawless and insubordinate, i.e. to reprove them and restrain them.
2. Paul was careful to preach God’s whole counsel **– Acts 20:27** – this includes warning and rebuke of all sin.
3. The sin of GLUTTONY is clearly condemned in scripture. Incredibly immoral people were characterized by this vice – **Titus 1:12** (Cretans). The Pharisees falsely charged Jesus with this transgression (**cf. Luke 7:34** – punishable by stoning under OT).
   1. This is definitely a problem within our American culture.
   2. We live in a “super-size me” society.
   3. This poses a potential spiritual threat to Christians. We must be aware of Satan’s devices. **(cf. 2 Corinthians 2:11**)
4. The subject of gluttony is not often focused on explicitly. While matters which concern gluttony are often addressed, the specific sin is not often addressed.
5. This lesson seeks to consider the sin to gain a greater understanding of it and warn against it.
6. What is gluttony?
7. Defined
   1. OT:
      1. *zâlal* – to shake (as in the wind), i.e. to quake; figuratively, to be loose morally, worthless or prodigal. (Strong)
      2. “to pour out, to shake out…a squanderer, a prodigal…’those who squander (or, are prodigals as to) their own body,’ voluptuous profligates” (Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon)
      3. “A shaking from fear or overeating.” (Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible)
   2. NT:
      1. *Phagos* – a voracious man, a glutton. (Strong)
         1. “akin to *phago*, ‘to eat,’ a form used for the aorist or past tense of *esthio*, denotes ‘a glutton’” (Vine)
      2. *gastēr* – the stomach…a glutton, gormandizer, a man who is as it were all stomach. (Strong)
         1. “the stomach; by synecdoche a glutton, a gormandizer, a man who is as it were all stomach” (Thayer)
   3. Gluttony – “excess in eating or drinking; greedy or excessive indulgence” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).
   4. It involves more than mere “overeating.” The overeating is a manifestation of a greater problem of fleshly mindedness, and profligacy.
8. Portrayed
   1. Quail given to Israel – **Numbers 11:31-34**
      1. **(v. 33)** – God obviously displeased and punished them while they were eating.
         1. Not because they were eating simply, because God was the one who sent the quail for them to eat.
      2. **(v. 34)** – Name given shows what aroused God’s wrath
         1. Kibroth Hattaavah – “graves of the longing” (Strong); “graves of lust” (Brown-Driver-Briggs)
         2. “i.e., graves of greediness, because there the people found their graves while giving vent to their greedy desires.” (Keil & Delitzsch)
         3. It seems a matter of over indulgence, i.e. lack of moderation and restraint.
   2. Exposition by **Psalm 78:26-31**
      1. **(v. 29)** – ate to their full – satiated.
      2. **(vv. 30-31)** – regardless of God’s ample provision, they desired more, and did not restrain themselves from overindulgence.
         1. **Numbers 11:4-6** – they already showed this kind of discontentment with their request for meat despite the ample provision from God of manna.
      3. “and the idea is, that they did not restrain their intense desire even when it should have been fully satisfied. They indulged to excess, and the consequence was that many of them perished.” (Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible)
      4. Manifestations of the people:
         1. Dissatisfaction – even though God gave them plenty, and they ate to satiation, they were dissatisfied.
         2. Ingratitude – such dissatisfaction is a form of a lack of appreciation for God’s provision.
         3. Misplaced Attention – their excessive lust, and unrestraint in their indulgence took all attention away from God the giver, and placed it on that which was given.
         4. An Imbalanced Diet of the Physical and Spiritual – “The body cannot be gorged, unbridled lust satiated, and at the same time the soul fed, the spiritual life nourished.” (The Pulpit Commentary)
9. What is the problem with gluttony?
10. A Portrait of a Disciple
    1. Spiritually Minded – **Romans 8:5-8** – they have a concern about their spirit, thus spiritual life as it is directed by God. (They don’t live for the flesh.)
       1. **1 Corinthians 6:12** – they do not allow even lawful matters of the physical (flesh) control them.
       2. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** – view the body as belonging to God as an instrument to His service.
       3. **Romans 14:17** – they know the kingdom of God is not about fleshly appetite.
    2. Abstainer of Fleshly Lusts – **Galatians 5:16-18** – as people who are focused on the spiritual, they deny themselves sinful desires and live according to the Gospel.
    3. Meticulously Cautious – **Romans 13:14; 1 Peter 1:15-16** – having an understanding of holiness, they stay as far away from sin as possible.
    4. Self-Controlled – **1 Corinthians 9:24-27** – they are temperate, and have their bodies in subjection.
11. It’s Moral and Spiritual Implications
    1. Discontentment – **Philippians 4:11-12** – Paul’s discussion of contentment.
       1. Gluttony is not knowing how to be filled.
       2. It is discontentment with what is simply needed, with the desire for excess.
    2. Covetousness – **Hebrews 13:5** – discontentment is really a form of covetousness.
       1. **Colossians 3:5** – covetousness is idolatry.
       2. When we partake in matters of blessings – like food – we must not give ourselves to that blessing, but to the One who gave it to us!
       3. Otherwise we become like the Gentiles Paul described – **Romans 1:21-23 (cf. Philippians 3:19** – god is belly, i.e. appetite)
    3. Carnality – **Proverbs 23:1-3** – describes a man who is tempted to seek fulfillment in the physical.
       1. Gluttony is about exceeding the fundamental need for the base attempt at senseless pleasure – truly serving the body.
       2. Pleasure isn’t wrong – **Ecclesiastes 2:24; 3:13**
       3. HOWEVER, LOVING PLEASURE, AND BEING GIVEN OVER TO PLEASURE IS WRONG – **2 Timothy 3:4; 1 Timothy 5:6**
       4. Life is not for fleshly fulfillment – **1 Corinthians 15:32** (if Christ is not risen)
    4. Relinquished Power – when we are carnal, we have allowed our flesh to gain ascendency over our spirit.
       1. **1 Corinthians 6:12-14** – Paul’s point is against sexual immorality, but his example of food and the stomach serves our point.
          1. SEXUAL IMMORALITY IS NOT ONE OF THE LAWFUL THINGS – THAT IS PAUL’S POINT.
          2. EATING IS, BUT ACCORDING TO VERSE 12, IT CAN BECOME UNHELPFUL IF WE ARE BROUGHT UNDER IT’S RULE.
    5. Provision for Sin – A Christian is to have self-control. This is not a virtue that can be merely concentrated in one area of life. If we allow ourselves to lose self-control in one area, we will be prone to lose it in others, even areas of sin.
       1. **Romans 13:14** – make no provision for the flesh.
       2. **Gluttony not just about sin** – “to pour out, to shake out…a squanderer, a prodigal…’those who squander (or, are prodigals as to) their own body,’ voluptuous profligates” (Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon)(zalal)
12. It Brings Along Sinful Companions
    1. Rebellion – **Deuteronomy 21:18-21**
       1. **(v. 20)** – The specific matter which made him stubborn and rebellious was his gluttony.
       2. Gluttony in general is a form of rebellion – it is going against God’s allotted portion – indulgence. (I want MORE than what God has permitted.)
       3. However, gluttony as a form of rebellion will progress to other forms of rebellion – rebellion is progressive.
    2. Idleness/Laziness – **Titus 1:12; Proverbs 23:19-21**
       1. “inactive, that want to be filled without exertion in earning an honest living by honest work.” (Lenski)
       2. Such is our society today – those who simply live to gratify their fleshly senses do not have an aptitude, or attitude, for honest work.
       3. The glutton wants simply the reward of work without the work, and an overflow of such at that.
       4. **Cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:10** – God requires work.
    3. All such activity of unrestraint ends in shame – **Proverbs 28:7**

**Conclusion**

1. The Bible clearly condemns gluttony as a sin.
2. Let us not be naïve to think we cannot be guilty of this ourselves.
3. We live in a society that makes gluttony so easy, and really, because the society is gluttonous itself.
4. Christian’s must not be enveloped with the fleshly senses, and the gratification thereof, but must be focused on the spiritual.