



Avoiding More.

November 16, 2025

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BIG IDEA – Everything I want **without God makes me less**; everything I want **in God makes me whole**.

Scripture Focus – “But it wasn’t long before they forgot the whole thing, wouldn’t wait to be told what to do. They only cared about pleasing themselves in that desert, provoked God with their insistent demands. **He gave them exactly what they asked for— but along with it they got an empty heart.**” Psalms 106:13-15 MSG

What’s the one thing that no one has in Southern California? ENOUGH.

The one thing we all have is MORE,

but what we don’t we have is ENOUGH?

Is more always better?

Our hearts often reach for “more,” but more of what?

We are created beings bound by both earth and heaven. Bound to desire the things of earth that should be growing strangely dim, but also bound to this deep, trusting relationship with our good shepherd who promises to lead and guide us to the perfect provisions needed in this life. This Sunday, let’s talk about how our desires can be persuaded towards more of heaven than of earth.

God invites us to something deeper.

We can bring every wish and want to Him, trusting that His blessing isn’t a jackpot but a joyful alignment with His good purposes. As we pray, the question isn’t “Can I get it?” but “Will this draw me nearer to You?”

Is more really better?

In our world of genies, fairy godmothers, stars, horoscopes and fortune cookies, if we would only wish it, it could be ours.

We want. We wish. But should we get it?

We can even Christianize it by swapping out secular words for the word, “blessing,” and play the same game.

We ask the Lord’s blessing, but what’s the desires behind that prayer?

What if God’s best gift is not “more,” but “enough” at the right time?

- How might His blessing reshape my wants so they serve love?
- Could the richest life be less about acquiring and more about abiding?

Desire isn’t necessarily the enemy. God designed it to lead us to Him.

Instead of wishing harder, we can ask, “Lord, **shape my desires so your blessing makes me a blessing.**”

More could be more for a far better reason – a blessing to be a blessing.

“If I got everything my uncrucified, unsubmitted heart wants, **I’d trigger and train my desires and/or addictions, harming myself and others.**”

If I submit my wants and desires to Jesus, then my deepest desires would be reordered by God, leading me to gratefulness and giving glory to God and life to others.

Many of us hope **that one more thing** will finally be enough. Jesus tells us that **He is enough!**

So how can I shift my hope from **stuff to satisfaction**, from **belongings (plural) to just belonging** (singular- to Jesus)?

The Old Testament continues to amaze and horrify me.

It amazes me that God weaves such a compelling story that threads through human history. **It is provocatively persistent.** And His promises and prophetic predictions are 100% true and trustworthy.

The Old Testament horrifies me because it is not just history, not just about God’s chosen people – Israel, but **it is annoyingly accurate about human nature. Not theirs (Jews), Not ours (Global), but MINE!**

When God tells us a story, even a though the story is thousands of years old – it is current, modern and extremely relevant.

Why is that?

It's because of the permanence of God's Word. It's the stickiest story ever told!

I wrote this in the front of the Bible I bought when I was fifteen, Isaiah wrote...

"The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever."
Isaiah 40:8 NLT

Then the author of Hebrews reinforces that reality by writing...

"For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires." Hebrews 4:12

So, as we peer into God's Word, understand that God's Word is peering into our soul!

GOD SHOWS US WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE GET EVERYTHING WE WANT

Let's look at just a portion of a very long, somewhat sad story of the Exodus, the journey from slavery to freedom for the Jewish people and discover how that applies to our lives today!

The Jewish people created an artform out of grumbling and complaining.



DIG DEEPER: It has been said, although controversial, that **our western ears hear the ancient Jewish music modality as angsty and unresolved.** I believe it is because even in these ancient Jewish-sounding musical scales, it is an anticipation of the coming messiah.

Exodus highlights a **grumbling generation** so we learn that **distrust leads to dead ends!**



Dig Deeper – When whining isn't winning.

The Bible mentions the height of their grumbling.

"There, too, the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron. "If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt," they moaned. "There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death." Exodus 16:2-3

Obviously, the desert was the worst place to find bread and meat! They were completely and utterly dependent on God to feed them.

God provided for 2 million people with water and he provided food - Manna which literally means "what is it?" because no one knew exactly what it was and it just appeared in the morning.

It was the perfect food for camping and traveling. It provided all the nutrition they needed every day as they were moving towards the promised land.

After figuring out every possible way to prepare Manna - they had baked Manna, boiled Manna, barbecued Manna, fried Manna, they had Manna on a stick and yeah Manna burgers they had Manna salad they even had Manicotti and they probably even had Manna-Banana Cream Pie but even with that they complained!

Did you know that God provided Israel 256 billion gallons of Manna a year and did that for 40 years which equals 10.24 trillion gallons of Manna?



Dig Deeper:

- **Marah** → sweet water; Elim's springs — Exodus 15:22–27.
- **Horeb/Rephidim**, water from the rock (Massah–Meribah) — Exodus 17:1–7.
- **Kadesh**, water from the rock (Meribah of Zin) — Numbers 20:2–13.
- **Beer**, the well raised by the leaders ("Spring up, O well!") — Numbers 21:16–18.

Remember this critical verse in Exodus 16:18

But when they measured it out, **everyone had just enough**. Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little had enough. Each family had just what it needed.

Say this with me, "just enough."

After the famous Manna experience in **Exodus 16:1-36** the complaining intensified.

Then quail quandary happens in Numbers 11:4-9.

You won't find the quail provision story in Exodus, it shows up in Numbers – interesting huh?

"Then **the foreign rabble** who were traveling with the Israelites began to crave the good things of Egypt. And the people of Israel also began to complain. "Oh, for some meat!" they exclaimed. Numbers 11:4



DIG DEEPER: Who is the foreign rabble or riffraff?

The "foreign rabble" in Numbers 11:4 refers to a group of non-Israelites who accompanied the Israelites during their exodus from Egypt. Often called the "mixed multitude," this group likely consisted of people from various backgrounds who had joined the Israelites out of curiosity, shared faith, or other motivations

during the journey. This group is portrayed as stirring up discontent among the Israelites.

It came to the point that it made God angry.

“Moses heard all the families standing in the doorways of their tents whining, and the Lord became extremely angry. Moses was also very aggravated.” Numbers 11:10

Why was God angry and Moses aggravated?

Is it possible that the people's craving was a rejection of God and not a lack of food?

For four hundred years their lives were under **submission to slavery** and the whims and **desires of the Pharaoh and his many gods**. Had they forgotten God's provision during that time. **That would be about 15 to 20 generations who only knew a slave mentality.**

Let me ask it this way...

How many generations does it take for us to see that God is doing a new thing? How many of those generational experiences struggle to hang on to what was rather than what is going to be?

Freedom from our past has always been a Biblical truth we regularly struggle with!

Although, it makes sense to me that the people of God had good reason to complain about the desert trip from slavery to the promise land, **God did not want the cravings to convert to complaining because it rejected His provision to fulfill His promises!**

What started as a parlayed provision plunged into a plague. The quail quandary ended in utter horror.

“But while they were gorging themselves on the meat—while it was still in their mouths—the anger of the Lord blazed against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. So that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah (which means “graves of gluttony”) because there they buried the people who had craved meat from Egypt.” Numbers 11:33-34 NLT

Moses ended up calling the place—Kibroth Hattaavah.

Learning from Psalm 106 tells us **the final outcome of those who get what they want** and it is so sad, “But it wasn't long before they forgot the whole thing, wouldn't wait to be told what to do. **They only cared about pleasing themselves in that desert, provoked God with their insistent demands. He gave them exactly**

what they asked for— but along with it they got an empty heart.” Psalms 106:13-15 MSG.

What can we learn from ungratefulness or avoiding the curse of more?

CRAVINGS

Our cravings promise fullness but end in emptiness

- **Texts:** [Numbers 11:34](#); [Psalm 106:13–15](#); [Proverbs 27:20](#); [Ecclesiastes 5:10](#).
- “Graves of craving” happen when our appetites becomes master.
- Proverbs exposes the truth, “**Just as Death and Destruction are never satisfied, so human desire is never satisfied.**” Proverbs 27:20 NLT
- Solomon and the wisdom authors are **extremely blunt** about the cravings after the “money god.” “**Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness! The more you have, the more people come to help you spend it. So what good is wealth—except perhaps to watch it slip through your fingers!**” Ecclesiastes 5:10-11 NLT



Dig Deeper notes there is a lot of material on gluttony, cravings, and addictive cycles. There is also material on how our desires get hijacked and become disordered. We can have good desires, but take bad shortcuts to having them fulfilled.

There’s a section on the 7 Deadly Sins and how they may start out as virtuous, but end up being dark and deadly. As well as a look at the brain systems work and how they can be mapped by “deadly sin.”

CRAVINGS

Blessing is not “more” but “enough” in God

- **Texts:** [Isaiah 55:2](#); [Psalm 23:1](#); [Philippians 4:11–13](#); [Hebrews 13:5](#); 1 [Timothy 6:6–10](#).
- God’s blessing is **sufficiency with Him, not accumulation and consumption without Him.**
 - **Isaiah asked this piercing question: “Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.” Isaiah 55:2 ESV**
 - This should put a whole new twist on Jesus’ words to pray, “**Give us this day our daily bread...**” **Matthew 6:11 NLT**
 - The Psalmist David taught us to remind ourselves, “**The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**” **Psalm 23:1 ESV**
 - The Apostle Paul gave a clear and compelling mindset to understand this word, “enough!” “**Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost**

nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.
Philippians 4:11-13 NLT

CRAVINGS

Retrain desire with gratitude & generosity

- **Texts:** [Deuteronomy 8:10](#); [Luke 12:15](#); [Galatians 5:16](#); [Titus 2:11-12](#); [Colossians 3:5](#); [1 John 2:15-17](#).
- **Desires don't disappear; they get disciplined.**
- **Practices:**
 - **Gratitude liturgy** before and after meals, "When you have eaten your fill, be sure to praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you." Deuteronomy 8:10 NLT
 - **Remember what life is really all about**, "Then he said, "Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own." Luke 12:15 NLT
 - **To quit, you must submit**, "So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves." Galatians 5:16 NLT **"You become what you feed" flesh vs Spirit.**
 - **Beware what culture pitches as free!** "For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world." **1 John 2:16 NLT**
 - **Fasting** to break urgency; **generosity** to break grip. "And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God..." Titus 2:12 NLT

Greed and Gluttony are contentious cousins when godly desires are highjacked!

Greed hoards; Gluttony binges.

Together they form a **self-reinforcing loop that trains the heart to worship "more."**

How they feed each other

- **Acquisition → Consumption. Greed stockpiles to feel safe;** surplus invites overeating/overuse. "Wealth... never satisfied" ([Eccl 5:10](#)) pairs with "gluttony brings poverty" ([Prov 23:20-21](#)).
- **Consumption → Acquisition. Gluttony raises tolerance;** bigger hits require more supply, so greed hunts, hoards, and cuts corners to keep the pipeline full ([Luke 12:15-21](#)).

- **Shared idol: control.** Both say, “I must secure my own ‘enough.’” Manna-hoarding and Sabbath-breaking reveal distrust of daily bread (Exod [16:16–20](#), [27–30](#)). Paul calls greed idolatry and “god is belly” two faces of the same worship ([Col 3:5](#); [Phil 3:19](#)).

If these cousins rule our heart, it produces...

- **Scarcity psychology in plenty.** Full barns, empty souls ([Luke 12:19–21](#)).
- **Dulled gratitude and generosity.** “Why spend on what doesn’t satisfy?” ([Isa 55:2](#)).
- **Relational injustice.** Hoarding deprives others; binging blinds true love ([James 5:5](#)).
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If the virus is craving more just to get more, what’s the antidote?

APPLICATION

Giving thanks. The simple practice of being a grateful person

Stolen from Kenton Beeshore’s yearly Thanksgiving Sermon.

The password into God’s presence is: **Thank You**

When you stop & sincerely say thank you - it changes everything.

- **When you taste something good**, we say – THANK YOU
- **When we wake up in the morning and we see another sunrise**, we say – THANK YOU
- **When we get up in the morning and our body obeys**, we say – THANK YOU
- **When we listen to a great podcast or sermon and our mind understands what they are talking about**, we say – THANK YOU
- **When we go to work and we’re able to get things done**, we say – THANK YOU
- **When our heart beats ten thousand times a day**, we say – THANK YOU
- **When we don’t have to live in Fargo, New York City**, so we say – THANK YOU

When it’s about:

- money
- or our in-laws
- or we complained about our in-law’s money
- the stock market or
- the government
- complaining about our weight
- or complain about traffic
- or we complained about our spouse that you have or don’t have
- or complained about our kids that you have or don’t have
- or about our friends
- **When we complain about missed opportunities?**
- or our house, our car, or our boss

Instead, we can look at our STUFF or our

- Car and say ahhh
- House ahhh
- Closet aaahhhh
- Mirror and see our own body and say ohhhhhh

So now when we see:

- A new gadget, car, or clothes...we can honestly say **"I don't need it"**
- When someone asks if we want to **buy a lottery ticket** because the payout is **a Billion dollars**, we can say, **"I don't need it."**

- **How do we break the cooperative patterns in us?**
- **Daily-bread rhythms.** Fixed limits and Sabbath stop **the hoard-binge cycle** (Exod 16; [Deut 8:3](#)).
- **Gratitude before/after.** Name the Giver; satisfaction rises, craving drops ([Deut 8:10](#)).
- **First-gift generosity.** Give before you store or eat; it cuts both roots (1 Tim [6:6-10](#), [17-19](#)).
- **Fasting and simplicity.** Lower tolerance; re-teach "enough."
- **Shared tables.** Hospitality turns private excess into communal joy.

The antidote for disordered cravings for more becomes gratitude and generosity.

Everything I want **without God makes me less**; everything I want **in God makes me whole**.

SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 40:8 ESV

The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.

Hebrews 4:12 NLT

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

Exodus 16:2-3 NLT

There, too, the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron. "If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt," they moaned. "There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.

Exodus 16:18 NLT

But when they measured it out, everyone had just enough. Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little had enough. Each family had just what it needed.

Numbers 11:4 NLT

Then the foreign rabble who were traveling with the Israelites began to crave the good things of Egypt. And the people of Israel also began to complain. "Oh, for some meat!" they exclaimed.

Numbers 11:10 NLT

Moses heard all the families standing in the doorways of their tents whining, and the Lord became extremely angry. Moses was also very aggravated.

Numbers 11:33-34 NLT

But while they were gorging themselves on the meat—while it was still in their mouths—the anger of the Lord blazed against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. So that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah (which means "graves of gluttony") because there they buried the people who had craved meat from Egypt.

Psalms 106:13-15 MSG

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Proverbs 27:20 NLT

Just as Death and Destruction are never satisfied, so human desire is never satisfied.

Ecclesiastes 5:10-11 NLT

Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness! The more you have, the more people come to help you spend it. So what good is wealth—except perhaps to watch it slip through your fingers!

Isaiah 55:2 ESV

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

Matthew 6:11 NLT

Give us this day our daily bread...

Psalms 23:1 ESV

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Philippians 4:11-13 NLT Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with

everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

Deuteronomy 8:10 NLT

When you have eaten your fill, be sure to praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

Luke 12:15 NLT

Then he said, "Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own."

Galatians 5:16 NLT

"So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves."

1 John 2:16 NLT

For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.

DIG DEEPER NOTES



When Whining isn't Winning

Scripture's portrait of the Exodus generation:

- **Sea to Sinai:** fear and complaints (Ex 14:11–12; 15:24; 16:2–3; 17:2–3).
- **At Sinai and after:** calf, nostalgia for Egypt, meat craving (Ex 32; Num 11).
- **Refusing the land:** grumbling → unbelief (Num 13–14; Ps 106:24–27).
- **Rebellions:** Korah, Meribah (Num 16; 20:2–5).
- Hebrew terms: לון/lun "grumble," תלונה "complaint." **Purpose: to expose distrust.**

But not all of them were grumblers:

- **Praise and faith:** Song at the Sea (Ex 15), covenant "we will do" (Ex 24:7), generous tabernacle giving (Ex 35–36), Caleb/Joshua's trust (Num 14:6–9).



"Graves of Craving."

- **Hebrew:** קברות התאווה
 - qibrot = "graves" (plural construct of קבר, qever)
 - ha-ta'avah = "the craving/desire" (with definite article)

- **Transliteration:** *Kivrot ha-ta'avah*.
- **Pronunciation:** kee-VROHT hah-tah-ah-VAH.
- **Where it appears:** Numbers 11:34–35; 33:16–17; Deuteronomy 9:22.
- **Narrative:** The people “craved” meat and complained. God sent quail “for a month,” then struck many with a plague “while the meat was still between their teeth.” The place was named **Kibroth-hattaavah** because they buried those who yielded to the craving (Num 11:4–34). They then moved on to Hazeroth (Num 11:35; 33:17).
- **Meaning/theme:** A memorial of judgment for disordered desire—gratification without gratitude. The name functions as a theological marker: craving against God’s provision leads to grave consequences.
- **Location:** Uncertain. On the route from Sinai toward Paran, before Hazeroth. No secure archaeological identification.
- **LXX (Greek):** “μνήμα/τάφος τῆς ἐπιθυμίας” = “grave of desire,” reinforcing the wordplay.
- **Preaching handles:**

1. Provision vs. appetite: God gave quail, but craving mastered them.
2. Naming as warning: places can teach.
3. **Gratitude redirects desire; grumbling distorts it.**

If you want cross-references for desire language: Psalm 78:26–31 reflects on this event; James 1:14–15 outlines desire → sin → death, echoing the pattern.

Scripture treats unchecked craving as bondage, idolatry, and a path to death; the antidote is worship, gratitude, and contentment in God.

Old Testament

- **Genesis 3:6** — Desire misdirected corrupts judgment.
- **Exodus 20:17; Deut 5:21** — Coveting forbidden; craving re-aimed toward God.
- **Numbers 11:4–34; 11:34** — Kibroth Hattaavah, “graves of craving.”
- **Psalm 78:26–31; 106:13–15** — God grants the desire but sends leanness with it.
- **Proverbs 23:4–5** — Wealth flies away.
- **Proverbs 27:20** — Sheol and human eyes are never satisfied.
- **Proverbs 30:15–16** — The leech and the never-satisfied fowls.
- **Ecclesiastes 2:10–11; 5:10** — Pleasure and money cannot satisfy.
- **Isaiah 55:2** — “Why spend on what does not satisfy?”
- **Jeremiah 2:13** — Broken cisterns that hold no water.
- **Haggai 1:6, 9** — Much effort, little yield because priorities are disordered.
- **Micah 2:1–2** — Coveting drives oppression.
- **Habakkuk 2:5** — The greedy are as wide as Sheol.

New Testament

- **Matthew 6:19–24, 33** — Treasure, master, and first allegiance.

- **Mark 4:19** — “Deceitfulness of riches” chokes the word.
- **Luke 12:15–21** — Rich fool; life is not in possessions.
- **John 4:13–14; 6:35** — Christ as living water and bread that satisfies.
- **Romans 1:24–25** — Disordered desires and exchanged worship.
- **Romans 13:14** — Make no provision for the flesh.
- **Galatians 5:16–24** — Desire of flesh vs. Spirit; crucify passions.
- **Ephesians 4:19** — “Greedy to practice every kind of impurity.”
- **Philippians 4:11–13** — Learned contentment in Christ.
- **Colossians 3:5** — Greed is idolatry.
- **1 Timothy 6:6–10, 17–19** — Godliness with contentment; danger of loving money.
- **2 Timothy 3:2–4** — Last-days lovers of self and money.
- **Titus 2:11–12** — Grace trains us to renounce worldly passions.
- **Hebrews 13:5** — Be free from love of money; “I will never leave you.”
- **James 1:14–15; 4:1–3** — Desire conceives sin; quarrels from cravings.
- **1 Peter 2:11** — Passions wage war against the soul.
- **1 John 2:15–17** — Lust of the flesh, eyes, and pride pass away.
- **Revelation 3:17–19** — Laodicea’s self-satisfied poverty.
- **Revelation 18** — Babylon judged for luxury and excess.

Teaching frame

- **Problem:** Craving promises fullness, delivers famine.
- **Mechanism:** Disordered love → idolatry → injustice → judgment.
- **Counter-formation:** Reordered love through worship, gratitude, generosity, simplicity, and Sabbath.
- **Anchor texts to preach:** Num 11; Prov 27:20; Eccl 5:10; Isa 55:2; Luke 12:15–21; 1 Tim 6:6–10; Heb 13:5; 1 John 2:15–17.

The “craving” theme in Scripture is the same root problem the tradition labels “gluttony.” Gluttony is disordered desire for consumption. It makes appetite a god. Kibroth-hattaavah is a case study.

What gluttony is

- Not just overeating. It is being ruled by appetite.
- **Classic taxonomy (Aquinas): too soon, too expensively, too much, too eagerly, too daintily.**

Old Testament

- Numbers 11:4–34; 11:34 — Graves of craving.
- Deut 21:20 — “Glutton and drunkard.”
- Proverbs 23:2, 20–21; 25:16 — Put a knife to your throat; gluttony brings poverty.
- Ezekiel 16:49 — Sodom’s guilt included abundant food and careless ease.

New Testament

- Luke 12:15–21 — Life is not in possessions; the belly can be a false god by proxy.
- Luke 21:34 — Hearts weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness.
- John 6:35 — Christ as the bread that satisfies.
- Romans 16:18 — “Their god is their belly” idea echoed.
- 1 Corinthians 6:12–13 — “Food for the stomach... but I will not be dominated by anything.”
- Philippians 3:19 — “Their god is their belly.”
- Titus 1:12 — “Lazy gluttons.”
- James 5:5 — Living in luxury and self-indulgence.

How it ties to the Seven

- **Gluttony** feeds **sloth** (dulls vigilance), **lust** (sensual fixation), and **greed** (acquisitive appetite).
- It opposes **temperance** and **gratitude**, and ultimately **charity**.
- Mechanism: disordered love → idolatry of the belly → injustice toward neighbor (hoarding) → spiritual death.
- **Problem:** Appetite as master (Num 11; Phil 3:19).
- **Truth:** Only God satisfies (Isa 55:2; John 6:35).
- **Warning sign:** Gratification without gratitude becomes a grave (Kibroth-hattaavah).
- **Fruit:** Contentment and generosity (1 Tim 6:6–10; Heb 13:5).

Practices that counter gluttony

- Fasting and delayed eating to retrain desire.
- Gratitude before and after meals.
- Simple, shared meals; hospitality to the poor (Luke 14:12–14).
- Weekly Sabbath from shopping and scrolling.
- Confession when appetite rules decisions.

Can the poor struggle with gluttony, excessive cravings and desires for more? How so?

Gluttony is not about income. It is about being ruled by appetite. The poor can struggle with it, though the pressures differ.

How it shows up

- **Scarcity mindset:** “Grab it now or lose it.” Leads to binge-eating when food appears, hoarding free items, payday splurges.
- **Feast-famine cycles:** Irregular access to food or cash trains the body to overconsume when available.
- **Stress physiology:** Chronic stress, cortisol, and sleep loss drive cravings for quick calories and dopamine hits.

- **Cheap calories:** Ultra-processed, low-cost foods invite overeating for fullness and comfort.
- **Social pressure and marketing:** Promotions targeting price sensitivity push “more for less” consumption.
- **Compensatory desire:** Deprivation in one domain expresses as excess in another (food, screens, substances, small luxuries).

Biblical lenses

- **Same heart issue, different context:** Desire can master both rich and poor. (Prov 30:8–9; Phil 4:12–13)
- **Warnings about excess:** Gluttony and drunkenness destroy even in hardship. (Prov 23:20–21)
- **Hasty craving for gain:** Poverty can tempt “quick fixes” that backfire. (Prov 28:22)
- **Manna lesson:** Hoarding from fear rots; daily trust frees. (Exod 16:16–21)
- **Contentment and godliness:** Applies in lack and in plenty. (1 Tim 6:6–10; Heb 13:5)
- **Desire → death pattern:** Lust of flesh/eyes is universal. (James 1:14–15; 1 John 2:16–17)

Pastoral and practical counsels (poverty-aware)

- **Plan simple, steady meals:** Reduce feast–famine swings; pre-portion when possible.
- **Delay tactics:** “Eat, then decide.” “Wait 10 minutes.” Break the immediacy loop.
- **Gratitude liturgy:** Short thanks before eating; name the provision and the Provider.
- **Fasting with wisdom:** Light, time-bound fasts (or non-food fasts) that do not harm health or work.
- **Community meals and shared cooking:** Mutual support curbs isolation and binging.
- **Payday safeguards:** Pre-commit grocery lists; envelope small “treat” money to avoid blowouts.
- **Replace, don’t just remove:** Add protein, fiber, water, and sleep; reduce triggers.
- **Confession without shame:** Name when appetite rules; receive grace; try again.
- **Justice and mercy:** Pair discipleship with help—benevolence, budgeting help, access to healthy food.

“Gluttony is not having much or little. It is letting ‘more’ be your master. Christ teaches daily bread, not daily binge.”

Gratitude Liturgy:

Before eating (short berakhot by food type) — before

- **Bread:** *Barukh... hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.*
"Blessed... who brings forth bread from the earth."
- **Wine/grape juice:** ... *borei p'ri hagafen.*
"Creator of the fruit of the vine."
- **Grain foods (non-bread):** ... *borei minei mezonot.*
"Creator of kinds of sustenance."
- **Fruits of trees:** ... *borei p'ri ha'etz.*
"Creator of the fruit of the tree."
- **Fruits of the ground/vegetables:** ... *borei p'ri ha'adamah.*
"Creator of the fruit of the ground."
- **Everything else:** ... *shehakol nih'ya bidvaro.*
"By whose word all came to be."
- **New season/first time this year (e.g., first taste of a new fruit):**
Shehecheyanu...
"Who has kept us alive..." — said **before** the first bite/sip of that item or occasion.

Meal frame on Sabbaths and festivals — before and during

- **Kiddush (Shabbat/holy days):** Sanctifies the day over wine **before** the meal, then the *hamotzi*.
- **Netilat yadayim:** Ritual handwashing **before** eating bread.
- Table psalms/singing may occur **during** the meal (customal, not mandated).

After eating (grace) — after

- **Scriptural basis:** "You shall eat, be satisfied, and bless the LORD..." (Deut 8:10).
- **Birkat Hamazon** (full Grace After Meals) when bread was eaten (any amount by most customs). Core four blessings:
 1. *Hazan et ha'olam* — God feeds all.
 2. *Al ha'aretz v'al hamazon* — Land and food.
 3. *Boneh Yerushalayim* — Jerusalem.
 4. *HaTov v'haMeitiv* — God's goodness.
 Additions on Shabbat/holydays (*Retzeh, Ya'aleh v'yavo*).
With three or more diners, begin with a **zimun** invitation: *Nevarekh she'achalnu mishelo...*
- **Me'ein Shalosh** ("one-paragraph" grace) when no bread but one of the seven-species foods or wine was eaten:
 - *Al hamichya* (for grain foods),
 - *Al ha'etz* (for certain fruits),
 - *Al hagefen* (for wine).
- **Borei Nefashot** after other foods/drinks not covered above: ... *borei nefashot rabbot...*
Thanking God for creating many lives and their needs.

When each is said

- **Before:** the category-specific blessing for what you're about to eat or drink; Kiddush before Shabbat/holiday meals; handwashing before bread.
- **During:** songs or study by custom; no required "during-meal" blessings.
- **After:** *Birkat Hamazon* if bread was part of the meal; otherwise *Me'ein Shalosh* or *Borei Nefashot* based on what was eaten.

Before the meal

Everyday

- **Leader:** Blessed are you, Lord our God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gives food to the world.
- **All:** We receive this from your hand with thanks. Amen.

If bread is present

- **Leader:** Blessed are you... who brings forth bread from the earth and gave us the Bread of Life.
- **All:** We give thanks in Christ. Amen.

If wine/grape juice is present

- **Leader:** Blessed are you... creator of the fruit of the vine, who gave us the cup of the new covenant.
- **All:** We remember and give thanks. Amen.

First time this season / special joy (*Shehecheyanu* echo)

- **Leader:** Blessed are you... who has kept us, sustained us, and brought us to this moment.
- **All:** Thanks be to God. Amen.

During the meal (optional)

- Read one verse: Deut 8:10 or Ps 145:15–16.

After the meal

Grace after eating (*Deut 8:10*)

- **Leader:** We have eaten and are satisfied. Let us bless the Lord.
- **All:** The Lord's name be praised now and forever.
- **Leader:** You feed all your creatures and open your hand.
- **All:** Satisfy us with your steadfast love in Christ. Amen.

Short forms (when time is tight)

- **Before:** "Father, from you and through you are all things. Thank you for this food. Amen."
- **After:** "We bless you, Lord, who has satisfied us. Amen."

Communion-adjacent meal (Sabbath/feast, small group)

- **Leader:** This day you made holy; we receive it with rest and joy.
- **All:** You are our portion and our peace.
- **Leader:** Blessed are you... who brings forth bread and gives the true bread from heaven.
- **All:** Give us this bread always. Amen.

Call-and-response opener for groups

- **Leader:** Let us bless the One from whom we have eaten.
- **All:** Blessed be the One from whom we have eaten and by whose goodness we live. Amen.

Use any single "Before" plus the "After." Keep it fixed for a season so people learn it by heart.



Hijacked desires that become disordered.
Good desires, Bad shortcuts to having them fulfilled.

A look at the seven deadly sins.

- **Pride** → desire for significance, excellence, honor, stewardship of gifts → becomes twisted into self-exaltation, superiority, contempt and narcissism.
- **Envy** → desire for fairness, recognition, belonging, aspiration to grow → becomes twisted into resentment at another's good, joy in their loss.
- **Wrath** → desire for justice, protection of the vulnerable, moral courage → becomes twisted into vengeance, cruelty, control.
- **Sloth (acedia)** → desire for true rest, peace, simplicity, meaningful work → becomes twisted into avoidance of good effort, apathy toward God and neighbor.
- **Greed (avarice)** → desire for security, prudent provision, wise stewardship, and generative creativity → becomes twisted into accumulation, distrust, treating people as profit.
- **Gluttony** → desire for nourishment, pleasure, comfort, celebration, table fellowship → twisted into excess, compulsion, escape from reality.
- **Lust** → desire for intimacy, union, delight, generativity, appreciation of beauty → twisted into using persons, commodifying bodies, novelty addiction and feeding the euphoric neurotransmitter, Dopamine and endogenous opioids; oxytocin and vasopressin rise with sexual bonding.

Here's the issue with these desires **whether they are “good,”** aspiring to healthy, godly pursuits or **“bad,” divulging into base, evil and selfish pursuits.** Desire share brain circuits using the same reward and learning loops.

They have the same hardware, but different patterns and outcomes.

- **God-aimed habits give smaller, steadier dopamine, better serotonin balance, and lower cortisol over time.**
- **Addictive or disordered pursuits give big dopamine spikes, receptor down-regulation, more craving, and higher cortisol.**

And they have different after-effects:

- **Ordered desires → self-control, resilience, prosocial bonds, better sleep and mood.**
- **Disordered desires → compulsion, tolerance/withdrawal, anxiety, shame, isolation.**

The same brain systems fire, but **ordered loves heal and stabilize; disordered loves spike, fray, and enslave.**

They share the same neurotransmitters and hormone responses; they just have different masters! One is God, the other our flesh.

Quick brain systems map by “deadly sin”

- **Pride (vainglory):** Dopamine from status/likes/achievement; serotonin may rise with status, but swings; oxytocin minimal unless strong in-group bonding is involved.
 - **Envy:** Dopamine from rivalry wins; cortisol/stress up; serotonin often down with rumination; oxytocin not central.
 - **Wrath:** Dopamine can reinforce retaliation; norepinephrine/adrenaline and cortisol surge; low serotonin links to impulsive aggression; oxytocin not central.
 - **Sloth (acedia):** Low arousal/anhedonia states; dopamine tone often low; relief-seeking behaviors (doom-scrolling, bingeing) chase dopamine; serotonin variable.
 - **Greed (avarice):** Anticipation/acquisition triggers dopamine; serotonin variable; oxytocin low unless money/status is tied to group belonging.
 - **Gluttony:** Palatable food drives dopamine and endogenous opioids; post-meal satiety involves serotonin; oxytocin minor unless meal is relational.
 - **Lust:** Strong dopamine and endogenous opioids; **oxytocin and vasopressin** rise with sexual touch/orgasm/bonding; serotonin typically dips during desire and rebounds later.
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The Israelite wilderness stories surface all seven deadly sins.

- **Pride** — Korah's rebellion against God's order. "All the congregation are holy... why do you exalt yourselves?" (Numbers 16:1–3, 31–35).
Object: Two censers: "mine" vs "God's choice" (cf. budding staff, Numbers 17).
- **Envy** — Miriam and Aaron resent Moses' unique role. "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses?" (Numbers 12:1–10).
Object: A white cloth for Miriam's leprosy turning back to normal skin.
- **Wrath** — Moses' anger at Meribah; he strikes the rock and dishonors God (Numbers 20:10–12). People also talk of stoning leaders (Numbers 14:10).
Object: A cracked staff and a rock labeled "speak" vs "strike."
- **Sloth (acedia)** — Refusal to enter the land after the spies' report; avoidance dressed as prudence (Numbers 13–14).
Object: A packed backpack dropped at the border; footprints turning back.
- **Greed (avarice)** — Hoarding manna and breaking Sabbath gathering; distrust of daily provision (Exodus 16:16–20, 27–30).
Object: Two jars of manna: one fresh "daily," one wormy "hoarded."
- **Gluttony** — Quail binge at Kibroth-hattaavah, "graves of craving" (Numbers 11:31–34; Psalm 106:13–15).
Object: Quail feathers beside a placard: "More ≠ Life."
- **Lust** — Baal Peor: sexual immorality and idolatry with Moab; covenant betrayal (Numbers 25:1–3).
Object: A small idol with a broken covenant cord.

Big idea: Same desert, two paths—ordered desire leads to trust and life; disordered desire to graves and delay.



Greed and Gluttony are cooperative cousins when godly desires are hijacked!

greed hoards; gluttony binges. Together they form a **self-reinforcing loop that trains the heart to worship "more."**

How they feed each other

- **Acquisition → Consumption. Greed stockpiles to feel safe;** surplus invites overeating/overuse. "Wealth... never satisfied" (Eccl 5:10) pairs with "gluttony brings poverty" (Prov 23:20–21).
- **Consumption → Acquisition. Gluttony raises tolerance;** bigger hits require more supply, so greed hunts, hoards, and cuts corners to keep the pipeline full (Luke 12:15–21).

- **Shared idol: control.** Both say, “**I must secure my own ‘enough.’**” Manna-hoarding and Sabbath-breaking reveal distrust of daily bread (Exod 16:16–20, 27–30). **Paul calls greed idolatry and “god is belly” two faces of the same worship (Col 3:5; Phil 3:19).**

If these cousins rule our heart it produces...

- **Scarcity psychology in plenty.** Full barns, empty souls (Luke 12:19–21).
- **Blunted gratitude and generosity.** “Why spend on what doesn’t satisfy?” (Isa 55:2).
- **Relational injustice.** Hoarding deprives others; bingeing dulls love (James 5:5).

How do we break the cooperative patterns in us?

- **Daily-bread rhythm.** Fixed limits and Sabbath stop the hoard-binge cycle (Exod 16; Deut 8:3).
- **Gratitude before/after.** Name the Giver; satisfaction rises, craving drops (Deut 8:10).
- **First-gift generosity.** Give before you store or eat; it cuts both roots (1 Tim 6:6–10, 17–19).
- **Fasting and simplicity.** Lower tolerance; re-teach “enough.”
- **Shared tables.** Hospitality turns private excess into communal joy.

“Greed builds bigger barns for the belly; gluttony makes the belly demand bigger barns.”

The antidote becomes Gratitude and Generosity.