



# SEVEN DEADLY SINS

## SEVEN DEADLY SINS: GLUTTONY

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### Philippians 4:10-13

Doxa Church is taking a look at the seven deadly sins commonly brushed off and rarely considered for our own lives. Each sin presents a unique sickness in our hearts that can only be remedied by Jesus and a battle only winnable through the spirit's empowerment. Join us for this eight-week series on these deadly sins and their antidotes, found in Christ. Visit [doxa-church.com](http://doxa-church.com) for service times or more info on how we make disciples in the everyday stuff of life.

Good morning Doxa. This morning we're gonna be reading Philippians 4 verses 10 through 13. And it reads, I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. For you were indeed concerned for me, but had no opportunity. Not, not that I'm speaking of being in need for, I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low and I know how to abound in any and every circumstance. I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. This is the word of the Lord. You may be seated.

Hello, for those of you that are new, my name's Eddie. I'm the lead pastor here. So good to see you. I teach most Sundays and today we're talking about gluttony, so, if this your first Sunday, it's a random, random topic for you. Um, but here we are. So can I pray for us? I'm gonna pray.

Well, let me just say this. Um, we going through the seven Deadly Sin series and some of these topics are heavy. Some of 'em feel trivial, I get that, like gluttony. Nonetheless, we've experienced, you know, just some spiritual attack on our staff people, spiritual attack even in this room on Sundays. And so I just want to acknowledge that. I want to ask that you guys all just join me in praying over that, that like the Holy Spirit would seal this room and that we'd be able to communicate clearly and that you would all be able to receive it.

Can we do that? Okay, let's do it. Well, Holy Spirit, we ask for you to seal this room. We ask that you would be Lord over a subject even like gluttony Lord, that you would be a rule-- that you would rule over this. And we do pray, I do pray that everything that comes out of my mouth, Lord, would that be, would, if it's from you, would it just be seeded in my friends' brains, and anything that's not from me, would that just be discarded? And I also pray for hedge a protection again, Lord Jesus, that the Holy Spirit would be present, that King Jesus would, would reign here, that the white throne would be, uh, admired and acknowledged here, um, before the, uh, the powers that be. We love you. We praise you. You are king. In Jesus' name. Amen.

All right, so who here's heard of Mukbang?

Yes.

Mukbang, I don't know. <laugh> America, right? Anyone know what this is? Nobody. Okay, let me tell you. Mukbang is a live online broadcast in which the host eats a large amount of food on camera for likes, comments, and views, and sometimes for money. Pretty crazy, right? So think about all your favorite foods. You put 'em in front of you on a table, kind like you imagine you would like to do, but you just don't, and then you put a camera on you and you eat until you're done. Okay? It's, yes, someone said it's gross. Yes, it can be gross unless you have that channel, in which case, hey, we love you, we're glad you're here. Okay? <laugh> This is the right sermon for you, okay? But I just want to give you an idea of what some of this looks like because it, it's, it can be a lot, a bit a lot.

Now again, this began I guess-- (again, not again). This began in South Korea and it's blown up, and even Americans are doing it, but this is one of the most famous ones: Eating with Boki. Now Eating with Boki, you wouldn't look at her and go, wow, she's a glutton, but nonetheless, look at all that food she's got there. And some of you think, I just ate that much Thai food last night. That looks great, right?

There's another one. This guy is Nicocado Avocado.

Yeah!

Some of you have seen this guy's face. Now he started out very skinny when he started doing these videos and he's gotten larger, uh, and he eats usually fast food. He usually does a lot of fast food. So you could see, you guys see any of your favorites up there?

Yeah, Wendy's.

Wendy's, Wendy's fries. I don't see a, uh, a Frosty next to those.

Um, what else? We got Big Mac. There's a lot of barbecue sauce. That's quite a bit of barbecue sauce. That's a lot. And there's some weird tacos in the middle of there. Those look like Dorito tacos, which, if you had one of those abominations (whistles) shame on you. No, I'm just

kidding. <laugh>. And he's got a Crunchwrap Supreme there. He's eating a lot. Now this is, this is kind of what we think of when we think of gluttony, but there's also this, uh, there's this other phenomenon called Epic Meal Time. I think we have another video of this. Yeah, Epic Meal Time. Now this is more popular a few years ago, but these guys are Americans, and what they would do was they would create these giant fast food abominations, like this, and they would put 'em all together and they would eat 'em in front of one another.

So this one was called the Fast Food Lasagna and you could leave that up. I'm just gonna explain to you what's in it. It's made from bacon. 15 Big Macs from McDonald's burgers. There is uh, 15 Baconators, layered. There's 15 Teen Burgers from A & W. Onion rings, cheese, Jack Daniels Meat Sauce. And this entire, well also there's also a liter of Big Mac sauce, a liter drizzled over it. There's obviously cheese there as well. And this meal will cost you a whopping 5,463 grams of fat and it would be 71,488 calories. Good grief, right?

Now when most of us think about gluttony, this is what we think about, right? We think about people eating as much as possible and naturally we all think, listen, that's not me <laugh>. I'm not a glutton, look at these people, they're crazy and you're right, and maybe you don't live stream yourself eating gluttonous amounts of meals on your Twitch, um, and you're probably right about that.

But gluttony that we see most of the time in human nature, particularly here in the West, is actually much more subtle. In fact, when many of us think of gluttony, like I kind of made fun of it, we mostly think of it as funny or unimportant or maybe we have a whatever attitude about eating and we go, Oh, stop, who cares? It's not a big deal, there's nothing wrong with a little food, just a little drink, just a little bit of dessert, it's not a big deal.

Here's the case I want to make for you this morning. Gluttony is the most overlooked sin of the Christian faith bar none. It's minimized, it's laughed at sometimes because it's funny, it's cast to the side and it's even mocked when people call it out. Hey, you shouldn't be eatin' that. Oh, stop. You know what I'm talking about. The reality is, though, this sin causes a lot of problems.

In fact, I'd make the case no sin has had a greater impact on the quality of one's life than, than that of gluttony. Okay? And mainly because it's so overlooked in the West. Maj-- every major modern Western disease in the United States is absolutely out of control, especially those that are called chronic diseases. You know what chronic disease is? These are diseases that are now known to be significantly linked, if not outright caused, by what we consume. These are things like type two diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, obesity and more. Okay? Now, chronic disease is now the defining feature of the modern Western world.

And unfortunately, it's one of our biggest exports. I went to another country, uh, some, some time ago. Walking down the street, it was a mid, mid sort of mid-tier neighborhood, and walking down the street, what do you think I saw? You think I saw ethnic food? Yeah, some of it. You know what I saw? McDonald's, Burger King, Taco Bell, Starbucks, that's all like the, the top ones, the American ones, right? This, it's our biggest, one of our biggest exports. It's crazy.

One in two Americans now has a chronic disease. Half of the room. One in four has multiple chronic diseases. 91% of all prescriptions filled in the United States are for chronic disease. That's a lot. And 76% of physician visits are for chronic illnesses. And the crazy part is, again, you don't even need to be a full-on glutton to experience the causes of chronic disease, right? Of course not. Many people aren't, and do experience these. But if you are a glutton, let's say, the reality for you is probably far worse. One author calls chronic disease in the West a slow-motion plague, but more wide-scale. Serious.

So there are two important reasons why we should care about this topic today. Two important ones. One, God has called us to steward the resources he's given us. An uncaring spirit about what or how much we consume really is the root of gluttony, but it's also poor stewardship. Two, gluttony presupposes God's faithfulness. It assumes and abuses resources that God has given us.

Now, Christians again, we believe-- for those of you that are uh here, and you're not Christians, tell you what Christians believe-- Christians believe that God provides all things including our food. We believe God provides everything. This is more difficult to see, though, in countries of wealth and in countries of abundance like the United States. Harder to see, right? But we believe, though, that food, shelter, clothing, all that stuff comes from God as a gift. And he provides for us one day at a time.

And so when we get these resources that should spur us on towards thankfulness. But gluttony makes those resources not about thankfulness towards God, but about satisfying our own desires themselves. And here's the sort of thesis for this morning. Gluttony makes God's provision about our pleasure rather than God's faithfulness.

Now you may be thinking one or two things. One, this doesn't apply to me. I'm not a glutton. I never will be a glutton and probably never have been. I would say to you that in America, particularly if you live in a Western, a Western part of the world, this absolutely can and does apply to you, because of the subtle nature of gluttony. And two, you might in your other category, you might be thinking this does, this does apply to me. What the heck do I do? How do I, how do I solve this? Well, like all of these sins, God provides an antidote through his scriptures to break free from these sins that we might, so we might worship Jesus in freedom, and not in bondage to something else like food and drink.

Okay? So we're gonna talk just as we've done all series, what is the sin? So what is gluttony? Where does it hide? And then, what the antidote is. What is gluttony? Where does it hide? What's the antidote? Okay, first, what is it? What is it? Now I scoured the scriptures looking for all of the verses on gluttony. And here's sort of the, the definition I've come with you, or, come to you with. Here it is. Gluttony is the enjoyment of excessive eating-- it's not just the enjoyment of excessive eating in and of itself-- eating and drinking that has been disconnected from contentment in God. Okay? So gluttony then is not just having the biggest meal you

possibly can. It's about having the biggest meal you possibly can or having lots of food or lots of drink, and doing it for itself, in and of itself.

Because everything we do should be tied in fact to our relationship with God, and anything we don't do that is disconnected from our relationship with God that can segment us, like we talked about last week. Hey we can lose integrity and we could feel a sense of loss and disconnect from God. Okay? Everything we do is connected to God. You might think, oh man, that's so overwhelming. Well, 1 Corinthians 10 says, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Do all to the glory of God. When we disconnect our eating and our drinking from the reality that God has provided the sustenance for our living, that's actually when we can take our first step towards gluttony. Okay?

Again, all of these seven deadly sins, as we've been talking about, they all begin with good things. Gluttony begins with a good desire for food. God gave us food to sustain us. He gave us taste buds to enjoy it. We're, I'm not saying we shouldn't enjoy food. Both of those things are awesome. In fact, all across scripture meals are always scattered throughout. God centers big parts of the scriptures around meals. He wants us to get that. He wants us to see that. The Passover, the upper room discourse, uh, the wedding supper of the lamb. These are big meals. God wants to surround his work around meals. It's important. So anytime we receive a meal, we should have opportunity to worship Jesus. That's why we should be thankful.

Now the problem with Westerners, us Americans, let's say, is that we live in a state, again, of abundance. And we believe we have not just the desire for food and drink, but the right to food and drink. I deserve food. I deserve drink. I should have it. Everyone around the world should have it. We believe it. I need it. I should have it, anytime. I should be able to go to my pantry and have whatever it is I need. But the problem is, it's hard to be thankful for things you believe you're entitled to. And when we have so much food, so much drink, we become entitled to being able to eat and drink whatever we'd like. Then all of a sudden it's hard to be thankful.

You can get an avocado anywhere in the country at any time of the year, never before in the history of the world has that been possible. But we can do that now unless you go to Costco and get the really hard ones, and then they turn bad in like 12 hours. You know what I'm talking about? We're not thankful to God for those. But all the other avocados, praise God. You know what I'm talking about? You can't buy avocados from Costco. You can't do it. Yes, thank you. Even if you could eat, let's say eight avocados in 12 hours, should you, you know? That's a lot.

We should be thankful. But gluttony then trickles in when we begin to pervert God's intention for food. Okay? So this is when we turn a good thing into a God thing. For example, now all of a sudden you're eating, every time you eat, it's about how much pleasure you can receive from the meal, not about God anymore. Every time you drink it becomes about the taste, it becomes about the taste, not the worship. You may begin, uh, to make eating more about curing your sadness or drowning your sorrows than it is about praising God or lamenting amongst him. Okay? That leads me to say that gluttony is a form of idolatry.

Now, for those of you who don't know, idolatry is when we worship something, some person, place or thing more than we worship God, when we put something in position of highest authority in our lives. It could be food, it could be something else. This is what, this is what idolatry really is. And we can use food to worship God, or we could use food to worship food itself, or some other emotion or situation that might come amongst from eating or drinking. Okay?

Ken Pierpont, he says this: "There is nothing wrong with enjoying food like any other good gift from God. But when you begin to delight in food so much that it, it occupies a place in your soul that only God should have, only God should have, you've made a God of food. No longer are you worshipping God and seeing food as one of the many great gifts he gives; we're actually replacing, replacing God with food, replacing God with the pleasures that food brings."

Gluttony then, friends, is not really about the act of eating so much, although it is about that. Um, it's actually about the heart. Gluttony is dangerous because it is a, it is a symptom of a failure to see God for who he is, which is sufficient for you in your time of joy, celebration or need. Okay? That's what gluttony is. Now we need to know where it might hide. It hides a lot of places, right, because it's subtle, it's subtle for Americans, it's subtle for Westerners, we don't see it as much. There's a lot of abundance here. Where does it hide?

This first one is for most of us, and this is it hides in a carefree attitude about eating. This is like, masks under this idea of self-forgetfulness. Oh, I'm not worried about the self. Oh, I'm not interested about that. I don't, I don't think about what I eat. I don't think about the food. I just love and praise God. But you do make a choice about what you're gonna eat for dinner, right? You do decide what you're gonna have for breakfast. You decide how many packets of sugar to put in your coffee. You make those decisions. So it's not like you don't decide anything about food. But when it comes to narrowing the scope and doing-- eating properly for, for stewardship, then all of a sudden it becomes an issue. Carefree attitude, right? Carefree attitude about eating.

This is where we say food is food. It's not a big deal. We shouldn't focus on too much of what we eat. I mean after all, I mean look at all the Instagram models, the body builders, that's vanity. Look how much they care. Have you said that? I've said that like, oh my gosh, it's so vain, right? And it's true. We shouldn't be overly focused on our bodies, self-infatuation or vanity. These are not helpful and they're sinful in their own right, to be sure. But that's not what we're talking about today. We're not talking about vanity today, Today we're talking very clearly about the other side of it. And that's gluttony. So let's not move the needle, or let's not move the finish line, or move the cheese, let's say. And let's, uh, let's focus in on the actual goal here. Okay? That's gluttony. When we don't think deeply enough about what we eat, we can accidentally be relying on food again for comfort, for cure from sorrows, or just to feel happy all the time.

And we'll say things like, you know, all things in moderation. All things in moderation. But of course at what point does all things in moderation become all things, right, in moderation.

<laugh> Since all things in moderation is not exactly moderation, it's actually gluttony. If you have everything in moderation, it's too much. And by the way, I was looking for the verse on that. You guys know what chapter "all things in moderation" is in? That's not in there. That's an American thing to say. It's very American, right? We say these things, we love all things in moderation. We love these sort of verses. It makes us happy. But what point does all things in moderation become poor stewardship of the things God has given us?

1 Corinthians 6, Paul says this: "All things are lawful for me", he's quoting, "but not all things are helpful". Did you hear that? All things are lawful. I can do whatever, I could eat all things in moderation, but is everything helpful? And my great grandfather used to say, you could drive a car with your feet if you want to, doesn't mean it's a good idea. Right? Yeah, you could eat as much as you, you could do. It also could be really dumb, right? All things are lawful for me, but I will not be dominated by anything. Hey, all things are lawful, but I'm not gonna be owned just 'cause I can do something. Food is meant for stomach and stomach meant for food. And Paul says, and yeah, God's gonna destroy both, one and the other.

Now you might be confused on that last one. Food meant for stomach. Stomach meant for food. That's a common turn of phrase that was used in Corinth. The Corinthians have adopted an idea that essentially whatever the body craves it should have. Sound familiar? Sounds an awful lot like today. Whatever you feel you should want or desire or do, you should be able to do it. Same principle here in Corinth. This passage is using this phrase suggesting that there's some sort of distance people are suggesting. Doesn't matter what I eat, you know, that's great, like I'm eating whatever my body craves it. But Lord Jesus I love you and that's all that really matters, okay? What matters is, what matters is, yes, I eat food meant for stomach, stomach for my food, all things in moderation, but I've got the Lord over here. The passage is suggesting that actually the Lord's over both. He's over your stomach, he's over your food, he's over your spirit. Why are you putting a, a fork-- why are you separating the two? That's not what we're supposed to do. Essentially this passage says whatever you like to eat, you should eat it. Whatever you feel you should be able to feel, whatever you want to feel, you should be able to feel it. And Paul's like, yeah, and God's gonna destroy both, and they're governed by him, actually, not you.

Later, if you're not convinced yet, Paul goes on to say: "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you?" Oh, so there's a connection between your spirit and your body. Hmm. Who you have from whom? From God. From your mom and dad, from you, from biology? From God. You are not your own. You were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body. You are not your own. This idea of, oh, it's my body, I can do whatever I want, is not true for the Christian. The Spirit has made his home in us, the Father has created us in his image, and the son has purchased us with his blood. Our bodies are not ours, they are his. That's why we care.

And for those of us going back to the original point, they're like, well, but are the spirit and body separate practically? Our bodies are inextricably linked to our spirit. Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones has a wonderful quote. Now, Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones is not a doctor of theology. He's a

doctor, he's a medical doctor, but he's also a theologian. You may have heard his name. This is what he says on the subject. "But someone, does someone hold the view that as long as you are a Christian, it does not matter what the condition of your body is? Well, you'll be soon disillusioned if you believe that... There are some in whose cases it's clear to me that the cause of their depression is mainly physical. On the other hand people who are more physically weak are more prone to attacks of spiritual discouragement and depression. But if you recognize that the physical may be partly responsible for the spiritual condition and make allowances for this, you'll be better able to deal with the spiritual issues."

What is he saying? He's saying that you may be going through a spiritual funk and you, oh Lord, I don't know what's going on. I'm so depressed. And he's saying actually your physical body may be contributing to that. He's saying it's possible that what you're eating, your environment, your lifestyle may contribute to your spiritual depression. Okay? That's possible. And it's also possible that spiritual forces can also affect your physical body. We see that all throughout scripture. So to pull those two apart is dualistic, and it's Western, it's American. It's not biblical, it's not a biblical idea to extract the two from one another.

Where else does gluttony hide? It hides in drinking. In drinking. Gluttony is not just about eating. While the Bible speaks frequently though about drinking alcohol, I mean remember Jesus turns water into wine. There's lots of different seasons where there's things in scriptures where we see ideas about, uh, about alcohol. Paul talks about it frequently.

Just to be clear, our church's position on alcohol is that it's to be stewarded extremely well. That we need to be careful with it. We understand it's addictive nature and yet the scriptures speak about it as a gift from God and we need to be careful around it, okay? Many of us though are actually frequent gluttons in the form of drinking too much. Let's just be honest, okay? Even if you're not clinically an alcoholic, Proverbs 23: "Be not among the, the drunkards or among the gluttonous eaters of meat, for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and slumber will cloth them in rags." Okay? Sort of funny, also kind of sad, right? Sort of both. And now the two concepts of gluttony and drinking, uh, drunkenness are sort of linked together in scripture, often. Both often lead us away from full dependency in Christ.

So we turn to the pleasures of the world like drinking and eating to sort of bring us comfort and bring us healing instead of going to God. Okay? Now I'm sure you're well aware, I'm sure you're well aware of the addictive nature of alcohol and its dangers, right? I'm sure you're well aware of that. You have to be extraordinarily careful of that. But one of the main issues is that amount-- the amount of people, the amount that, that people are drinking today is far more today than it ever was in Jesus' day. It's to be stewarded well. Culturally we are drinking way more. Did you know that wine was fermented and consumed in the first century at far lower amounts than it is today? Far lower. Your typical bottle of wine, what might, what-- what might the percentage be? 8%, 9%, 10%, 14%, there's some out there, 14% really dry wines. Those are really high.



In the first century percentages of alcohol and wine were in the one- to three-and-a-half percent range. That's what it was fermented to. It was fermented in a different process and far shorter amounts. This idea of 10%, 11%, 14% wine was not a thing. So when you're like, Oh, I'm drinking wine, Jesus made wine. Well, he didn't make that wine, okay, <laugh> he didn't do that. That is some serious, it's got glyphosate in it, your-- you don't know what you're drinking, okay? High percentages. Jesus didn't make it like that. And he certainly didn't distill liquor. He didn't do that. So we have to be very careful. It's an addictive slippery slope. This Ephesians 5, many of us know this verse, says, "Do not become drunk with wine but be filled with the Holy Spirit". What is he saying? It's impossible for you to be drunk and also be led by God.

Now, question: What is drunk to you? <pause> No one wants to answer. Point oh eight? Oh because that's what the government says? What about Utah? Does anyone know the percentage of alcohol consumption in Utah before it's drunk driving? Point oh five. Now, if you were at point oh eight or point oh seven in Utah, are you drunk? And then when you come back to Washington, are you not drunk? Is that what the Bible says? Or are you drunk just in general? Here's the deal. Drunkenness is different for every person, okay? It's different for every person. The moment the Holy Spirit can no longer coexist in you with your alcohol is the moment you're drunk. For some of us that could be three drinks, for some it's one, for some it's zero. We don't know. That's up for you, that's up with you and the Lord and your counselor and your pastors to decide, okay? And whether you eat and drink, it says you're supposed to do all to the glory of God.

Last time you drank, did you hold up your glass to the glory of God and the joy of all people? Did you thank him for your Shirley Temple? Cosmopolitan, not a drink. I, you know, I don't know these drink names. You know lickey? Yeah, something, yeah. Mine-- Manhattan, boom. Did you thank the Lord for that cherry in there, or did you just drink it because you had a really long day and you needed to get something out of your system? Or because you just needed to celebrate an awesome thing, or because you were so sad you just needed something, or because you needed the courage to do something that you've been meaning to do but can't do it because you know it's wrong, and now you needed to drink and that'll help you do it. Hides in alcohol.

Where else does gluttony hide? The waistline. The waistline. Gluttony is not merely evidenced by what you look like. Gluttony can, can look differently for many different people. Some people they can eat one skittle and they balloon, okay, that's me. Some people can eat 50 tacos and look like Kate Moss on a juice fast. It just, it depends. It's, it's not about your size necessarily. Okay? Studies show by the way that your risk of heart disease is the same depending, uh, regardless of your weight or appearance, if your diet was poor, right? People who are thin are more genetically predisposed to other types of fat, like fat that surrounds your organs and is not subcutaneous, so it doesn't look as bad. Your health may not be evidenced by bodily neglect, yet. You might not yet see it. It's possible it's coming down the road for you. So that means what you look like in the mirror is not evidence of good stewardship.

It's not, it is your behavior and disposition towards what you're consuming in your body that is evidence of a gluttonous attitude, not what you look like. So you can't say, Oh, I'm 17 years old and <laugh>, I ate 50 piece chicken nuggets and I've been doing this and this and this and I'm not a glutton 'cause I'm skinny. No, it doesn't work like that. It's about the heart. That's where Jesus always goes.

Now, I'm not suggesting, by the way, I feel like I have to put this disclaimer in there. I'm not suggesting that you're a glutton if you don't eat perfectly or something. That's not what I meant. Not at all. What I am suggesting is that you yourself have to look in the mirror. You have to get with the Jesus, you have to get with good godly community and assess whether or not something is out of control and whether or not you're caring enough about what God has called you to steward.

Paul says, 1 Timothy: "Watch your doctrine and your life closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you'll save both yourself and your hearers". What is he saying? Doctrine and life. Doxa, I suspect you are incredibly astute at watching your doctrine. But are we watching our lives? Some of you, you may watch your lives, but you don't watch your doctrine. Paul says, we have to watch both. Okay. So this is the place, the types of places that gluttony can hide, so we kind of need an antidote, we need a, need a little help here to get this solved. So here it is. Here it is. Drum roll. The antidote for gluttony is self-control through contentment. Now you might think self-control. Gee, thanks. So your, your answer to gluttony is to stop being a glutton? Uh, appreciate that pastor. Yeah, that's awesome. Yes, that's what I'm saying.

But for something like gluttony, it is one of the major factors, self-control. We do need this. I mean, Bible speaks about self-control constantly. Proverbs 25:28 says, "A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls." There is no protection for you. You are totally out there. You can be attacked at any moment. Now, naturally some of us have immense self-control, like you can white-knuckle through anything, and others have literally none. No natural self-control.

Now, by the way, while you can on your own increase your self-control, it's important to know that an American psychological association and many other agencies have recently put out several studies proving that self-control or willpower are finite resources. Meaning that your ability to be self-control, be self-controlled on your own, white-knuckling, can in fact fade. It's actually possible you can no longer put the effort in to stop doing or start doing something. It's gonna wear you out and you'll quit. So then how do you get it? Hmm. We need to find another source. The source can't be our own elbow grease. We have to find another source that does not come from us. We need an exogenous source from the outside. And where do we get that? For those of you that are Christians, or not Christians, uh, might-- our case is from the scriptures that you can have infinite levels of self-control through, again, contentment in Jesus Christ.

Where do we see that? Well, Paul, in his letter to Philippians in chapter 4, he says this: "Not that I'm speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have

learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all, all things through Christ, through him who strengthens me." Paul is saying, no matter what my circumstances is, if the Holy Spirit comes upon me, transforms my heart, empowers me for a mission, I could be in loss, I could be in poverty, I could be wealthy, I could be happy, I could be lacking joy, I could be really hungry, I could be really full. It doesn't matter where I'm at. I could be in, trying-- almost giving in to my addiction, I could be all these different things. All of them. And yet I can be content in those situations. That is a hard thing. And we all long for that, don't we?

But here's the cool part. Self-control is what follows. Self-control, remember, is a fruit of the Spirit. When the Spirit comes upon a person, someone who worships Jesus as God, he plants this seed in you, and out grows the fruits of the Spirit. Love, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, self-control, amazing. These things then beginning to grow in the life of somebody. Self-control follows. Self-control is a fruit of the spirit that is naturally produced by a person who, who is rooted contently in Jesus. Now, if gluttony is the enjoyment of food that has been disconnected from contentment in God, what happens if we plug back into God? What happens if we sit in his shadow and we are back in his presence and we experience them at an amazing level?

One of the cool things about having kids is watching them open presents. And if you were a kid, or maybe are a kid now, you love opening presents. It's the best part of anyone, kid's life. There's a few days you look forward to, you look forward to Christmas, you look forward to your birthday. These are the two days 'cause there's gonna be gifts. And I love giving my kids lots of little gifts because they love diving in, and they're, they're scratching at 'em and opening 'em all up. It's amazing, right? Couple years ago I gave, I bought my kid what I thought was the coolest gift ever. I thought they were gonna love this gift and they were, they were really excited about it.

But then my mother-in-law, yeah, I know. She-- <laugh>, she basically carries in, or wheelbarrows, I can't remember, this giant gift, maybe four-and-a-half feet, taller than all the kids. And she's like, <laugh>. And she's brings it in, just puts it right in the living room. Now what do you think my kids did when they saw that gift? It was wrapped like it, she-- there was a whole roll of, of stuff she wrapped with that thing. They all go <whoosh> what's that? Right? Like all of them, like without exception. Got four. And they all sprint over there and they start grabbing this thing and clawing at it like little rodents trying to get all of the wrapping paper off so they can open this gift. They, they were so excited to see this amazing gift. Now, I felt a little bad because as a parent I bought and me and my wife bought all these other gifts, and they sort of abandoned them. I mean they liked 'em, but they went for this big gift. They loved it.

God the father in our lives, is gonna give you a ton of different gifts. You're gonna have food, you're gonna have drink, gonna have relationships. You're gonna have all these wonderful things. And you're gonna be enjoying them. And then God the father is gonna wheel in a big old gift, and he's gonna set it right in the middle of the living room. And that big old gift's name is Jesus. And all of us, when we understand the character of our amazing father, or should rightly,

throw aside these other little g gifts and look at the amazing, beautiful, wonderful gift and you run to that gift and you claw at it, and you sit in its presence, you go, My gosh, I, I absolutely love this gift.

But what if my kids, when my mother-in-law wheeled that big old gift in, what if when she wheeled that thing in, wouldn't it be weird if she rolled it in, and they, they glanced at and went, Huh. And they went back to their tube socks in the corner that Aunt Edna bought them, with their back turned, like, yeah, these will keep me warm. I really like these and maybe I'll wear 'em to school and look like, um, everyone will make fun of me 'cause they're so big. And what if they did that? Friends, when we're gluttons, that's really what we do. We take the wonderful gifts that God has given, we're really thankful for them. And then Jesus is right behind us and we are enjoying these wonderful g, little g gifts and we've missed the big G gift. But you know what the big G gift is really supposed to do? You know what my kids did? They opened the gift and they saw how amazingly wonderful it was and then they turned their head just a few more degrees up and they saw the gift giver. And they sprinted to her. Big hugs.

Because the gifts are great, but it's not really actually about the gifts, it's about the gift giver. The point of all of a gift, it's all just a symbol of the love that the gift giver has for the recipient. That's what I want you to lean into today. Some of us are in the corner with our tube socks with a massive, wonderful gift behind us. And if we would just turn our heads, he would be our delight, not these gifts. And then we could be content in him. And then, weirdly enough, this would lead to, actually, more joy with the other little gifts, not less, because then you can actually enjoy them and not rely on them like you've been doing. Contentment is in Jesus, it's the gift that leads to the appreciation of other gifts, but not a disproportionate love of them.

Paul has learned contentment through satisfaction he finds in God himself, too. Philippians 3:8, he says, "Indeed, I count everything as, as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ my Lord. For his sake, I have suffered loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ." He is saying, I love these gifts. They are so great, but guess what, if I lost them, I still got him, and that's what's most important, because that's the source of my contentment. Now all of a sudden, all of the little g gifts lose power because I have my full contentment in him. But if I do get a gift, I can absolutely enjoy it for what it is because I have the big G gift. Now, when we enjoy food and drink, we can enjoy it in proper perspective. Jesus becomes the bread of life and in him we are satisfied.

If you want that today, friends, Christian or not, you can have it. Bible says ask, it will be done unto you. Do you want contentment? Do you want to be free? Aren't you sick of it? Aren't you sick of it owning you, ruling you, the tears you fight back, the anger you fight back, the broken relationships? Don't you want to be free? I'm not saying it's gonna be easy to fight gluttony, it's not. There's all sorts of physical and biological effects. But if your power source is the Holy Spirit sent by God, you can absolutely overcome it.

Let's pray. Jesus, thank you for being Lord over our lives. We love you. We praise you. Would you be the big G gift in our lives today? Would we look at you with adoration and pray and

praise, in peace and hope, that you would provide everything we need. And may we not be-- may we enjoy the little gifts you've given us like food and drink in their proper perspective, and not, may we not rely on them for what you're supposed to do for us. Some of my friends here, they're trapped, they're addicted, they're hurting, and they're in pain. Lord God, you can actually bring healing to the biological and chemical effects that is in them, that is causing them to stumble, that has hijacked their biology. And Lord uh, you're a Lord over that and you can solve that. And so we ask for that healing today. We love you. We praise you in his name. Amen.