

Gluttony

Introduction:

I invite you to think beyond the common image of the glutton. We think of a glutton as a person who gobbles down food without thought. Author, Roald Dahl, played up this trope in his children's classic, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." The image of Augustus Gloop wantonly eating and drinking from a river of chocolate was a classic and somewhat horrifying picture for us to read. However, gluttony isn't about obesity, and I dare write it goes beyond food and drink. Gluttony is about excess of food, drink, goods, things, and physical enjoyment. Gluttony is not what some people suffer from. Gluttony is sinfulness that we all suffer from and commit. Jesus teaches a better way through a miracle and a lesson.

Jesus miraculously fed a very large crowd. When they finished eating, they followed him because they wanted more bread. Once fed, Jesus teaches that there is more to life than following the desires of the stomach, or flesh, or the empty soul. His lesson teaches that our purpose isn't to eat, drink and be merry. Rather, our purpose is to believe in Jesus. This belief leads to salvation and true life, true satisfaction, and holy contentment.

In Philippians, Saint Paul uses the word "content" as the opposite of gluttony (or want). If we have much, we need to find contentment in Jesus. If we are in want, we can find contentment in Christ. Jesus is eternal; the things of this world are not for they are temporal. "Content" describes the person who is filled with Christ Jesus, and that is a better way to live.

Read Your Bible

- Philippians 4:10-13
- John 6:25-40

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. When have you eaten too much, and what did it feel like?
2. Is that a healthy way to live?
3. Why were the crowds following Jesus?
4. In verse 27 how does Jesus redirect the crowd?
5. What is the work of God according to verse 29?
6. How does the crowd respond?
7. What did the crowd forget in their question?
8. What is the promise in verse 35?
9. Is there a person you know who exemplifies contentment?
10. How do you find contentment?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Father in heaven, thank you that your Son, who feeds us with the bread of life. May we find contentment and life in Him and Him only. Forgive us when we stray attempting to find fulfillment in the excess enjoyment of temporal things. Redirect us always to Christ and His eternal love. In His name we pray, Amen.