

THE VICE OF GLUTTONY

The Christian Teachings of Virtue (Series 4, Part 6, Teaching #30)

Instructions: Watch video, read aloud, underline what stands out to you most, discuss

Leader Guide...

See the back page for detailed facilitator instructions.

The evil lure of deceitful cravings is cast by the deadly sin of gluttony.

The vice of gluttony is a disposition of immoderate or immoral consumption.

Though often reduced to overeating or overdrinking, gluttony reaches far beyond the stomach. It is not limited to the unjust attachment to bodily appetites—it extends to the appetites of the mind, the cravings of the heart, the insatiable desire for more of anything that delights the senses but dulls the soul.

“Food is not evil, but gluttony is. Childbearing is not evil, but fornication is. Money is not evil, but avarice is. Glory is not evil, but vainglory is. Indeed, there is no evil in existing things, but only in their misuse” (St. Maximus).

Hence, there is no fault in a tasty meal, cocktail, or screen time; things like these—received with gratitude and moderation—are to be enjoyed, but not overly-enjoyed. For it’s that little divergence in the path, that unnoticed excess, that small turning from discipline to indulgence, that quietly leads to gluttony.

Gluttony is not simply the act of consuming—it is the refusal to stop. It is when delight becomes dependence. The glutton is enslaved to addictions of many kinds, unable to say no even when their conscience pleads otherwise. And instead of turning to Christ—the Bread of Life—for fulfillment, they grasp at created things, trying to fill a hunger only God can satisfy.

But consumption without purpose leaves the soul bloated and starved at the same time—overfed and undernourished. For every moment spent feeding the flesh beyond what is right steals from the love of God, the service of neighbor, and the respect of self.

There is a better way.

Gluttony is defeated through the virtues of temperance, abstinence, and accountability.

Grow in temperance. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to your patterns of excess. Let Him strengthen your will to moderate consumption—not by mere restriction, but by righteous order. Let your intake reflect your aim—to glorify God, not gratify self.

Practice abstinence. Train your soul by fasting. Control your appetites by refraining from what you enjoy until the right time and amount. Offer the hunger that lingers as a sacrifice of love—a prayer without words that says, “You, Lord, are my portion.”

Take accountability. Gluttony thrives in secrecy and excuse. Be honest. Take ownership of your weaknesses. If you fall, don’t hide it. Confess it. Turn your gaze back to Christ. Receive His mercy and keep walking the narrow path.

(continues on next page...)

7 Chief Vices

Pride

Envy

Anger

Sloth

Greed

Gluttony

Lust



Watch Video: Scan the QR code to access the video for this teaching as well as additional resources such as related Scripture, quotes, and more.

Or, visit horseandchariot.com/the-vice-of-gluttony

Scripture says, “Don’t associate with people who drink too much wine or stuff themselves with food. Drunkards and gluttons will be reduced to poverty. If all you do is eat and sleep, you will soon be wearing rags” (Proverbs 23:20–21). The gluttonous soul is left spiritually impoverished—slow to rise, dull to hear, weary in will.

But the temperate soul is light, free, and focused. It consumes not for escape, but for strength—to love God better, to serve others well, to live in clarity and purpose. “For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17). “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (Matthew 5:6).

So oppose gluttony. Don’t let your appetite be your master. Let Christ be your satisfaction. For He alone can fill the deepest hunger of your soul—not with more food, more pleasure, or more escape—but with the fullness of life that never fades.

Let temperance govern your consumption, and let your every appetite—body, mind, and spirit—be ordered toward God.

That is the way of freedom. That is the victory over gluttony. That is the virtuous life.

Gluttony is not merely overeating—it is the immoderate consumption of anything that delights the senses but dulls the soul. It is the refusal to stop. When delight becomes dependence, appetite becomes master. The soul, created to hunger for God, begins grasping at created things for satisfaction. But through temperance, abstinence, and accountability, desire is reordered and freedom restored.

1. Gluttony exceeds rightful measure. It turns enjoyment into excess. → Where have good things in your life become overused or misused?

2. Gluttony seeks comfort over clarity. It consumes to escape rather than strengthen. → Are you using food, drink, screens, or entertainment to avoid deeper hunger?

3. Gluttony dulls spiritual sensitivity. Excess weakens the will and clouds discernment. → Do your habits leave you spiritually alert—or spiritually sluggish?

4. Temperance restores order. It moderates consumption with purpose. → Are you consuming in a way that glorifies God or gratifies self?

5. Abstinence trains desire. Fasting strengthens mastery over appetite. → When was the last time you intentionally refrained from something to grow spiritually?

6. Accountability breaks secrecy. Confession weakens hidden indulgence. → Are you honest about your struggles, or quietly excusing them?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A TEMPERATE & ORDERED SOUL

Those who resist gluttony and cultivate virtue exhibit these traits:

1. Moderate. They enjoy good things without excess.

4. Resolute. They can say no when conscience calls.

2. Self-Controlled. Their appetites serve their mission, not rule it.

5. Spiritually Alert. Their mind and heart remain attentive to God.

3. Purposeful. They consume for strength and clarity, not escape.

6. Free. They are not enslaved to cravings or compulsions.

Signs of Gluttony Taking Root...

- You struggle to stop once you begin consuming things you like.
- You regularly overeat, overdrink, over-scroll, or overindulge.
- You turn to consumption as emotional comfort.
- You justify excess because “it’s not that bad.”
- You feel sluggish, distracted, or spiritually dull.
- You hide or minimize indulgent habits.
- You crave created pleasures more than communion with God.

Think: Consumption without order leaves the soul both bloated and starving. When I chase satisfaction in created things, I remain restless. Christ alone fills the deepest hunger of my heart. When I moderate my appetites, my soul becomes lighter, clearer, freer—ready to hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Pray: Lord, bring order to my appetites. Where I have indulged beyond what is right, give me conviction and grace. Teach me temperance—not harsh restriction, but holy moderation. Strengthen my will through abstinence and make my hunger a prayer that draws me closer to You. Let nothing I consume master me. May You alone be my true satisfaction. Amen.

SELF-EVALUATION & ACTION STEP																				
<p>Of the areas you underlined throughout this teaching, which stood out to you most and why? (Reflect, write down, discuss)</p>																				
<p>Rate yourself from 1-10 1 = I am frequently ruled by cravings 10 = I consistently practice moderation and self-control</p>	<table border="1" style="text-align: center; width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">←</td> <td>(avoid 5)</td> <td colspan="4">→</td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	←				(avoid 5)	→			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10											
←				(avoid 5)	→															
<p>Why did you give yourself this rating?</p>																				
<p>What appetite most threatens your spiritual clarity (food, drink, screens, entertainment, comfort)?</p>																				
<p>When do you most tend to overconsume—stress, boredom, celebration, loneliness?</p>																				
<p>What specific act of abstinence or fasting can you practice this week to strengthen your will?</p>																				
<p>Daily Affirmation: Today, I will master my appetites. By God’s grace, I will consume with purpose, practice moderation, and seek my deepest satisfaction in Christ alone.</p>																				

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Courageous Facilitator,

Your willingness to step forward and lead is a gift of grace to your community and a brave act of faith. God bless you for answering the call to inspire others to grow in virtue and pursue the character of Christ.

The Holy Spirit thrives in fellowship and community, working powerfully through the connections and shared experiences of small groups. That's why these lesson plans are designed to cultivate genuine relationships, inspire meaningful conversations, and foster a spirit of transformation through shared wisdom and grace.

Facilitating these lessons is both simple and impactful. While many forms of teaching rely on one-way communication, where one person speaks and others listen, true transformation happens through two-way communication. In this format, ideas aren't merely taught—they're explored together. You'll guide, but everyone will share and learn from one another, creating a rich environment where the Holy Spirit can move and grow each mind, heart, and soul.

These lesson plans succeed because they:

- **Encourage connection** in a collaborative small group setting that fosters action and accountability
- **Empower every voice** with opportunities for each participant to share and contribute
- **Inspire growth** through educational, inspirational, and transformational teachings

Your role as a facilitator is to:

- **Follow the instructions and trust the process**—the wheel is already built, you're here to guide it.
- **Honor the schedule** by being punctual and respecting the time of your group.
- **Lead with love** and rely on God's grace to inspire, guide, and uplift everyone in the group.

Your courage to create a space for growth and fellowship will not only bless others but will deepen your own journey of faith and virtue. Together, with God's help, lives will be transformed.

To God be the glory!

FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

1. Getting Started (5-10 mins)

- Give everyone a few minutes to join before getting started. Be friendly and greet people as they arrive. Get them talking! Come prepared with some good ice-breaker questions you can ask during this time.
- 3-5 minutes in, do quick introductions for anyone new to the group. What brought them to the group? Spend a moment getting to know them.
- Open with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).

2. Watch & Read the Teaching (5-10 mins)

- Watch the video of the teaching as a group.
- Have a volunteer read all of page 1. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

3. How it Applies (5-10 mins)

- Have a volunteer read all of page 2. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

4. Reflection & Discussion (20-30 mins)

- Have everyone quietly take 5 minutes to complete the "Self-Evaluation & Action Step" on page 3.
- Then, going around the group, have each person take a minute to share what stood out to them most about the teaching and why.
- If time allows, continue the discussion using the remaining self-evaluation questions as a guide.

5. Wrap Up (5 mins)

- Remind everyone to do the daily affirmation until you meet again next time.
- Ask for any prayer requests from the group.
- Close with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).