

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXV

December 27, 2015

No. 52

Beware Of Gluttony

(Jerry Fite)

Anyone can be charged with gluttony. Jesus was charged with being a glutton and winebibber by his detractors (*Luke 7:34, Matthew 11:19*). But what was Jesus doing? He was merely “eating” and “drinking”. No evidence of excess of food or drink was leveled at Jesus. In his accusers’ eyes, his association with sinners was enough proof.

We all must eat food if we are to live. Therefore, we should be aware of the possibility of gluttony. Let us examine gluttony from the Scriptures deeper than the obvious characteristic of excess.

Gluttony is idolatry. Paul focuses upon idolatry, not by naming the idolatrous gods, but by isolating the human desire behind all idolatry. Covetousness is an evil desire, which is or “amounts to idolatry” (*Colossians 3:5- NASV*). As the god of mammon or riches is created from our inordinate desire for money, gluttony can become our god in our inordinate desire for food. Money, life’s necessity for ex-

change of goods and services, becomes a god, not because you use money, but because you allow money to govern your life instead of God. The same change in masters can happen with food. Food, a necessity for existence, becomes a god, not because you eat, but because you allow food to govern your life instead of God.

Gluttony is an enemy of self-control. At times, all the loving and no doubt painful chastening of a parent cannot overcome gluttony. For example, a rebellious young man had come to the point that he would not submit to his parents’ instruction even “when they chastise him, he will not listen to them.” (*Deuteronomy 21:18*). What was he? No doubt to the sadness of exasperated parents, they have to confess, “...he is a glutton and a drunkard” (*Deuteronomy 21:20*).

“And put a knife to your throat, if you are a man of great appetite” (*Proverbs 23:2*). When the Bible paints drastic pictures of self-control in the context of appetite for food, we know how strong an enemy of self-control

gluttony can be. “Self control” is an essential proof of the Spirit of God abiding in the Christian (*Galatians 5:23*). Not being “mastered by” or brought under the power of “anything” is the focus of godly self-control (*I Corinthians 6:12-13*). Self-control is about to lose a spiritual battle when food becomes our drug of choice to medicate stress and unhappiness, instead of contentment with God.

Gluttony can become a habitual characteristic of a life spiraling downward. Paul pointed to the Cretans as “lazy gluttons” (*Titus 1:12*). Gluttony was such a habit that it characterized what they were “always”. Laziness and poverty accompany gluttony: “For the heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man in rags” (*Proverbs 23:21*). A drowsy stupor is not the mindset for industrious work. Look out! “Riches to rags” is the downward spiral. Beware of gluttony! It is not only harmful to both soul and body, it is also contagious to those exposed to it (*Proverbs 23:20*).