



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V21 N46 November 24, 2019

## TOXIC

“The Harmful Habit of Gluttony”

Proverbs 23:19-21

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Self-Control

I have the power,  
through Christ, to  
control myself.

*“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”*

Titus 2:11-13



How much is  
too much?

“Food, Glorious Food!” is the refrain of Oscar Winning Musical *Oliver!*, Hungry orphans daily eating gruel pine for anything that rich people eat. We would expect such reverie from those with empty stomachs, but our world is full of “foodies” who live, breath and sleep FOOD!

Today we have more groceries and specialty food shops than ever before. We can buy food in bulk and we can have our groceries delivered directly to our doors. New restaurants open weekly. We can order from our apps and get food points for every meal we consume. If we are too overwhelmed to go out for food, we can have UberEats deliver us a hamburger from one fast food joint and a mochaccino from another. We can have a food preparation service like Blue Apron ship us fresh gourmet meals, or we can pay a personal chef to cater for us. All of this convenience gives us more time to Instagram our favorite meals and watch our favorite food network marathons of *Cake Wars* or *Man Vs. Food*. You can now even binge watch other people’s gluttony voyeuristically on YouTube as professional gluttons host their own channels stuffing themselves with edible pleasures so you do not have to suffer the consequences of bulimic bliss.

Obsession with food is not just for 19th century orphans or 21st century food addicts. Thomas Aquinas, the 13th century scholastic, codified in his *Summa Theologica* five ways in which we can be found guilty of gluttony by eating:

- *Laute* - food too luxurious or exotic
- *Studiose* - food excessive in quality
- *Nimis* - food that is excessive in quantity

- *Praepropere* - hastily or at a wrong time
- *Ardenter* - greedily (too eagerly)

Obsessing over food can be huge time waster. As a self-confessed “foodie” I find myself spending inordinate amounts of time trying to figure out what I am going to eat. I will drive farther or wait longer for the perfect meal, just so I get maximum pleasure. This would not be so bad if I did this a few times a week. But every meal for seven days a week? This can get ridiculous! When food becomes an inordinate focus or when eating habits limit my ability to perform healthy routines, I may be slipping into an unhealthy relationship with food.

Food limits should be pursued without resorting to slavish legalism. The annual feasting cycle in Judaism demonstrates that God’s plans for His people include pleasures involving food. God did not design us to be dispassionate ascetics. Rather, we are to worship God, enjoying his creation rather than worshipping what we consume. We can enjoy the abundance of a Thanksgiving feast if we are not trying to feast every other day of the year.

Pleasure works best as a seasoning rather than as a main course. Eating an entire box of cinnamon would be foolish and dangerous! Yet what is more enjoyable than a little cinnamon added to our favorite dish? Pleasure, understood as a secondary rather than a primary pursuit should be our aim in food consumption. Nutrition as primary and pleasure as secondary promotes life. Meals that nourish mostly and celebrate occasionally will do better than meals that overwhelm with flavor and overwhelm with nutrition. How we eat says a lot about who we are.

# 1

## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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### Proverbs 23:19-21

19 Listen, my son, and be wise,  
and set your heart on the right path.  
20 Do not join those who drink too much wine  
or gorge themselves on meat,  
21 for drunkards and gluttons become poor,  
and drowsiness clothes them in rags.

### READ in other translations

19 Hear, my son, and be wise;  
And guide your heart in the way.  
20 Do not mix with winebibbers,  
Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;  
21 For the drunkard and the glutton will come to  
poverty,  
And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags. (NKJV)

19 Listen, my son, and be wise;  
keep your mind on the right course.  
20 Don't associate with those who drink too much  
wine or with those who gorge themselves on meat.  
21 For the drunkard and the glutton will become poor,  
and grogginess will clothe them in rags. (HCSB)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Number each command in Proverbs 23:19.
- Circle the primary verb in Proverbs 23:20.
- Underline the words of excess in Proverbs 23:20.
- Draw a connecting line between items consumed in Proverbs 23:20.
- Draw a connecting lines between the labels (Proverbs 23:21) and their corresponding actions (Proverbs 23:20).
- Double underline the results of these actions in Proverbs 23:21.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. How does the “heart” *influence* self-control (consider Proverbs 23:12, 15, 17, 19, 26)?
2. Is the command “do not join” in Proverbs 23:20 a prohibition against participating in gluttonous feasts with others or is it a command to not identify with gluttons through personal and private actions? Explain.
3. What are some problems resulting from “too much wine” (consider Proverbs 23:29-35; 31:1-7)?
4. Is Proverbs 23:20 promoting vegetarianism? Explain your answer.
5. What are some problems resulting from “gorging” on meat (consider Proverbs 23:1-8)?
6. Describe what makes a person a “glutton” (Proverbs 23:21).
7. What is the connection between gluttony and drowsiness?
8. How could excessive eating make you poor?
9. Is gluttony only a problem for people who eat or drink too much? Explain your answer.
10. **Discussion:** What does our use of food say about our faith?

Proverbs 23:19-21 is found in a section of Proverbs called "The Thirty Sayings of the Wise" (NIV). Solomon or other editors may have adapted common proverbs from neighboring cultures into the Hebrew wisdom sayings. "In 22:20 we have what now seems to be a deliberate reference to their particular prototype, in the words, 'Have I not written for you thirty sayings ...?' If 'thirty sayings' is the right translation, it almost certainly invites comparison with the currently well-known *Instruction of Amenemope*, which not only has many themes in common with this set of sayings, but also addresses the reader with 'See thou these thirty chapters'" (Derek Kidner, *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes*, 32).

A number of these "sayings" deal with self control (Sayings 3, 7, 9, 16, 18, 19). Others are warnings against "partnering" with those who do evil (Sayings 3, 4, 16, 24, 30). Proverbs 23:19-21 contains warnings against both temptation and camaraderie with evil.

Before delivering a command, the fatherly sage encourages the wisdom seeker to consider the direction of his "heart" (Prov. 23:19). If the heart is not "set on the right path," then attempts at self-control may not succeed. Without a humble heart, pride will result. The "heart" (used over 60 times in Proverbs) is essential for making wise choices. Jesus stated, "For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come..." (Mark 7:21). Setting God first (Matt. 6:33) and making God more important than even our food (Matt. 4:4) is where we must begin if we are to defeat overindulgence.

This "wise saying" continues with a warning against excessive volume coupled with reckless consumption. Wine is described as being "sucked up" with a slurping sound of rapid ingestion in excess. Consumption's purpose is inebriation. The words describing eating are equally violent. At its root, the word for "gorge" here means "to shake in a riotous manner" or "show no respect or restraint" while consuming flesh. Put together, these phrases describe a wild party where pleasure is king and restraint is banished. King Belshazzar hosted such a wild party (Daniel 5). The Greeks had their *Bacchanalia*, honoring Bacchus, the god of wine and ecstasy. The Prodigal Son (Luke 15) "squandered his property with reckless living" (Luke 15:13 ESV). Gluttony, then, is a wild form of excessive feasting and drinking that has grave consequences. Today, followers of God will do well to avoid temptations often included in parties, drinking games, pub crawls, and outings in Vegas. These excesses are not only for the ancients. They are held every weekend in our own hometown.

The consequences of extreme consumption produce immediate and long-term effects (Prov. 23:21). Poverty often results from excessive consumption. The cost of consumption can be wildly outrageous and can quickly create debt. Poverty can also produce a loss of health. Medical bills can pile up from the abuse the body. The short-term effects of *bacchanal* is labeled "drowsiness." This stupor or inability to function often follows "the bender" or "the binge." Overextending for pleasure can cripple you from the normal functions of responsible adulthood.

Gluttony, in biblical understanding, is a habit of excessive consumption, often with others, that destroys those who live so carelessly. Many a follower of Christ has been choked out by the excesses of the party scene. This warning against gluttony is for more than just weekend ravers. Unfortunately, technology and modern conveniences have made it possible for anyone to become a "drunkard and a glutton" while never having to join anyone else in such excess. While many of us would never participate in a wild weekend party, we are often tempted consume completely out of control, all in the privacy of our own homes. A "closet glutton" can come to the poverty worn by the wildest of party animals.

Appetites without limits destroy. "The Proverbs instruct us about the subtle or not-so-subtle dangers of gluttony, moving from poor table manners [Prov. 23:1-8] to the outright dissipation of the drunkard [Prov. 23:29-35]. ... By pointing out the painful and even deadly consequences of appetites that know no bounds, they show that we are either masters of our desires or they are masters of us" (Paul Koptak, *NIV Application Commentary, Proverbs*, 556).

Biblical warnings about gluttony are not about waist size or Body Mass Index (BMI). You can be in perfect physical shape and still be a "drunkard and a glutton." Gluttony is excessive focus on and overconsumption of food. It is promoted by a hyperactive market that seeks to sell more than it seeks to nourish. An inordinate focus on abstaining from food can be categorized as an inverted form of gluttony, as it too is a hyper-extended focus on food.

Solutions are not simple. Consider how food relates to your heart's desires (Prov. 23:19). Consult with your physician for advice on how to include fasting in your routine and cutting down on so much feasting. Consider reducing the number of "joins" (Prov. 23:20) you make to excessive eating situations. Dine out less or limit yourself to smaller portions. Also consider combating drowsiness" (Prov. 23:21) by making sure that activity and exercise are rarely missed in a weekly routine. Looking forward to a walk or run or an act of service and not thinking about your next meal may be a step on the "right path" (Prov. 23:19).

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 19 **heart** “We have seen that the key words ‘heart’ (*leb*, 23:7, 12, 15, 17, 19, 26, 33, 34) and ‘eye’ (*ayin*, 23:5, 6, 26, 29, 31, 33) appear throughout this part of the ‘sayings of the wise,’ restating and developing the truth of previous chapters. What the eye takes in is stored in the heart: ‘My son, give me your heart and let your eyes keep to my ways’ (23:26). The father’s touching plea calls for an identification with parental teaching, values, and view of the world. But this learning can be perverted if the eyes are led astray by that which seduces, especially wine, for the ‘eyes will see strange sights’ and the ‘mind [heart] imagine confusing things’ (23:33)” (Koptak, 551).

v. 20 **join** “The imperative here is a simple warning against spending time (‘mix’ [join] in Hebrew is simply ‘be’) with people who drink to the point of inebriation (‘winebibbers’) or eat ‘meat’ to the point of a debasing extravagance (28:7). On the peculiar temptation of young men to engage in these two excesses, see Deut. 21:20. Though both drunkenness and gluttony represented waste in an austere society where both wine and meat tended to be saved for religious offerings and festive meals, it is the lazy stupor they induce that causes them to be proscribed here” (David A. Hubbard, *The Communicator’s Commentary, Proverbs*, 363).

v. 20 **drink... gorge** “Drunkards (*sobe-yayin*) means literally, ‘wine addicts.’ *Sobe*’ occurs three times (Deut. 21:20; Prov 23:20, 21) and always with ‘gluttons’ (*zolel*). Since the other two texts distinguish them by ‘and,’ with among they denote two close, but distinct, groups. They represent all the incorrigible, delinquent, and self-indulgent. Gluttons glosses *zolel* (lit. ‘who depise/make light of’) *basdr* (‘flesh,’ i.e., the meat next to the bone full of blood and the source of energy; cf. Prov.5:11; 14:30). By itself *zolel* denotes a profligate who makes light of anything that is precious and thus squanders it. But its unique occurrence with ‘flesh’ and its consistent use with drunkards suggest the gloss ‘glutton.’ Elsewhere in the book ‘flesh’ refers to one’s own body, leading some to draw the conclusion that gluttons are self-destroyers, but the parallelism suggests that flesh refers to the meat consumed at table. For themselves denotes that these gluttons gorge themselves on animal flesh without regard to the animal or the need of others” (Bruce Waltke, NICOT, *Proverbs 15-31*, 255-256).

### v. 21 **drunkards and gluttons**

“Drunkenness and gluttony are here castigated. Elsewhere the rationale for criticizing getting drunk has to do with clouding one’s ability to think and make decisions. In other words, it disrupts one’s wisdom. The same can apply to overeating, which would lead to lethargic behavior, not the kind of diligent work so frequently encouraged in the book [of Proverbs]. However, the explicit motive given here against overdrinking and eating is that such overindulgence would lead to poverty. Spending too much money on too much food and too much drink would be foolish, not wise” (Tremper Longman III, *Baker Commentary on the Old Testament, Proverbs*, 428). “These terms occur together in the law concerning the rebellious son in Dt. 21:20. They may have formed a pair of stock epithets” (R. N. Whybray, *New Century Bible Commentary, Proverbs*, 338).

v. 21 **drowsiness** “The torpor which comes from overindulgence. Compare the various proverbs in the sentence literature which speak of the lazy person’s propensity to fall asleep” (R. N. Whybray, 338). See Proverbs about sloth or over indulgence of sleep such as Proverbs 6:9-11; 13:4; 19:15; 20:13; 21:5-6.

## Other Texts to Consider

### Philippians 3:17-21

17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.



## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Prioritizing the pursuit of pleasure can bring ruin. Pursue God with all your heart, submitting all appetites to His honor and glory.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



## 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## FAMILY TALK

Good food at our house seems to be fair game, and by good food I mean junk food. If you have something that someone else might want, say, special chips, cookies or even a chocolate-covered granola bar, you better hide it, and hide it good. I can't tell you how many times my youngest son has buried half a cup of ice cream deep in the freezer only to return an hour later and find a completely empty, licked-clean cup. I don't know why the cup hasn't been thrown away, but that's a subject for another *Scrolls*. Or, one kids bakes a dozen cookies and steps away for a moment... Poof! They're gone. I mean, if one cookie makes you happy, a dozen will make your life complete, right?! It's no surprise that many of us struggle with gluttony. As parents we bribe with food, reward with food, celebrate with food, and oftentimes cry with food. Why then am I always surprised when my kids overindulge in food? When we allow food (or anything else) to be our focus, we rob the spot in our heart that rightfully belongs to God. Not only do we rob God of His place, but we give it to something meaningless that only fulfills for a moment, like a dozen Oreos. Parents, are you with me on this one? This week, as we're planning our menu and laying out pants with expandable waistlines, let's also model self-control and discipline for our kids. We are praying for you!

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read Proverbs 23:19-21

1. What does verse 19 tell us to do?
2. What does verse 20 tell us *not* to do?
3. How can gluttony can lead to being poor and clothed in rags?

### What Do You Think?

What does wisdom have to do with gluttony? How can over-eating cause us to suffer spiritually?

### What Do You Do?

Record everything you eat and drink this week. Did you make healthy choices? What do you need to change about your diet? Are there other things besides food or drink that you overindulge in?

### CORE COMPETENCY: Life Purpose

Self-control – I can take charge of myself with Jesus' help.

### MEMORY VERSE: 2 Timothy 1:7

*For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline.*

## KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I completed my Bible Study
- \_\_\_\_\_ I memorized this week's verse
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought my Bible to church
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

### **Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

### **Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

### **Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

### **The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

### **Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

### **Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

### **Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

### **Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

### **Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

### **Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

### **Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

### **Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

### **Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

### **Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

### **Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

### **Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

### **Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

### **Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

### **Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

### **Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

### **Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

### **Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

### **Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

### **Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

### **Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

### **Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

### **Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

### **Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

### **Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

### **Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

### **Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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