

**THE SOLUTION:** *'Only knowledge of God's love for me can fill that emptiness, (and) ....., give me ultimate worth.'*

(P. Kreeft quoted by Tomlin: page 114)

*"There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every person which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus."* Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662)

**WARNING SIGNS:** Regularly eating alone for reasons that are not to do with God's purpose for food.

**THE CHRISTIAN WAY TO AVOID GLUTTONY:** A healthy diet, combined with times of fasting and times of feasting.

**THE BENEFITS OF FASTING:**

1<sup>st</sup> Keeps food in its proper place and ensures we keep control of our appetites rather than letting them control us. (Cf. Daniel chapter 1)

2<sup>nd</sup> Fasting combined with prayer can draw us closer to God.

3<sup>rd</sup> Makes the point to ourselves and to God, that we're choosing not to live *'by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'*

4<sup>th</sup> Helps us identify with those who don't have enough food

**Benefits feasting:** Prevents us from finding our worth in our ability to deny ourselves; and also helps us appreciate God's gift of food.

**FREEDOM IN CHRIST:**

*'It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.'* (Galatians 5:1)

*'So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.'* (John 8:36)

*'No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.'* (1 Corinthians 10:13)

**Recommended reading:** Dr Graham Tomlin's Book *'The Seven Deadly Sins and how to overcome them.'* (ISBN 978-0-7459-5221-8)

# Can I really break free from destructive habits?

## Overcoming the 7 Habits of Highly Destructive People

9.00am and 10.30 Services 8<sup>th</sup> May 2011

St James, Oxford Road,  
Gerrards Cross & Fulmer



### “THE SIN OF GLUTTONY”

*“It is written: ‘People do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”*

(Matthew 4:4 TNIV)

**INTRODUCTION:** Food is not neutral; it possesses power for good and a power for harm.

Jesus enjoyed food and mixed with people who enjoyed a good meal (ref. Matthew 11:18-19)

Jesus' first miracle: water into wine at a wedding party. (John 2:1-11).

Food is good because God made it. (Genesis 1:11-12)

*'Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for it is now that God favours what you do.'* (Ecclesiastes 9:7).

*'A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes life merry...(Eccl 10.19)*

The 'Lord's Supper' is integral to Christian worship

**WHAT IS GLUTTONY?** A misunderstanding of God's purposes for food. Allowing food to control us, rather than the other way round.

**GOD'S PURPOSES FOR FOOD:**

**1. For physical health.** *'Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.'*  
(Romans 12:1) (See also 1 Corinthians 6:19).

**2. For building friendships through sharing a meal.**

Hospitality - Greek word *'philoxenia'* – *'love of strangers'*

What's the difference between entertaining and hospitality?

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.....

**3. For giving pleasure:** *'.....wine that gladdens human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts.'*  
(Psalm 104:15)

**CONTEMPORARY MESSAGES ABOUT FOOD:**

Opinions about what defines beauty are cultural, generational and changing: Contrast the 21<sup>st</sup> century belief that to be fat is a sin with the 17<sup>th</sup> century belief that to be fat is beautiful. (See paintings by Rubens or Velasquez)

**JESUS SPEAKS ABOUT FOOD:**

*"It is written: 'people do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"* (Matthew 4:4 TNIV)

'When food becomes a god, it becomes dangerous. Food, like sex, has the ability to skew things, and so it must be kept in its proper place.'  
(G.Tomlin, 'The Seven Deadly Sins..' page 109.)

**Evidence of the misuse of food:** In Britain, 30,000 people die every year because of obesity. 23% of the population are obese. 52% of people in Britain are overweight.

In contrast: half the world's people live on less than 60p a day: 1.7 million children die each year from hunger related diseases. Bulimia and anorexia blight the lives of around 2 in every 100 school girls.

**FOOD IS NOT NEUTRAL:**

Food has the potential for both good and harm. Our attitude to food affects our health in body, mind and spirit.

**Shalom** – peace and wholeness in body mind and spirit.

**REASONS BEHIND THE MISUSE OF FOOD:** *'The motivation for gluttony is the unconscious self-image of emptiness: I must fill myself because I am empty.... Worthless.'*

(P. Kreeft quoted by Tomlin: pages 112)