

Announcements:

- Good Friday Service in Cedar Hill Campus @6pm
- EASTER Sunday March 31st
- Food Distribution April 6th 9-11am on Campus
- Family and Friends Day/Baptisms April 14th

QUESTION: What is one thing that you took away from Sunday's message?

Thinness is Not a Virtue

This week, pastor discussed the sin of gluttony. We live in a culture obsessed with being thin. We often believe that people who are thin are people with more self-control, or just better people. Any of us who are not as thin as we would like to be often feel that we would be better people if we were thinner. Or at least we feel like if we were better people, we would be thin. We are constantly bombarded by ads for products and programs that promise to deliver slimmer waistlines. These messages telling us that we must be thin can shape our sense of ourselves and our neighbors. It is no wonder that in our trying to improve ourselves we have sometimes confused goodness and even godliness with being in great physical condition. In 1 Timothy, Paul makes it clear that is

not true. Physical wellness has benefits, but it is not the goal of Christian life. Let's read 1 Timothy 4:6-10:

If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished by the words of the faith and the good teaching that you have followed. But have nothing to do with pointless and silly myths. Rather, train yourself in godliness. For the training of the body has limited benefit, but godliness is beneficial in every way, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. For this reason we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. (1 Timothy 4:6-10, CSB).

Notice what Paul says here about physical training. "The training of the body has limited benefit." But training in godliness is of so much more value. In other words, while keeping fit is not a bad thing, it is not a Christian virtue to be in good shape. When we talk about the sin of gluttony it is very important that we don't confuse American diet culture with Christian faithfulness. It is not a virtue to be thin, nor is it a sin to be overweight. When the scriptures do speak about eating to excess, they generally speak of those who eat more than they need, while others are left to do without. We will discuss this in the second section.

Question: How can we seek to live healthy lives without falling into the trap of equating fitness with goodness?

Gluttony is Putting the Ourselves over Others

This Sunday, we took communion together as a church. This is a beautiful expression of Christian worship that goes all the way back to the beginning. In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul addresses problems that the Corinthian church was experiencing when they shared

communion together. At that time, the church shared more than just a small piece of bread and a sip from the cup. At least for the Corinthians, the Lord's supper had been an actual supper. In this passage Paul chastises the church for their failure to eat together in a way that honored God. Let's read together:

Now in giving this instruction I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. For to begin with, I hear that when you come together as a church there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. Indeed, it is necessary that there be factions among you, so that those who are approved may be recognized among you. When you come together, then, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For at the meal, each one eats his own supper. So one person is hungry while another gets drunk! Don't you have homes in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I praise you? I do not praise you in this matter! (1 Cor 11:17-22, CSB).

Paul corrects the Corinthian church because when they gathered together, those who could easily afford good food ate very well, while the poor went hungry. Some in the community chose to overindulge themselves even while others didn't have enough. Paul says that this ruined their practice of sharing the symbols of the body and blood of Jesus. The sin of those who have overeaten in this passage is the sin of failing to share what God had given them.

We see this in even more stark terms when we read the prophets. In Jeremiah chapter five, he says this of the leaders of Judah:

Therefore they have grown powerful and rich. They have become fat and sleek. They have also excelled in evil matters. They have not taken up cases, such as the case of the fatherless, so they might prosper, and they have not defended the rights of the needy.

Notice that when God accuses call them fat and sleek, this isn't really a reference to their waistlines, but to their willingness to take advantage of others and their failure to care for poor. The sin of gluttony is the sin of overindulging while others must do without. It is being blind to the needs of others and seeing only our own appetites.

QUESTION: How can gluttony be a failure to love?

Prayer

Take the time to check on prayer requests from last week and pray for any new or continuing needs in the group. Give praise to God for answered prayer.