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| SUMMARY: We need to eat and we need to drink. Without fuel to run on, the human body quickly loses its ability to function before eventually ceasing to function altogether. Food and water are utterly essential to human survival and flourishing.Yet when do these essential and very often good things become bad? When does what we consume cease to be as God intended? Well the simple answer is when we step into the realm of gluttony. Historically, the word gluttony speaks about overindulgence, which is certainly part of the problem, within a more Biblical context though, this sin takes a much wider form of meaning. Thomas Aquinas expressed it in four ways. You could consume excessively, well beyond what the body required. You could consume sumptuously, only eating the best of anything. You could consume daintily, being particularly fussy. Last of all you could consume impulsively, demanding your fill immediately. The unifying theme of these types of gluttony is that they make the individual, their tastes and their felt needs the highest priority. Their consumption becomes an intensively selfish pursuit. We all consume and therefore the fine line that exists between food as a good and food as a god is one that all of us struggle with. So, are we going to confront it? Are we going to be the slaves of our stomachs, worshiping our bellies (Phil 3:13) or slaves to Christ, submitting even our natural desires to him? |

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| Gluttony in the book of proverbs1. What kind of person comes to mind when you think about someone you would identify as a glutton?
2. Why is gluttony a different issue today that it has been for most of human history?
3. Do you think that Aquinas’ four forms of gluttony are all valid as sinful expressions of how we eat and drink?
4. Which of the four do you think you are most prone to?
5. What does Paul mean when he says their god is their stomach in Philippians 3:13?
6. How does gluttony lead to poverty? (See Prov 19:19-21)
7. What forms of gluttony are most easily seen in our world today?
8. How is gluttony destructive to our faith?
9. Why is fasting so often ignored in the modern church?
10. What experience do you have with fasting?
11. How does Jesus’ own life confront the temptation to be gluttonous in our own lives?
12. What does Jesus’ response to the Pharisees in Luke 7:34-35 say about how we are to think and live?
13. How does Proverbs 30:7-9 sum up how we should consider our consumption?
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