

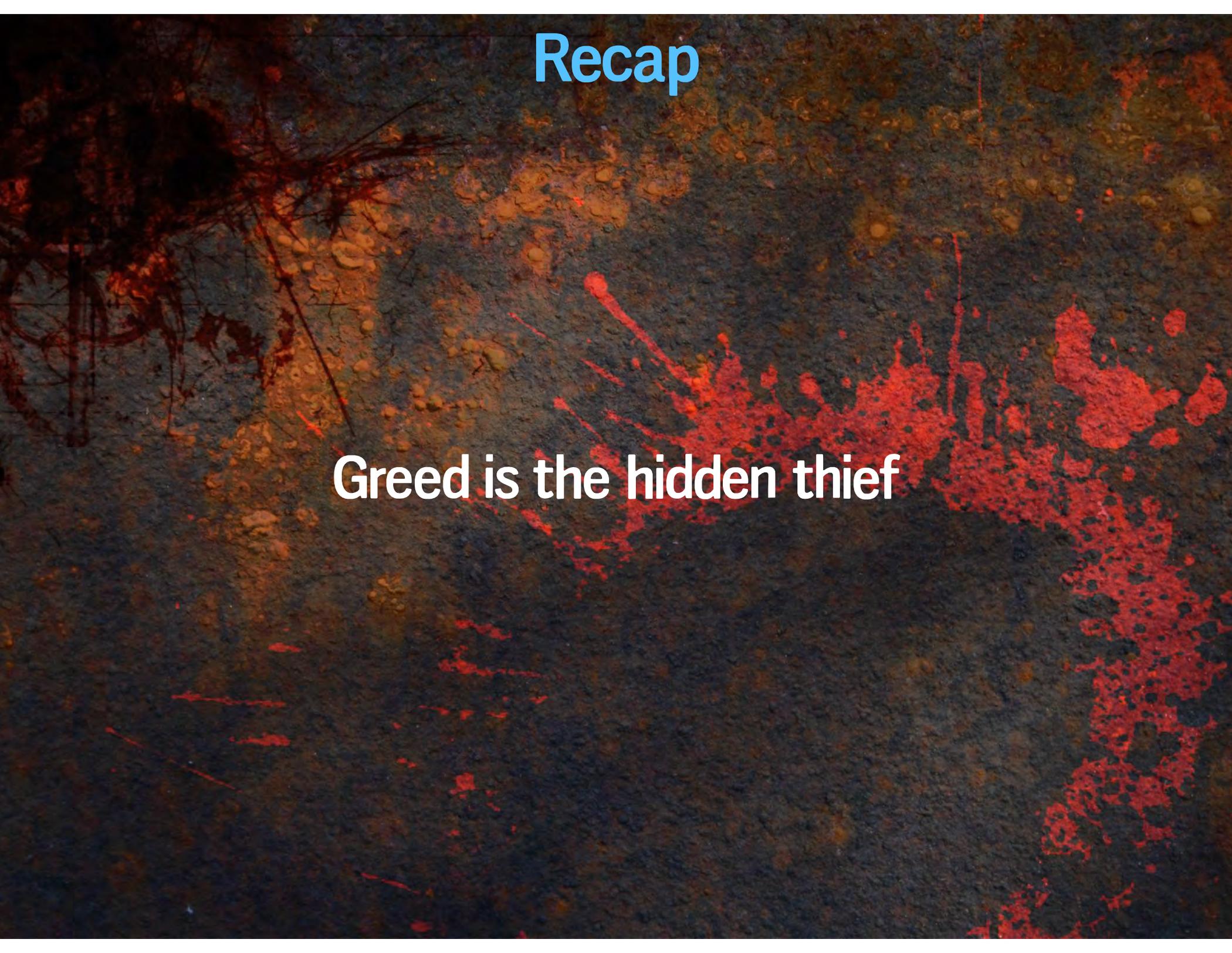
# THE SEVEN

THE CULTURE OF GLUTTONY

# Recap

## What is Greed?

Greed is an inappropriate attitude toward things of value, built on the mistaken judgment that my well-being is tied to the sum of my possessions. Greed is more than mistaken belief —as if knowing a few more facts would somehow solve the problem. It also involves emotions (perhaps longing, unfulfillment, fear) and attitudes (a sense of entitlement, rivalry). Greed alienates us from **God**, from our **neighbour**, and from our **true self**.



Recap

**Greed is the hidden thief**

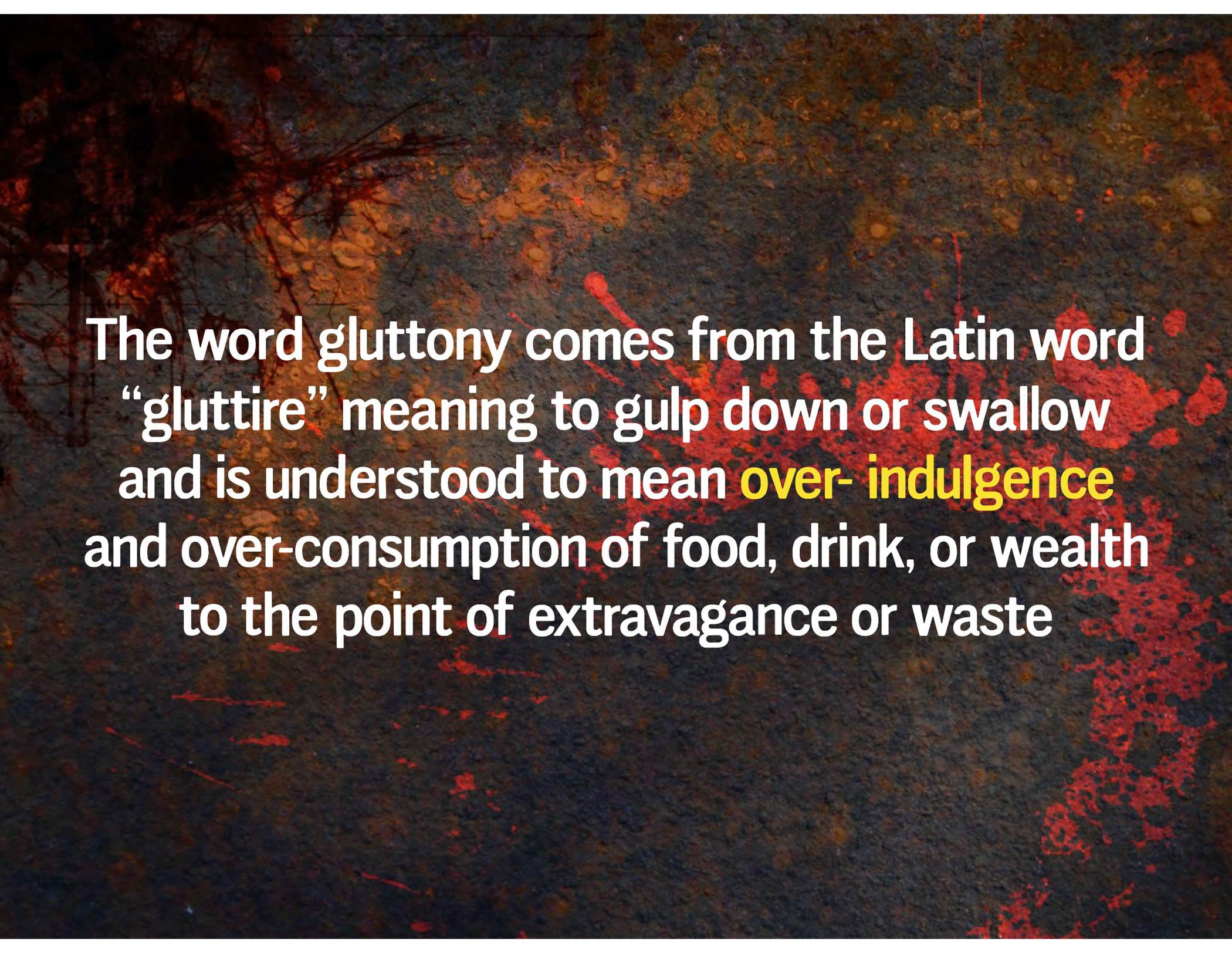
# Recap

**Remember this:** Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, **not reluctantly or under compulsion**, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. **2 Corinthians 9:6-8**

“The Seven Deadly Sins are things that perennially tempt us because **they look like fulfillment** and **we can get them for ourselves**, They are a kind of do-it-yourself happiness project.” **Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies,**” **Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung**

“We overcome after a fashion, perhaps, our serious and dangerous vices, but there it stops. **The small desires we freely let grow as they will.** We neither embezzle nor steal, but delight in gossiping; we do not “drink,” but consume immoderate quantities of tea and coffee instead. **The heart remains quite full of appetites:** the roots are not pulled out and we wander around in the tanglewoods that have sprung up in the soil of our self-pity.”

**Tito Colliander, The Way of the Ascetics**



The word **gluttony** comes from the Latin word “**gluttire**” meaning to gulp down or swallow and is understood to mean **over-indulgence** and over-consumption of food, drink, or wealth to the point of extravagance or waste

“Two mistakes accompany most discussions on gluttony. The first is that it only pertains to those with a less than shapely waistline; **the second is that it always involves food.** In reality, it can apply to toys, television, entertainment, sex, or relationships. **It is about an excess of anything.”**

**Chris Donato**

# A Brief History of Hedonism

Aristippus of Cyrene (c. 435-c. 356 BCE), a pupil of Socrates, taught that that **the goal of life was to seek pleasure by adapting circumstances to oneself** and by maintaining proper control over both adversity and prosperity.

# A Brief History of Hedonism

After the Roman conquest of Greece in 146 BC, pleasure became an empire-wide obsession: Marcus Aurelius found it necessary to reduce the number of religious celebrations per year to a modest 135. During the six centuries of Roman rule, hedonism and decadence reached such heights that the subsequent fall of the empire was blamed on excess.

# A Brief History of Hedonism

Hedonism can be defined as a way of life which treats pleasure as the **ultimate good**.

# A Brief History of Hedonism

“It is a mistake...to suppose that the public wants the environment protected or their lives saved and that they will be grateful to any idealist who will fight for such ends. **What the public wants is their own individual comfort.**”

Isaac Asimov, *The Gods Themselves*

“Americans (Christians) no longer talk to each other, **they entertain each other**. They do not exchange ideas, they exchange images. They do not argue with propositions; they argue with good looks, celebrities and commercials.”

Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, 1985

“When a population (church) becomes distracted by trivia, when cultural life is redefined as a perpetual round of entertainments, when serious public conversation becomes a form of baby-talk, when, in short, a people become an audience, and their public business a vaudeville act, **then a nation finds itself at risk; culture-death is a clear possibility.**”

# Pleasure is God's Gift

You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. Psalm 16:11

Simchah-mirth, gladness, joy, gaiety, pleasure

When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, Lord God Almighty. Jeremiah 15:16

# Pleasure Chokes Life

The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are **choked** by life's worries, riches and **pleasures**, and they do not mature. **Luke 8:14**

## Hedone

You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, **that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.** **James 4:2-3**

# Pleasure is a False Pursuit

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be **lovers of themselves**, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, **lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power**. Have nothing to do with such people. **2 Timothy 3:1-5**

# Pleasure Replaces Meaning

I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; **I refused my heart no pleasure.** My heart took delight in all my labor, and this was the reward for all my toil. Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, **a chasing after the wind;** nothing was gained under the sun. **Ecclesiastes 2:10-11**

# Pleasure Replaces God

For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, **their god is their stomach**, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. **Phillipians 3:18-19**

# Are You a Hedonist?

Do you look for experiences to make your life bearable?

Do you live for the weekend?

Do you judge an experience on how fun it was?

Do you evaluate experiences based on how they make you feel?

Are you frequently bored with “normal” life?

# History of Monastacism

Asceticism and monasticism are **two religious disciplines designed to de-emphasize the pleasures of the world so the practitioner can concentrate on the spiritual life.** Both asceticism and monasticism have been adopted by worshipers of various faiths. In general, **asceticism is the practice of strict self-denial** as a means of attaining a higher spiritual plane. **Monasticism is the state of being secluded from the world in order to fulfill religious vows.**

But it is not only moderation that is a solid weapon against the sin of gluttony – **we also may make use of another, the practice of fasting.** Fasting does not only mean giving up certain foods (i.e. red meats on Fridays), but also giving up many other things that we love, for the love of Christ and in order to maintain our gaze solely on Him.

**Jason Liske**

But it might be asked, why write so alarmingly of such seemingly harmless things? Simply because “gluttony engenders love of pleasure and many other passions as well. It is the root from which the rest of the passions spring up in vigorous growth...” In other words, **if we indulge our bodies in such ways as I have mentioned above, we will find that the sins of lust and greed will not be far behind, for these too are indulgences of the body.** Jason Liske

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.

**While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting**, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” **So after they had fasted and prayed**, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. **Acts 13:1-3**