

In and Out
#11: In the Kitchen, But Not of It
July 21-23, 2007

¹When you sit to dine with a ruler, note well what is before you, ²and put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony.

³Do not crave his delicacies, for that food is deceptive. . .

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

Proverbs 23:1-3, 19-21 TNIV

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. *1 Corinthians 10:31 TNIV*

[Jesus preached,] “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?” *Matthew 6:25 TNIV*

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹²It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. *Titus 2:11-14 TNIV*

Introduction: Perhaps the most pressing issue facing believers in our culture is how to live “in the world, but not of it.” This is especially true for a church like Columbia in a place like Metro DC. In a culture obsessed with food and eating, Christians must learn to be “in the kitchen, but not of it.”

I. A Culture Obsessed

A. America is a gluttonous culture.

1. Between ages 20 and 50, the average American spends 20,000 hours (over 800 days) eating.
2. Over 2 out of 3 Americans are “overweight.”
3. Obesity is associated with higher levels of religious participation, according to a 1989 Purdue University study, which found Baptists had the highest average body-mass index.

4. “Noshing” has become the norm, supplanting a normal mealtime pattern.
 5. 33% of Americans are now considered “morbidly obese,” up from 23% in 1994, 15% in 1980, and just 13% in 1962.
 6. Cooking, eating out, dining, and snacking have become American obsessions!
- B. America is an food-obsessed culture.
1. 40% of Americans now report that their greatest fear in life is “getting fat.”
 2. On any given day, one in four American men and half of American women are on a diet.
 3. One in three American dieters progress to “pathological dieting.”
 4. Eating disorders now affect three times as many Americans as AIDS or schizophrenia.

II. A Christian Blessed

A. God’s people, especially, are to appreciate a good meal as a blessing from God.

People can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment? *Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 TNIV*

- B. Yet the Bible counsels against culinary excess in numerous instances (such as Proverbs 23).
- C. As in every other “in and out” topic we have considered, the key is doing everything to the glorify of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- D. Food-obsession undermines absolute dependence on God’s providence and leads to despair. (Matthew 6)
- Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. *Philippians 3:19 TNIV*
- E. The clarion call of the Bible to followers of Jesus Christ is self-control, not obsession. (Titus 2)

III. A Holy Quest (practical suggestions)

Conclusion: In eras of scarcity, people worried about where their next meal might come from (many still do). In a food-gorged culture, such worries are a choice. If we would live “in the world, not of it” Christ must be our only obsession.