November 1, 2026: Gluttony & Moderation

Discussion Questions

1. Picture the scene of Denethor gobbling up a table full of food, or any image that comes to mind when you hear the word "gluttony." Before the sermon, what did you think gluttony meant? How did the sermon's definition (trying to fill a God-given spiritual hunger through consumption) change or challenge that picture?

2. Read Ephesians 5:15-20 aloud together. Paul was writing to a city where excessive drinking was considered a path to spiritual experience (*ekstasis*). Looking at the passage, what is Paul contrasting? Why do you think he calls drunkenness "debauchery" (wasting or squandering something good) rather than simply "wrong"?

3. Paul says "be filled with the Spirit" rather than giving a how-to list for moderation. The preacher suggests moderation grows as a by-product of being filled, not through sheer willpower. Does that match your experience? Where have you tried to fix a habit by willpower alone, and what happened?

4. Take a minute of quiet to think about this, and share only what you're comfortable sharing: What do you tend to reach for when you feel anxious, lonely, or restless (food, drink, screens, work, shopping, something else)? What are you hoping it will give you?

5. The sermon offers a test: *"How dominated am I by the desire for this thing? How hard would it be for me to give it up or do without it?"* How would you use this question in practice? What makes it hard to answer honestly on our own?

6. The sermon describes Sunday worship, with singing, prayer, learning, and the Lord's Table, as a feast for the spirit, the senses, and our need for connection. Which part of worship most feeds you, and why? Is there a moment, such as a song, a prayer, or the bread and wine, when you've felt "filled" rather than just informed?

7. The sermon names real pain: body image pressures, disordered eating, generational drinking cycles, and a culture of shame. It invites us to "speak against cultures of shame" and to walk with friends who are struggling. What does it look like to be that kind of friend? What helps you feel safe enough to be honest about a struggle, and what shuts you down?

8. The sermon names three practices: worship, accountability, and justice. Choose one to put into practice this week. For accountability, that might be reaching out to one trusted friend. For justice, it might be asking, “Does my consumption keep me from being generous?” and taking one concrete step, such as sharing a meal, giving to a food bank, or reducing waste. Share your choice with the group so you can check in next time.

Ephesians 5:15-20

15 Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, 16 making the most of the time,
because the days are evil. 17 So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 Do
not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 as you sing psalms
and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your
hearts, 20 giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord
Jesus Christ.