

Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.



Series: Vice

Talking about sin makes us uncomfortable. We can identify and try to avoid the “bad ones.” It’s easy to see in the lives of our neighbors. And evil is clearly at work out there in the world beyond us. But what about the sin and evil that arises from our own hearts? What about our own propensity to sin; those bad habits, tendencies, or traits that we would rather *not* be reminded of? Join us this Lent as we reflect on the historic seven vices in order to identify a multitude of mundane, everyday sins that can cling too closely.

Message Description:

Gluttony and Lust: two cousin-vices related to the body and desire. They begin with good gifts given to us by God but become corrupted by sin when the desire takes over and dominates all other aspects of life. How do we know when our feasting or eating habits have become gluttonous? And what do we do if habits done in secret are causing harm to others? Prayer, self-examination, and good friendship; for these two vices the presence of a loving community is key.

Key Scriptures

*Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts!
See if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!*
Psalm 139:23-24

Additional Resources:

- For more information on a daily practice of self-examination, check-out: <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/>
- For a prayer practice that will lead you through study and examination, check-out <https://www.24-7prayer.com/resource/lectio-365/> or download the app, lectio365!

Questions Related to This Week's Teaching:

1. There are many ways to be gluttonous. Which ones are most problematic for you?
2. Have you ever experimented with fasting? What did you learn? What would be the hardest food or drink for you to give up and why?
3. Do you agree that habits of lust can cause harm, even if done in secret? How?
4. How can a community help hold us accountable from misdirected physical desire?

Going Deeper: Gluttony

Read Luke 16:19-31

"Gluttony is sinful just to the degree that some consume too much in a world where others have not enough of necessities for life. Jesus says, in the story, that the rich man ate in the face of the great need of Lazarus. Lazarus, the man who gladly would have feasted on the crumbs from the rich man's table, was never even noticed by the rich man." (In *Sinning like a Christian* by William Willimon)

- Where do you see gluttony on display in this parable?
- How is it related to other vices of both greed and pride?
- Where have you seen examples of this type of gluttony in our world today?
- Is there any part you struggled with in this parable?

Questions for self-reflection:

- Do I eat more than I need?
- Do I spend excessive money on food?
- Do I drink alcohol excessively?
- Do I greedily eat with little consideration for those at the table with me?
- Do I fail to give money to help the hungry?
- Do I fail to regularly practice fasting and self-denial?

Going Deeper: Lust

Read Philippians 4:1-9

- What remedies does this passage offer regarding the temptation of lust?
- Knowing that Paul is writing this letter from prison to the church in Philippi, what role does this community seem to play for Paul in his moment of persecution? How can that help us understand the role a church community should play when it comes to curbing temptations and holding others accountable?
- How does lust spoil our ability to experience pleasure, to appreciate beauty, and to rejoice in community?

Questions for self-reflection:

- Do I view others as mere objects rather than as persons to be loved and honored?
- Am I tempted by what I watch, listen to, or play on TV or online?
- Do I entertain impure thoughts?