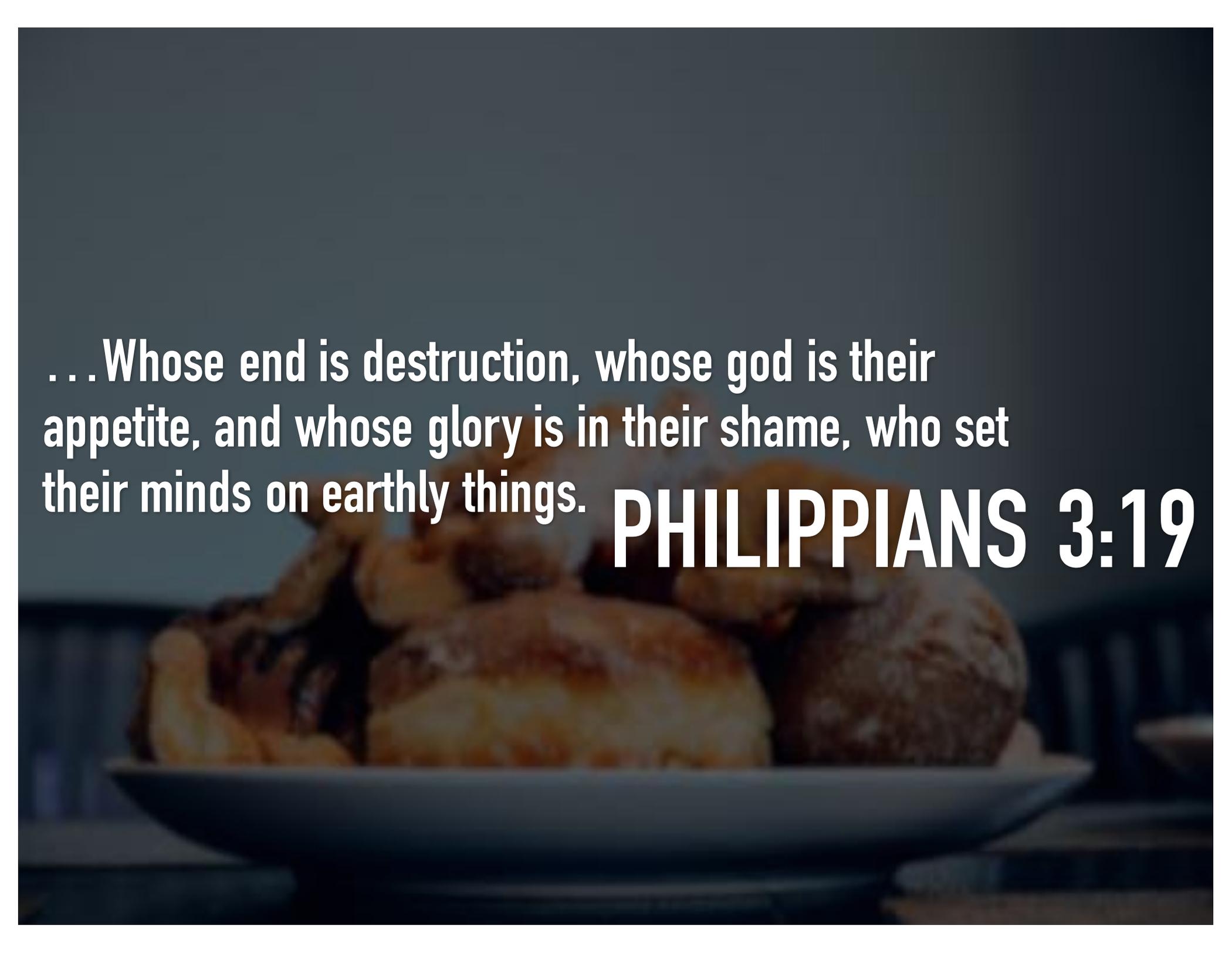


DOUGHNUTS AREN'T THE ENEMY



A bowl of fried food, possibly dumplings or fritters, is shown in the background. The food is golden-brown and appears to be served on a light-colored plate. The background is dark and slightly blurred, suggesting an indoor setting with a table and chairs.

... Whose end is destruction, whose god is their
appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set
their minds on earthly things. **PHILIPPIANS 3:19**

A plate of fried food, possibly dumplings or fritters, is shown in the foreground. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor setting with a table and chairs.

Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine, or with
gluttonous eaters of meat; for the heavy drinker and
the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will
clothe one with rags.

PROVERBS 23:20-21

THE MAN WHO HAD IT ALL

- It's no sin to enjoy an abundance (Abraham, Jacob, Job, David, Solomon). The Israelites, promised a land of milk and honey, were given several feast days every year to enjoy the produce. Virtuous Boaz enjoyed his harvest (Ruth 3:7). See also Ecclesiastes 2:24–25 and 5:19.
- Solomon provides perspective, however, by pointing to his own ultimate dissatisfaction with indulgence. He could have had anything he wanted and it proved to be vanity (Ecc. 2:9–11). He did not actively keep in mind that his life was not made up of his possessions (Luke 12:15), and suffered incredible emotional and spiritual distress.
- Easy access to resources often brings out the worst in us, as can be seen from Numbers 11:31–33.

IS GLUTTONY REALLY A BIG DEAL?



IT'S A BIG DEAL...

- When I consume without any thoughts of the future. I approach decisions with reckless abandon, as if life is just like a “going out of business sale.” Remember Isaiah 22:12–14, Luke 21:34, and Proverbs 23:1–2.
- When the people around me think I’m useless and don’t even attempt to involve me or get my input. Abigail’s husband was so busy indulging himself that he was totally unaware of both the dangers to his household and the incredible efforts of his wife to save them (1 Samuel 25:36).
- When I’ve embarrassed my parents (Proverbs 28:7). Perhaps they bear some responsibility for the environment, but we must take responsibility for our prodigal living.

IT'S A BIG DEAL...

- **When I find myself justifying unreasonable indulgence on a technicality. For sure, there are times to celebrate, but holidays only mean something if they're different from the routine. We all know what "reasonable" indulgence looks like, so stop pretending it means nothing (2 Peter 2:13-14, Ecclesiastes 10:16-19).**
- **When I'm regularly using up gobs of resources in short spurts. Good budgeting appears as a steady stream of savings and spending. A good diet is fairly even from day to day. But the glutton has money burning a hole in his pocket, makes huge purchases on credit, and eats and drinks until the pantry is empty (not when he has had enough). The prodigal son took his inheritance and burned through it in remarkable fashion (Luke 15:13).**

**A GLUTTON IS ANYBODY WHOSE INDULGENCE
BECOMES A DISTRACTION OR DETRIMENT TO
SERVING GOD. AND THAT'S A BIG DEAL!**



SOLUTIONS

- Welcome “limiters” in your life, such as input from parents, elders, books and article on money management, etc. Finally read nutrition labels and let the facts sink in. Look at your bank statement and count what you spend on entertainment, eating out, clothes, etc.
- While you should never try to be anybody but yourself, it’s okay to admire self-disciplined people and emulate their methods. You’re not trying to be that person, just utilizing the same tools they use to be the best version of themselves possible.
- Be guilty about your guilty pleasures.
- Recognize the way godliness and self-discipline are linked (1 Tim. 4:7, Col. 2:5, 2 Chron. 28:19). We’re vessels for God, put into His service — have you been buffeted lately (1 Cor. 9:23–27)?

SOLUTIONS

- **Think about the example you set. Just because something is lawful does not mean it is beneficial or uplifting. Paul made this point to the Corinthians, noting, “If meat causes my brother to stumble, I’ll never eat meat again” (1 Cor. 8:13) and “Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor” (10:24). Some of them had lots while others had little, and it was causing disunity (11:17–22). Perception and behavior actually mean something — it matters what people think!**
- **Start small — discipline begets more discipline, and it spills into other areas of life. Physical victories can impact your spiritual life. Remember that Jesus’ victory over Satan came during a time of physical deprivation. He showed He was capable of being spiritually stout as He took control of His physical desires.**