

# Temperance/Self-Control

## CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

### Sunday School – Sept. 19, 2021

#### A. SCRIPTURE

1. **Galatians 5:22, 23** – “ But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, *temperance*: against such there is no law.”

a. ***Temperance***: Noun – “enkrateia” pronounced – eng-krat’-i-ah, literally inward strength or power; meaning temperance, self-control, mastery, control; and is translated “temperance” in King James. Temperance today is commonly used to refer primarily to abuse of alcohol. Spiritually, temperance & self-control involve the power of the Holy Spirit to restrain the flesh from all sins. Originally used by the Greeks to refer only to immorality, the New Testament uses it to refer to all sins of the flesh.

NOTE: Root word is “kratos” meaning power, strength. It is used in Eph. 1:18-20, “mighty power” in verse 19. This is the same Divine power and strength God used to raise Christ up from the dead (resurrection) and to the heavenly places to sit at His right hand (ascension).

b. Paul shows us in Gal. 5: 22-23 that *the indwelling Holy Spirit enables, produces, and helps us to cultivate that same power for our self-control (actually God’s Control) in our lives.*

#### 2. **I Corinthians 9:24-27**

a. ***Temperate***: Verb – “enkrateuomai” pronounced – eng-krat-yoo’-om-ahee, to exercise self-control, temperance, verse 25. In this passage it refers figuratively and symbolically to the “rigid self-control practiced by athletes to win the prize/race/crown.” Notice the self-discipline in verse 27 that he exercises to prevent his disqualification or disapproval, and failure.

#### B. DEFINITION

##### 1. Secular:

a. **Temperance**: Habitual moderation or self-restraint in action or words; self-control, including moderation in the indulgence of a natural appetite or passion, especially in the use of alcoholic liquors.

b. **Self-Control**: Control or restraint of one’s self or one’s actions, feelings, etc.

2. **Spiritual**: Self-Control - A fruit of the Spirit that enables us with the divine power and strength of God for self-control, self-restraint, and self-discipline in all our thoughts, attitudes, words, and actions to restrain and bring us into and keep us in faithful harmony with God’s will for His glory.

NOTE: To gain control, give God control. God’s control equals our self-control!

### **C. Principles:**

- 1. The Lord Jesus Christ exercised self-control. He was tempted in all ways like us and was yet without sin. He lived a life of perfect restraint. Heb. 14:15**
- 2. We are to be like Christ and exemplify self-control in the power of the Holy Spirit. II Corinthians 5:14-15; Gal. 5:24; Titus 3:2-7; Matthew 16:24-26**
- 3. A measure of maturity as a believer is self-control and temperance. Elders were selected using this essential qualification and this mark of maturity. I Tim. 3:2**
- 4. Paul uses the examples of athletes (I Cor. 9:24-27) and the military (II Tim 2:2-4) as illustrations of faithful servants who endure hardship to run the race and are pleasing to God. He emphasizes self-control as essential to Christian service.  
I Cor. 9:25**
- 5. Self-control is a (frequently overlooked and poorly understood) fruit of the Spirit. While it is the last in the list of nine, it is an important fruit of the Spirit and is enabled by the Holy Spirit as we walk in the Spirit. True self-control comes only from God – not man.  
Gal. 5:18-25**
- 6. Self-control is included in the lists of Christian character & attributes in the Bible.  
II Peter 1:5-7**
- 7. Love for Christ is the motivation for self-control and temperance. II Cor. 5:14-15**
- 8. Self-control must be in accordance with the knowledge of the Word of God and sound doctrine, or it may result in error or excesses, such as legalism.  
I Tim. 4:1-10; II Peter 1:5-7**
- 9. Self-control or temperance is not to be used in doing any evil or committing any sin. We are not to be involved in sin to any degree at all! Self-control means complete separation from sin and complete separation unto God is our response to sin as believers.  
II Cor. 6:11-17**
- 10. Despite being the last fruit of the Spirit, self-control and temperance are very important because without them sin would prevail and block all the other fruits of the Spirit. Self-control requires walking in the Spirit and being filled with Spirit which is essential for the other fruits of the Spirit. Gal. 5:16-25**

### **Summary:**

**It is God's will that we be followers and imitators of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are to wear the character, attitudes, qualities, and virtues of Christ. We are to bear the fruit of the Spirit. As we serve and worship Him in obedience to God's Word, the Holy Spirit enables us to be temperate/self-controlled and to grow by His grace. We are to be self-controlled as we walk in the Spirit in Biblical love and unity. We are to be self-controlled servants of our faithful God resting in His promises to meet all our needs as we obey, serve, and show our love for Him in the ministry he has given us for the purpose of glorifying God.**