

“Exercising Self-Control”

All Scripture is KJV:

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY ON THIS MATTER.

- What does exercising self-control mean?
- What does the bible have to say about this subject?

But self-control does mean, not letting your body or minds desires to have its own way.

1. When referring to self-control one of the words that the bible uses is the word temperance.
2. Which means - to control or to exercise restraint.
3. So, we need to be aware that if we don't exercise restraint over our mind and body it will want to do what the flesh desires, and that is to sin.

✚ In the book of Galatians Chapter 5, the Apostle Paul addresses one of the churches in Galatia about this very issue.

Galatians 5:16-26 King James Version (KJV)

¹⁶ This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

¹⁷ For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

1. The simple truth is this.
2. If you are not walking in the Spirit, you will have a desire to walk in the flesh.
3. It is true, that if you are not mixed up in the things of the Lord you will be mixed up in the things of the world.

✚ Scriptures which spring to mind in this regard is Psalm 119:11.

Psalm 119:11

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

✚ It is the word of God by the enforcement of the Holy Spirit which is the reprover of sin.

✚ We can only know our sin by the Word of God. The Apostle Paul said in Romans 7 verse 9...

Romans 7:9 “For I was alive without the law once: **but when the commandment came, sin revived**, and I died.

✚ The Word of God, which is known as “the commandment of God”, the scriptures is like **“a mirror”** by which man can **“see himself”** that he has fallen from Gods grace, and that man is in need of a saviour.

- ✚ Another scripture highlighting the reflection of man's sin is James 1 verse 20-22. This scripture is not only highlighting the sin but also offers the solution to it, which is able to save your souls.

James 1:20-22 King James Version (KJV)

²⁰ For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. ²¹ Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and **receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.**

²² **But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.**

1. Being just a hearer of Gods Word will not save your soul.
2. You need to put the Word of God into action as verse 22 says. For to hear only and not to be a doer of Gods Word is only to deceive your own soul.
3. It is self-deception.

James 1:23-25 (King James Version)

²³ For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

²⁴ For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

²⁵ But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, **and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.**

- ✚ Exercising self-control can only come through walking in God's Word.
- ✚ Walking in Gods Word is to walk in the Spirit, and allowing the Word of God to be the leader in your life. This is shown to us in Galatians 5.
- ✚ Trying to exercise self-control is impossible apart from the Word of God, because it is the Spirit of God by His Word that keeps reminding our conscience of what is evil and sin.
- ✚ In fact the scripture is bold in saying that if we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh as we see in Galatians 5.

As we continue now in Galatians 5:16-26.

¹⁶ **This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.**

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

- ✚ To be under the law is not the same as to be reminded of the law.
- ✚ The law was and still is impossible to keep in order to be saved. To be under the law was and is a stark reminder of just how fragile man is, and that no person was or is able to keep the law to perfection. For whoever shall offend in one point of the law is guilty of all.
- ✚ Therefore, Jesus is the end of the law with regards to salvation, because “no man” can keep the law.
- ✚ The law of God highlights the shortcomings of the works of man. These shortcomings are known as sin, and pointed out here in these scriptures that follow.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

- ✚ Evidently, they were struggling to understand what the message of grace was.
 - ✚ The church in Galatia were supposed to not only love each other but that they were to realise that living by the grace of the Lord meant that they should now have had a total change of attitude compared to when they were without the Lord's salvation.
 - ✚ A “new creature in Christ” in the scriptures is referring to a born again person that is be different than the rest of the world.
 - ✚ And this would only be evident if in fact that they were truly born again.
1. The fruit of the Spirit would show and reveal a lot in whether a person was in fact born again.


2. Because the “fruit” of the “Spirit” being singular would reveal certain traits about a person, which would be like a thermometer as to whether they had been saved.
3. This is what Paul was talking about when he said elsewhere “examine yourself to see if you are of the faith”
4. This would be that self-examination to see if you had the signs of being saved by the Spirit.

Verse ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³ Meekness, **temperance** (*control or self control*): against such there is no law.

- ✓ Having the fruit of the Spirit is an indication or a gauge to see if you have been born again.
- ✓ It can be described as having a “tangible faith”.
- ❖ Would you not agree that a person who is involved in these lists of bad things listed above in the scriptures in verses 19,20 and 21; that they do not have their spirit under control?
- ❖ Would you not say that they are not exercising temperance.....self-control?

¹⁹ Now the **works of the flesh are manifest**, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings

- ❖ You see many Christians just think that now that they have been saved.....that they can just live and carry on any way that they like.....
1. Well this is not to be the case. The bible is very clear that by the scriptures that we are to bring our bodies under subjection.
 2. This scripture is not talking about you losing your salvation, but it is saying that you should not be showing these traits of an unsaved personif...in fact you have been saved.
 3. The bible warns here that the people who were doing this list of things we see here are the people who were not saved. So, in other words if you keep on doing the things that are here on this list.....then there may be a chance that you were never saved to begin with.
 4. Because a Christian (a saved person of the Spirit) would show the fruit of the Spirit.

 The importance of the fruit of the spirit should be to us as individuals who name the name of Jesus unto salvation, as a test or testimony for a self-examination.

- ✓ Exercising control is not being self-willed.
- ✓ It means that you don’t just think of yourself all the time, but that you will be thinking of others first.
- ✓ You will be thinking what can I do that will help the cause of Christ. Instead of doing those things which hinder the cause of the gospel.

- ✚ There are a lot of things that we like doing, but they are not helping the cause. Instead, they damaging to ourselves and to others.

The Apostle Peter gave a sermon and he said this.....

2 Peter 1:5-7 King James Version (KJV)

⁵ And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

⁶ **And to knowledge temperance;** and **to temperance patience;** and to patience godliness;

⁷ And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

- ✚ The character to add to knowledge was temperance. Which means that adding to the knowledge that you have learnt is a character of self-control with that knowledge.

1. That self-control is the word “temperance”.
2. Which meant that just because you have the knowledge or “head knowledge” does not mean that you are above doing what is right.
3. But that with that knowledge and temperance it is to be with “patience”.
4. Because the bible says that we are to be “quick to hear and slow to speak”.
5. We should have the ability to think on “these things” before acting or making any quick decisions.

- ❖ We are to exercise self-control with patience and godliness.

- ✓ How many of us just want to keep putting our foot into every “argument” or situation, or verbalize our thoughts to make them known.
- ✓ We hardly even think about what we are going to say, and so just say everything that comes to mind.

Paul says.....

1. I know that the things that I do are not for me. But I know that the things I do are for Christ. That’s why I do them.
 - ✓ He said it’s not for his vein glory that he does the preaching but that it is a commandment of God that he should do it.
 - ✓ And he says that willingly he does it.
2. Nobody told him to do it. He simply does it for the love of Jesus.
3. So too in the same way, we should exercise self-control.

1 Corinthians 9:27 King James Version (KJV)

²⁷ **But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection;** lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

- ✓ But Paul was also very quick to tell us that he is not perfect. And that he tries by all means to do that which is right.

Romans 7:15-19 King James Version (KJV)

¹⁵ For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

¹⁶ If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

¹⁷ Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

1. If you fail while you are trying to please the Lord. Don't give up. Because God can see that you are trying.
2. Just like God saw that Paul tried and also failed.
 - ✓ Our flesh is weak and therefore we need the Spirit of God to help us stay strong.
3. Temperance can only come from the spirit of God as the Holy Spirit convicts me and you of sin.
4. Because the bible says in **Galatians 5:23** Meekness, **temperance: against such there is no law.**
5. The law of God (scripture) does not condemn that which is good. In other words, it means that there is no law "against doing that which is good".
 - ✓ It's not the law that will give you "self-control" or "temperance", but it is the Spirit of God that will give you temperance.

But to continue on Romans 7 with the Apostle Pauls dilemma over sin. We find a struggle within him to do right as we shall see.

Romans 7:20-25

²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

- ✓ Our deliverance comes from Jesus.

- ✓ Despite that our flesh serves the law of sin.
- ✓ However, the Apostle Paul did not see this as an excuse to sin.

Romans 6:15

What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? **God forbid.**

- ✓ Paul was keenly aware of his limitation in the flesh. That's why he turned to Jesus.

Philippians 4:12-13 King James Version (KJV)

¹²I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³**I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

1. Paul said he knew how to exercise self-control.
 2. By what he said here in verse 23. He said I can do all things **through Christ “which strengthens me.**
 3. That was the reason why he could relinquish that self-will of his.
- ✓ To exercise your self-control, you and I will need to submit our will to Jesus.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.....