

"And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness." "2 Peter 1:6 KJV



Temperance is habitual moderation in regard to the indulgence of the natural appetites and passions. Unbelievers have nothing to restrain their lusts, but peer pressure. *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* Believers, on the other hand, have the blessed Holy Spirit to purify and cleanse their souls of the evil influence of the flesh with God's Word. *"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."* The body is *"carnal, sold under sin."* The Apostle said, *"I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."* We need to treat our body like an unruly pet. It doesn't want to do right, and will always do the wrong thing if we let it. Temperance, or denial of lust, is only possible by yielding our *"members as instruments of righteousness."* In other words, obeying God's Word. A myriad of lusts clamor for indulgence, but we must chain lusts with thought through God's Word. My wife used to give her smoker friends tightly rolled scripture verses on paper to put in their empty cigarette packs to help them quit smoking. An empty cup can be filled with anything from sewage to diamonds. Fill thoughts with Truth, else Satan will fill them with sewage! TV and worldly music are Satan's prime outlets for filth. If TV or worldly music is your meditation, evil will swiftly come. Meditate on Truth, the Voice of God, and evil has no place. God's Word is the power! *"It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure. I will meditate in Thy Precepts, and have respect unto Thy Ways. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word. Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee."* You want good music? Learn the old hymns. You do what you think. Do you obey God? It is only possible if we fill our thoughts with His Word. It must become habitual to apply Scripture to everything, even finding a parking spot.

With humble temp'rance mark your step,
Until through faith you are adept,
At fending off the fiery darts,
That evil hurls at human hearts. -CGP

Believers are also apt to "lord it over" others if one has a little more spiritual "knowledge" than another. *"Knowledge puffeth up."* Have you considered another "immature" in the faith? Was it a private evaluation based on Truth? *"Submit ourselves one to another."* A baby is surely immature, but we still love it, feed it, and change its diapers (well, maybe). If we think rightly, we'll act rightly. Thoughts are transformed by the Word of God, IF we *"[think] therein day and night. Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."* Ever become preoccupied with a thought? Meditation on Truth is listening to God.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; IF there be any virtue (excellence), and IF there be any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8 KJV