

As we saw earlier in this study, we have great liberty within Christ. We are not told to eradicate all of our fleshly desires, but to satisfy them in moderation. God wants us to have pleasure, but not to *love* pleasure (Pr 21:17). He allows us to have money but not to *love* money (1 Tim 6:10). He allows us to fulfill our sexual desires, but in the right *context* (Heb 13:4). We have liberty *in the Spirit*, when we exercise this liberty outside of the Spirit, we become indulgent, fleshly and intemperate.

📖 Galatians 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an _____, but by love serve one another.

The Christian is free from the law, but it is possible for the Christian who has become free from the law to abuse his liberty in Christ and to become a stumblingblock to his brothers and sisters in Christ..

📖 1 Corinthians 8:9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a _____ to them that are _____.

Temperance is key to avoiding offense within the church. Although we may feel we have the liberty and the right to indulge in certain things, temperance enables us to abstain for the benefit of our brethren.

📖 1 Corinthians 8:8-13. Was eating meat offered to idols a sin?

Q. If it was not a sin, why would Paul abstain from doing it?

Q. In this passage, what did Paul indicate WAS a sin?

Sometimes there are activities which we must not indulge in, not because they are sinful, but for the sake of weaker Christians.

📖 Romans 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to _____..

The spiritual fruit of temperance enables us to control our fleshly desires by the Spirit of God. The temperate Christian does not satisfy his legitimate desires by illegitimate means. His temper is controlled and his tongue is controlled. The temperate man is willing to forego some liberties for the benefit of his weaker brother. **Try to memorize 1 Cor 9:27.**

📖 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.

Now we have come to the last of the spiritual fruit as found in Gal. 5:22-23. This evidence of the spirit controlled life is called *temperance*. Many have defined temperance as *self-control*. But this may not be the best definition for the biblical use of the word.

Many false religions teach that controlling your fleshly desires is the path to God and holiness. This idea is contrary to the Bible.

📖 Galatians 5:16 This I say then, _____, and ye shall not fulfil the _____.

The way to holiness and self-control is not found in mere will-power. It is found in the Spirit’s power. Notice the Bible does not say “Do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, and you will walk in the Spirit”. It says “Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh”. Self-control is not the path to holiness; holiness is the path to self-control!

📖 Rom 8:13-14 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through _____ **do mortify the deeds of the body**, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

We cannot control our flesh by our flesh. Rather, we are to make a conscious decision of the will to yield to the Spirit, and by the Spirit we can control our flesh.

Temperance is not so much controlling our flesh as it is *not being controlled by our flesh*. A temperate life is one where we have surrendered to the Spirit, and through His power, moderate the desires of the flesh, fulfilling them by legitimate means.

📖 Rom 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye _____ yourselves servants to _____, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

In moments of weakness you may avoid giving into temptation by mere will-power, but this will fail, and is not God’s ultimate design. Temperance is the continual disciplined life moderated by the Spirit of God. It is allowing the Spirit of God to lead and guide how we satisfy our fleshly needs and desires. We control our flesh, as the Spirit controls us. This is temperance.

Temperance and Our Appetites

Friday

Philippians 4:5 Let your _____ be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

The idea of moderation is that we only satisfy our flesh to the extent that is necessary, and within the Spirit's approval. Unlike the unsaved we are not to be *given to* fleshly passions, indulging ourselves to excess.

📖 Ephesians 2:3. What is a characteristic of the unsaved?

📖 1 Corinthians 6:12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be _____.

Paul tells us that all things are available to us, but not all things advance our spiritual lives. The key is not to destroy all fleshly desires, but to ensure that we are not “under the power” of our flesh. He continues in verse 13:

📖 1 Corinthians 13. What 2 fleshly appetites does Paul cite in this verse?

1.

2.

Both the physical appetites for food and sex are legitimate, yet both of these things can be satisfied in illegitimate ways, leading to excess.

📖 Proverbs 23:1-2 When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man _____.

📖 Proverbs 25:16 Hast thou found honey? eat _____ for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

📖 1 Corinthians 7:2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man _____, and let every woman _____.

The illegitimate satisfaction of our sexual desires before marriage is called *fornication* and after marriage it is called *adultery*. The illegitimate satisfaction of our desire for food is called *gluttony*. These are but two illustrations of fleshly appetites that can be abused. What other five are mentioned in Proverbs 23:21 and 21:17?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Temperance and Our Attitudes

Saturday

Yesterday we saw a few illustrations of **appetites** which must be controlled by the Spirit. Today we will see that we must yield our **attitudes** to the Spirit of God.

📖 Proverbs 16:32 He that is _____ is better than the mighty; and he that _____ than he that taketh a city.

When we live a Spirit led life, our temper will be slow and our emotions will be controlled. Though our flesh may be given to anger, bitterness or wrath, the Spiritual man or woman will temper his or her reactions.

📖 Proverbs 25:28 He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is _____, and without _____.

The Christian who allows himself to be lead around by his emotions is like a city lacking protection from the enemy. Satan can use our bitterness, anger, depression, discontentment or other emotions to undermine our spiritual lives. We must control our emotions by the Spirit of God, and not allow our emotions to control us. Ruling our emotions well is like putting up walls of protection all around us. The spiritual man has few places in which Satan can infiltrate.

When we fail to allow the Spirit to govern our attitudes, sometimes our tongue is our last line of defense!

📖 Proverbs 21:23 Whoso _____ and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

📖 James 1:26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and _____ his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

One way of indulging in our flesh is by “speaking our mind” whenever our flesh prompts us to. When we respond to others with sharp and caustic words, we are indulging in our flesh. This type of reaction seeks to satisfy our pride.

The common theme throughout the above verses is that of “ruling, keeping, and bridling”. The temperate Christian is not *out of control* in any area, he controls his appetites, attitudes and actions by the power of the Spirit.

The Fruit of the Spirit is Temperance

Review

From Thursday

1. Religions such as Buddhism teach that in order to reach a plain of spiritual enlightenment one must extinguish all forms of fleshly desire. How does this differ from Christianity?
2. In your own words define Temperance?

From Friday

1. What did Paul mean when he said all things are lawful but "*not all things are expedient?*"
2. What are some appetites that should be moderated?

From Saturday

1. How can Temperance help us avoid trouble?

From Monday

1. What things can we take part in that may not be sinful, but are a stumbling block to others?