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#9 Temperance - Fruit Of The Spirit
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The series being taught on the fruit of the Spirit will continue with the fruit of temperance. The fruit of the spirit is what enables us to exemplify the attributes, character or attitude of Jesus. God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are found in each of the fruit. Jesus likens himself to being the vine and we are the branches and as we continue to grow and abide in Him, we will take on each of these fruits, that is God's intention for each of us.

Gal 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." KJV

John 15:3-5 "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." KJV

A person who has mastered their flesh and begins to bear the fruit is a person that has a good life, a life that is in control. A person that has not mastered their flesh is one that is out of control. Ephesians chapter 5 and 2 Peter chapter 1 also teaches about the fruit of the spirit. In Galatians however, Paul teaches about the works of the flesh of which there are 17 contrasting them to the 9 fruit of the spirit.

The 9 fruit of the spirit depicts how love or charity reacts and thinks, as found in Corinthians.

1 Cor 13:4-8 "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." KJV

Lester Summerall taught that longsuffering is love on trial and temperance would be love in self control.

Temperance means self control or self discipline and will enable us enjoy the rest of the fruit of the spirit or not enjoy them. We will never walk in love; will not have joy and peace until we perfect the fruit of the spirit in our lives. Otherwise, we will always be submitting to adversity and circumstances. Other commentaries mention that self control is a learned thing, it means restraint, mastery over a situation and it will cause the operation of God to flow through us smoothly. We must have restraint or mastery over our desires.

Learning to develop temperance or self control will take care of some of the bad moods, saying inappropriate things and addictions; it will help us to make right choices.

In the following scriptures, Paul is sharing with the Corinthians important principles they need to know in order for them to walk in victory. Paul apparently was interested in all forms of athletics, either as a participant or an observer. He is showing how the athletes were preparing

for the different events, either by their diets or by exercise for two years. In our spiritual race we are shown that we will have to prepare as they did and it will require some self control and discipline in our lives and training.

1 Cor 9:24-27 "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 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." KJV

Obtain means to possess, seize, grasp or find. This scripture does not mean that the prize is for only one, but is for all. We must be pressing forward, we are all running this spiritual race and all are winners if we continue what is mentioned in the following scriptures.

Phil 3:13-14 "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." KJV

2 Tim 4:7-8 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." KJV

Mastery means dominion, supremacy or rulership. Striveth means to contend with an adversary or struggle, to labor consistently. Rak means proceeding only with victory. If we are to obtain victory, there will be strife and we will have to obtain mastery over the situation

We are encouraged to keep running the race, to receive the crown of righteousness which is for everyone that has fought a good fight, has finished the course, and kept the faith. That crown is not just for one but for all. Hebrews teaches us that there is a cloud of witnesses in heaven watching us run that race, they are encouraging us onward because of what Jesus has done for us, He finished the race and is seated with the Father in heaven.

If we are going to have dominion, we must be temperate, having self control in all things. We are striving for a crown that is incorruptible, that will not perish. Practice must be involved in our lives in order for success to be ours. Champions are made on the practice field, spiritually we must be disciplined in prayer and reading the word, then we will be ready for whatever arises. We must bring our bodies under control, learning self control in all areas; our diets, our outside interests or anything else we may encounter.

Jim Thorpe, an American athlete, as well as Moses and David are examples of different people who lacked temperance or self control in their lives and what it cost them in the end.

God had told Moses earlier to hit the rock for the water to come out, but this time because of being upset with the children of Israel, he hit the rock twice with his rod. This action caused him not to be able to enter into the promised land, being upset at the people and lacking self control with them, he disobeyed the Lord. Moses had shown anger for a long time in his life, he had murdered an Egyptian before fleeing Egypt.

David at various times did not show self control in his life, but he had a heart after God and always had repentance.

If we develop a life style of no self control we will miss out on the blessings of the Lord. It is important that the fruit of temperance is developed and there be a true heartfelt repentance for anything we have done. We must look to Jesus in order to be able to finish the race before us, His example shows how this is done.

Heb 12:1-2 "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." KJV

Heb 12:1-2 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. 2 We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne." NLT

Heb 12:1-2 "Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. **Keep your eyes on Jesus**, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's *there*, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. *That* will shoot adrenaline into your souls!" MESSAGE

Jesus has not asked us to do anything that He knows we can't do. Don't consider quitting, but be winners, develop self control in order to finish the race set before you.