

TEMPERANCE

2 PETER 1

Text: 2 Peter 1:6

Introduction:

The word translated "temperance" refers to having self-discipline. What does that have to do with us adding to our faith?

Note the progression. Peter builds on the previous ideas.

Virtue is the desire to do what is right.

Knowledge knows what is right.

The problem is, that a desire to do what is right, and knowing what is right to do is insufficient as we add to our faith.

We need temperance... we need the self discipline to do what is right.

Let's say for instance that I wanted to lose a few pounds. I could really have the desire to do that. I may even know that in order to accomplish that, I must exercise and watch what I eat. But the desire to lose

weight, and the knowledge of how to lose weight, I mean I could sit around and read one of a million books that tell you how to do it, is not going to get the job done. I'm going to have to have the discipline to get out there and exercise and the discipline to eat the salad rather than the quadruple cheeseburger.

Adding to our faith, growing spiritually, requires self-discipline as well.

Your faith will not grow in a spiritual environment of disobedience.

Growth comes only when we die to self, and submit our will to the will of God.

Listen to what James 1:22 commands us,

James 1:22

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

So how can we build "temperance"... self-control into our spiritual lives?

First by....

1. UNDERSTAND THAT WE MUST STAY FOCUSED AND KEEP OUR EYES FIXED ON THE SAVIOR

Hebrews 12:1-2

¹ 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.

Illustration:

Back in the 50's Ted Williams was known as the "splendid splinter". He was one of the greatest hitters of all time. Baseballs last 400 hitter.

What made Ted Williams a great hitter? great eyesight? Perfect hand-eye coordination? Yes those things were important, but when asked he said that his greatest attribute was that he had the ability to block out all distractions and concentrate on the pitched ball.

One time... while in taking batting practice at in Boston, some of his teammates wanted to put his concentration to the test. As a pitch was thrown,

several of them threw lit firecrackers at his feet. As the story goes he didn't flinch a bit as he hit the ball. He was focused and fixed.

Listen, obedience requires that we not allow distractions to keep us from doing what we know we are to do.

Many of the basics of Christian living require that we focus on what it is we are to do.

For instance....

Bible Study, Prayer, Church Attendance, Giving, Witnessing.... just to name a few things require intentional obedience.

Listen there is a lot of things that will distract us from obeying the Lord. We get wrapped up in our schedules, our circumstances, sometimes we let our priorities get out of whack, and what happens... we lose the focus we need to live for Jesus.

2. UNDERSTAND THAT WE MUST FORGET

A. We need to Forget our Failures

Peter had some problems here. He had some failure in his life. No doubt the most obvious was his denial of the Lord Jesus. After that Peter decided he was going

to go back to the business of fishing. He was convinced that he was a wash out when it came to the ministry. Jesus of course in John 21, which we will look at closer in a moment, expressed His desire for Peter to be restored to service.

One of Satan's strategies is to get us to wallow in defeat and failure.

I am not minimizing our sins. When we sin we need to deal with them biblically. 1 John 1:9 promises that if we will confess our sins, God will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we have confessed our sins the Bible says that God has forgiven us and that our sins.

If you can learn and grow from past failures then an occasional look back may be helpful.

Most of us however, when we focus on the past become filled with despair and defeat.

It takes discipline to forget the past. It also takes discipline to..

B. Forget the Successes

That's what got Peter in trouble to begin with. He was the disciple that had walked on the water. He had

rightly identified Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God, when Jesus inquired as to who others believed Him to be.

Peter had some "success".

That night when Jesus warned Peter that he would deny Him three times, what was Peter's response?

Who me ?

These other guys might run out on You, but not me!

Peter fell into the success trap!

Success should make us grateful, but often it makes us proud and vulnerable to defeat.

So we need to understand that Temperance requires that we Focus and it requires that we Forget.

3. Understand That We Must Follow

John 21:14-22

¹⁴This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead. ¹⁵So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. ¹⁶He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. ¹⁷He saith unto him the

third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not. ¹⁹ This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. ²⁰ Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? ²¹ Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what *shall* this man *do*? ²² Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee? follow thou me.

Notice that Jesus was making one thing clear to Peter. I want you to follow me regardless of the circumstances or the consequences.

Peter answered the challenge and let the Lord use him greatly. Just in the first few chapters of the Book of Acts we have a record of Peter's preaching being used to bring thousands into the kingdom of God.

The Lord's prophesy of Peter's death did come true. He eventually surrendered his very life to the cause of Christ.

He too was crucified.

Close:

Some of you are not growing because you are not focused on spiritual things and your eyes and not fixed on the Savior. Others are hindered because they have gotten tripped up by some past failure or may have been slowed by a success.

Perhaps you have just stopped following. Your spiritual life is suffering because somewhere you started going your way instead of the Lord's way.

What do we need to do? We need to add temperance to your faith.