

The Fruit of the Spirit: Temperance
(Galatians 5:22-23)

Introduction:

1. The fruit of the Spirit consists of the 9 special characteristics listed in Galatians 5:22-23.
2. Today we are concluding this series of lessons with a study of the 9th characteristic: "*temperance.*"

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST DEFINE "TEMPERANCE"
 - A. Temperance: "the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites."
 - B. "Temperance" is also known as "self-control."
- II. THE BIBLE TEACHES CHRISTIANS TO PRACTICE "TEMPERANCE"
 - A. We learn from Acts 24:24-25 that temperance is part of "*the faith in Christ.*"
 1. Paul was speaking to Felix about "*the faith in Christ.*"
 2. As he did so, Paul showed Felix that he would have to practice temperance to be a Christian.
 3. God's people must also practice temperance to be ready for the coming judgment.
 - B. According to 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Christians must practice temperance just as athletes must be temperate.
 1. Athletes practice temperance to win "*a corruptible crown.*"
 2. We must practice temperance to finish the Christian race so we may receive an "*incorruptible*" crown.
 3. Temperance involves bringing our bodies into subjection to the Lord's will.
 - C. All Christians must practice temperance, but the Scriptures make special reference to:
 1. the older men (Titus 2:1-2)
 2. men who serve as elders (Titus 1:5-9).
 - D. Temperance is one of the Christian graces (2 Peter 1:5-7).
 1. We learn from vs.8-11 how important these graces are.
 2. (vs.9) One who lacks temperance is blind.
 3. (vs.10) Temperance will help a Christian to avoid falling away.
- III. THE BIBLE SHOWS US HOW OTHERS HAVE PRACTICED TEMPERANCE
 - A. (Genesis 39:7-12) Joseph refused to commit adultery with Potiphar's wife.
 - B. (Daniel 1:8-16) Daniel refused to defile himself by eating the king's food and drinking his wine.
 - C. (Matthew 4:1-11) Jesus refused to give in to Satan's temptations.
 - D. One of the keys to practicing temperance is hiding God's Word in the heart (Psalm 119:11).

Conclusion:

1. Temperance involves putting the works of the flesh to death.
2. Those who belong to Christ are to have already done this (Galatians 5:24).
3. Christians are to continue doing this (Colossians 3:5-10).
4. If we are truly allowing the Spirit to direct us through His Word, we will develop these characteristics and we will continually grow in them.