

**The Power of Righteousness:  
Growing in Temperance**

**“Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable.”**

**1 Corinthians 9:25**

One of the greatest signs of spiritual growth and a heart that is under the influence of the Holy Spirit is when a Christian is able to bring their will into submission to God’s will in order to reflect His righteousness. The ability to exercise discipline and self-control over one’s lusts, passions and emotions is known as “*temperance*” and is a trait that is highly esteemed by God and is to be sought after by every one of His children.

Our lusts, passions and emotions are very powerful. God built within each of us the capacity to feel angry, frustrated, sad and happy. However, if we lack temperance, these same emotions can make a fool of us. How many times has anger overtaken you and caused you to say or do something that you later regretted? Many of us know people who were so overcome by sadness that they became hopeless and despondent and maybe even suffered health issues. While all of our emotions serve a purpose, if you don’t control them, they will control you. A lack of temperance makes you vulnerable to attack by Satan and, thus, even more susceptible to sin. (Proverbs 25:28).

In order to grow in temperance, we have to learn how to deny ourselves and bring our will, emotions and desires into submission to the will and word of God. This is definitely a process. However, we have a reason to grow in temperance and this should provide the motivation we need each day to practice self-discipline. Just as an athlete practices self-control in order to be the best in his or her sport and win a prize, a child of God must exercise temperance in order to be his or her best and obtain that crown of righteousness that the Lord shall give to those who endure. (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

What area of your life and temperament do you struggle with the most? Does your tongue often get you in trouble? Are you easily upset? Do people tell you that you wear your emotions on your sleeve or that you are “in your feelings” too much? Are your lusts constantly causing you to fall into sin? Maybe it’s your eating or spending habits that are causing you to suffer. Since temperance is a product of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, connect with the Spirit and follow His lead daily. Additionally, you may want to ask someone to help you to grow by holding you accountable. Take some time to read the following verses to discover how, with God’s help, you can grow in temperance: Luke 9:23; Romans 12:1-2; Romans 13:12-14; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 4:21-32; James 1:19-27.