

Address: 160 Paya Lebar Road, Orion@Paya Lebar #04-06, Singapore 409022
Sun Worship Service: 10am, Sun School: 11.45am, Wed Prayer Meeting: 8pm
Website: www.sovereignhopebpc.org
Rev Dr Jack Sin: 91160948 (hp) / jacksin710@gmail.com
Elder Loke Tat Luen: lloke822@gmail.com

The Spiritual Development of Temperance in an Intolerant World

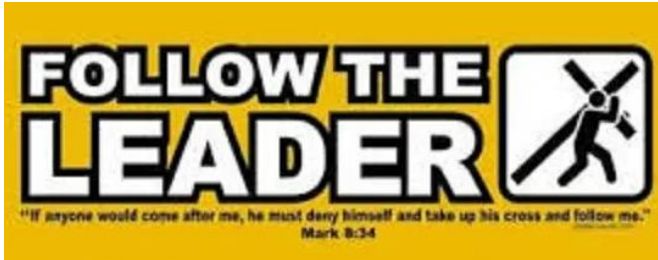
2 Peter 1:5-8 says, *'And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.'*



The Christian has through Christ the spiritual power and victory over sin and an ability to grow in godliness and sanctification as we live in a increasingly troubled world (2 Pet 1:3). We are called to develop Christian virtues and character according to the grace of God. Peter speaks of giving all diligence to this matter. Firstly, of developing our *faith in Christ*. It is a reference to both an objective and subjective faith. It is faith as in knowing God experientially as well as in trusting Him. We are to exercise our faith and to let it grow as it were in greater depth and intensity in the Lord. Then we are to add on to faith, *virtue* or moral goodness.

It is a general term to depict benevolence, ethical rightness or a pure disposition of heart and mind. This is important for the Christian testimony and general demeanour and conduct of every believer. To this attribute, we are to add *knowledge*, the knowledge of God through His Word. The understanding of the Bible is of paramount significance. Ignorance is not bliss. Search the Scriptures and we would do well to know it, apply it and then teach it to others (2 Tim 2:15; Ezra 7:10). To that, knowledge is to be added to *temperance*. This is a very important quality, the ability to control ourselves; moderation is the trait of being sober and self-disciplined. It is an important principle of life.

The Christian is a disciplined follower of the Master. He is to quietly and faithfully emulate Christ, and one of the qualities is that of a temperate character.



A drunkard is an intemperate person as is a person who flies into a rage or who excessively swears and shouts at others. An impatient man is often not a temperate person and is one who cannot wait patiently without complaint and murmuring.

Rev. Ian Paisley, Protestant leader of North Ireland, wrote a book on the 1859, *Revival in Ulster, Ireland*, and mentioned that the spiritual condition that could be described at that time is depicted by one word: Intemperance.

The people then were drinking, swearing, breaking the Sabbath, with immoral and unethical behaviour, and other excesses in life. People with uncontrollable impulses engage in sin and other iniquitous behaviour. It was a pathetic condition; like the time of the book of Judges where everyone did what was right in their own eyes. Only a true revival from God could transform and save them.

Biblical Examples

Moses was a good example of a temperate person. His own relatives complained against him, but he did not retaliate, and instead waited upon the Lord to vindicate him (Num 12:1–8). People complained about his leadership and his decisions in doing certain things, but he would still steadfastly rely on the Lord to lead and guide him. David was another temperate leader who was not easily provoked. He was unfairly chided and despised by Shimei (1 Kgs 2:38–44), but he did not allow his general to kill him but waited upon the Lord until the time of his son King Solomon to render righteous judgment upon the guilty offender. These men had a tremendous amount of self-control as did men like Job, Daniel and Noah. Godliness is shown forth externally in a temperate character and proper demeanour.

Christians live in a world of ridicule, intolerance, temptations and trials for our faith. Temperance is needed everyday when we drive on the road (that is how road rage starts when people get furious and cannot control themselves), in eating (to abstain from excessive consumption of some unhealthy but palatable food, e.g., laksa, durians, char kway teow, roti prata, etc.), in speech (temptation and not to say something unedifying or coarse or jesting which is unhelpful as a Christian), and on thought life (not to think of things that are not proper or right in the sight of God). **With the indwelling Holy Christ and by God's grace, we are to walk worthy of the zeal and be a good testimony to others.**

The soldier needs to learn to be alert, disciplined, temperate when he is undergoing military training and exercises (2 Tim 2:3–4). The athlete must learn to control himself from unhealthy food and practise seriously for his events through regular exercises and follow the rules as well (1 Cor 9:23–25). The diligent farmer must be temperate and disciplined as he works hard on the farm under the hot sun, to bring the harvest in or to sow the seed during summer. The ambassador of Christ must be temperate as well and so is the responsible steward of the Lord who is to be faithful and hardworking (1 Pet 4:10-11).



In life, self-control or temperance goes a long way in keeping us safe from worldly entanglements and fleshly appetites that may destroy us. Sinful habits can make us vulnerable to the fiery darts of the evil one, but Christians are to exercise spiritual restraint with godly temperance.

Conclusion

In an intolerant world that we live in, temperance is the discipline to quietly do the right things, to serve, worship God and witness for Him and to reach out and encourage, admonish and exhort others in Christ without the fear and favour of men. It is a conscious effort to please God and the ability to do it with God's grace (Gal 5:22–23). One of the facets of the fruit of the Spirit is temperance and it is not impossible to have it. The drug addict going through cold turkey has to nurture self-control to say "no" to drugs, others have to do the same to worldly music, and immoral temptations and websites and dancing and alcohol drinking and many other influences. So also must the Christian say "no" to sin and other iniquities.

Our reliance is on the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit who enables us to reject sin and yield our bodies unto righteousness (Rom 6:12). Constant prayer and knowledge of our accountability to God and the awareness of the presence of God will help us to be temperate in our speech and conduct. Pray and ask God to help us develop this important strength of character and calm composure to regulate our natural impulses and serve God faithfully. Philippians 4:5 says, *"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand."* 2 Timothy 1:7 says, *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a **sound mind**."* (The word "sound mind" or "sober" can be rendered as self-control too, in the original.) May God help us to be temperate in all things to be an effective witness and testimony for Him till He comes.

Jack Sin

Memory Verse

1Thess 4:11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Pastor brings us God's Word morning on "***Parable of the Tenants (Matt 21:33-45)***", the quarterly sermon series on "***Appreciating & Applying the Parables of Jesus***".
3. Next Sunday, Pastor will preach on "***Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:15-31)***".
4. Sunday School classes after the worship service are as follows:
 - Christian Apologetics (Pastor)
 - Studies in Nehemiah (Dr Kwong Leen)
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren. We have systematic studies on Old Testament Foundations and the 10 Commandments. Join us for a time of profitable learning. **[Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178]**.
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. **[Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551]**.
7. Pray for:
 - **Travels: George & Grace** (Boston, USA, 4 Oct – 5 Nov)
 - **Medical: Perry** [fractured shoulder], **John Wong** [gastro & colonoscopy on 9 Dec], **Anthony** [lung cancer: narrowing airways], **Samuel Wong** [multiple health conditions], **Daniel Phang** [high blood pressure & gout],
 - **Bangalore Mission Team (13-21 Nov)**: Pastor, Angie, Eld Jeffrey, Dr Sam, Yashu.
8. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**

Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.