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The Mark of Temperance

As Christians, we are to serve and glorify God but we also struggle with living a life that is pleasing to God in a fallen and decadent world that we live in. The process of sanctification as we grow in holiness takes place the moment we are justified by faith in Christ and it lasts a lifetime. Yet there are attributes that we would like



to develop in our lives and are still in the process of nurturing them. The apostle instructs us in the important virtues that we are to work on in our lives 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 Process of Sanctification

The Christian has with Him spiritual power and victory over sin and an ability to grow in godliness and sanctification (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 sovereign will of 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.

The late Rev. Ian Paisley, the 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 liquor, swearing in the name of God, 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 judges where everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

He that hath no rule over his own spirit
is like a city that is broken down,
and without walls.

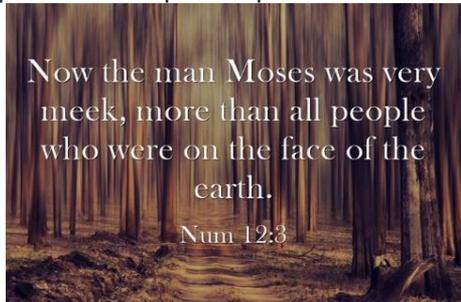
Proverbs 25:28



Only a revival from God could transform and save them and it did to some in a wonderful way as hearts were transformed by the word of God in a season of amazing awakening of the souls unto the Lord by the work of the Spirit through the preaching of the Word of God.

Biblical Examples of Temperance

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 his son 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 which is needed today.

Christians live in a world of ridicule, impatience, 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 Lord with godly 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 has to 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 has to be temperate and disciplined as he works hard on the farm under the hot sun, to bring the harvest in or to sow and water the seed during summer and wait upon till the harvest comes . 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 can go a long way in keeping us safe from worldly entanglements and temptations that may destroy us. Sinful habits can make us vulnerable to the fiery darts of the evil one, but Christians are to put on the whole armour of God and to exercise spiritual restraint with God given temperance.

Temperance is the spiritual discipline to do the right things, to serve, worship God and witness for Him and to reach out and encourage, bless and admonish and exhort one another in Christ. 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 do it. The drug addict going through cold-turkey has to learn to nurture self-control to say “no” to drugs an theft and cheating , others have to do the same to worldly music, and immoral temptations and unedifying websites or movies, sensual dancing and alcohol drinking and many other influences. So also must the Christian say “no” to sin and other iniquities when tempted by the evil one.



Conclusion

The believer has the Holy Spirit indwelling within him or her. 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 a good witness and testimony for Him till He comes.

Jack Sin

**PROPHETIC AND PRACTICAL INSIGHTS
FROM ISAIAH FOR TODAY**

Lord's Day Programme from Oct - Dec 2020

OCTOBER

- 4 The Case for Divine Reasoning (Isaiah 1:1-18)
- 11* The Holiness of God and the Prophet's Response (Isaiah 6:1-8)
- 18 When the Top Angel became the Devil (Isaiah 14:1-15)
- 25 Reformation Sunday: The Refuge of God in the Reformation (Isaiah 25:1-12)

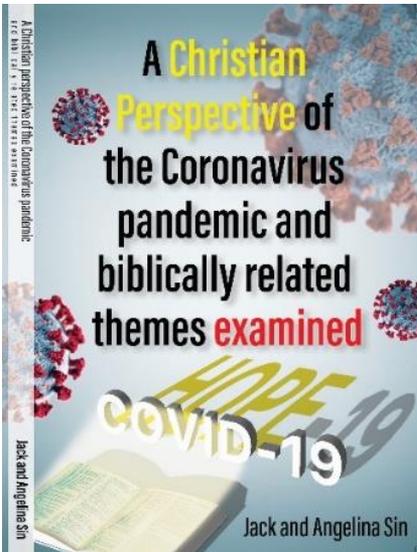
NOVEMBER

- 1 The Basis for Peace of Mind (Isaiah 26:1-9)
- 8* The Gospel Highway and Streams of Life (Isaiah 35:1-10)
- 15 The Almighty Comforter for Souls (Isaiah 40:1-14)
- 22 Fighting Phobia with Courage in God (Isaiah 41:1-14)
- 29 Triumph over Distress as Witnesses (Isaiah 43:1-28)

DECEMBER

- 6 The Only One True God of the World (Isaiah 45:5-28)
- 13* The Call to Extend the Kingdom of God. (Isaiah 54:1-17)
- 20 The Foundation for Contentment (Isaiah 55:1-13)
- 24 Christmas Eve: Mary and the Lamb of God (Luke 1:27-47)
- 27 Reforms through the Hand of God (Isaiah 59:1-21)
- 31* WATCHNIGHT SERVICE: Am I a Wise or Foolish Virgin? (Matthew 25:1-13)

A Reviewer's Thoughts....



Rev. Dr. Jack Sin has compiled a useful and timely publication in the wake of the current coronavirus pandemic. He is to be commended for upholding the Holy Bible as authoritative.

Rev. Sin covers a range of historical, pastoral, and practical subjects. Readers will not find here a thesis addressing the cause of coronavirus but instead can feast on a series of articles with practical application to life.

His final chapter about separation is challenging. Just as in the midst of the coronavirus we are to practise social distancing so Christians are to practise Biblical separation. A useful book. One to keep handy for future reference on a range of subjects.

*Rev David Yan
Pastor, Emmanuel Church,
Auckland, New Zealand.*

Available for Purchase!
Email: sovereignhopebpc@gmail.com

From A Reader

"I am praising God for this timely book on “*A Christian Perspective of the Coronavirus Pandemic and Biblically Related Themes Examined*”.

I thank God for Rev Dr Jack Sin and his wife Mrs Angelina Sin for co-authoring together to bring forth this valuable and essential book in this time of pandemic.

This book enables the readers to understand this Pandemic - COVID-19, in the light of scripture and view God’s sovereignty and providence for His children through this pandemic.

Dr Sin and his wife have reminded every Christian to have a biblical and spiritual outlook of this pandemic, and narrates Christian views and responses on the various topics.

This book advocates to see God's hands in all these perils and encourages to make this as an opportunity to intercede, to reflect and to reach out to others with gospel. This has covered various pertinent areas related to the walk of Christian living. It is a very useful tool in this pandemic and every reader will be drawn nearer in God.

May God bless them and continue to use them mightily in their ministries."

Rev V Nathan
Pastor, New Life Bible Presbyterian Church
Singapore



Memory Verse

Isaiah 25:4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! For our visitors, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave.
2. Rev Jack Sin speaks today on “**Reformation Sunday: The Refuge of God in the Reformation**” (Isa 25: 1-12), the Oct to Dec series on “*Prophetic & Practical Insights from Isaiah for Today*”.
3. Rev Jack Sin speaks next Sunday on “**The Basis for Peace of Mind**” (Isa 26: 1-9).
4. Sunday School classes continues in church after the worship service:
 - Catechism Class – Pastor Jack
 - “Rules for Walking in Fellowship by John Owen” – Dn Choo Siang
 - Studies in Leviticus – Dr Kwong Leen
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom.
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. Do collect your Oct prayer list from Dn Choo Siang.
7. The Pandemic book can be purchased through Dn Yue Kay (Hp: +65 97450311) or via email at sovereignhopebpc@gmail.com.
8. Those who would like to help with the cleaning or safe management procedures of the church, please see Dn Yue Kay.
9. Those who have a testimony to share may submit to Pastor for the weekly.
10. Pastor is still available for counselling via WhatsApp, Email or Mobile.
11. 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**