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## Practical Steps to Developing the Mark of Temperance

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,*

### The Importance of Temperance

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 and trusting Him too. We are to exercise our faith and to let it grow slowly in grace 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. We need to search the scriptures. We do well to know them, apply them and then teach them to others (2 Tim 2:15; Ezra 7:10). To that knowledge, is to be added *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 judges where everyone did what was right in their own eyes. Only a 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 and instead 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, impatience, temptations and trials for our faith.** Temperance is needed every day when we drive on the road (that is how road rage starts when people get furious and cannot control themselves and get into a fight ), in eating (to abstain from excessive consumption of some unhealthy but palatable food, e.g., too much of laksa, durians, char kway teow, roti prata, etc.), in speech (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 Spirit 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, and 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, following 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 the seed during summer. The ambassador of Christ must be temperate in his word as he or she represents a whole country 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.

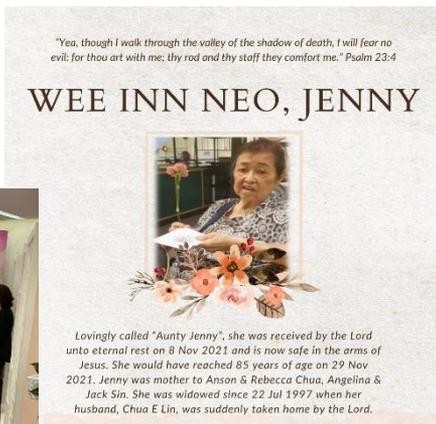
### Fighting Temptations

Temperance is the discipline to think or say or 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 treatment has to nurture self-control to say “no” to drugs or immorality or drinking alcohol or unedifying activities, 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.

### Conclusion

**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 thoughts, 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 In this endemic and post pandemic season, till He comes.

Jack Sin



## Memory Verse

*Neh 6:9* For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

## Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! For our visitors, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave.
2. Pastor speaks today on “**When the Enemy Closes in**” (*Neh 6: 1-15*), continuing the quarterly theme of “**A Biblical Paradigm for Triumphant Christian Service**”.
3. Pastor speaks next Sunday on “**Lesson from the Genealogy**” (*Neh 7:1-6, 73*).
4. Sunday School classes continues after worship service:
  - WCF Shorter Catechism Class – Pastor Jack
  - Understanding Biblical Eschatology & related Topics – Joseph
  - Studies in Numbers – Dn Kwong Leen
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren. Included in the programme is a study on Church History in China on alternate Sundays. Join us for a time of profitable learning.
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.
7. Neighbourhood Bible Class meets on the first Friday of each month in church on the study of 2 Samuel. Come and join us!
8. Those who wish to bring a new friend to the worship service, kindly inform the safety officer Dn Yue Kay or Pastor at least a day in advance.
9. The Pandemic book can be purchased through Dn Yue Kay (Hp: +65 97450311) or via email at [sovereignhopebpc@gmail.com](mailto:sovereignhopebpc@gmail.com).
10. Do kindly observe the safety measures of the church and assist with the weekly cleaning of the premises.
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**

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