

Temperance (Self-Control)

Joy, Temperance, and Repose (rest, tranquility) **slam the door on the doctor's nose.** - Longfellow, 1800's

- Too much of anything (even good things) is bad. (water, sunlight)

Temperance is much more than avoiding alcohol or limiting sugar intake.

Temperance is a “**state of mind**,” wherein you seek to **practice balance** with your **body** and your **passions**.

Temperance is an **age-old conflict of our (sinful) human nature.**

How do we practice temperance/moderation in our own lives?

Temperance = **Self-Control** = Learning how to control our **thoughts, emotions, actions.** (Fruit of the Spirit)

- Eating & Exercise Choices (habits, lifestyle) > Obesity & Disease OR Health & Fitness
- When making food choices, think “temperately.”
 - Eat enough to sustain your physical needs.
 - Choose nutrient-rich foods that will make your body happy.

Stimulants (caffeine, nicotine) and **Depressants** (alcohol) are **poisons** to the **body** and **mind**.

- Scientific health “benefits” of drinking small amounts of alcohol. (?)
 - Very limited and specified applications
 - Very questionable research parameters with contradicting “conclusions”
 - Newer research has totally debunked any health benefit in using alcohol.
- Occasional, light drinking > heavy, habitual drinking = Serious health and safety hazard
- **Addiction** (chemical/behavioral dependence) = **impaired** (or lack of) **self-control**
- The “**moderate**” use of alcohol, tobacco, coffee (poisons) is **Total Abstinence**

Practicing temperance will help you regain and maintain balance, focus, direction, and control.

- If you are over-reliant on technology (or any worldly thing):
 - Put your phone down. Turn off the TV.
 - Take a few moments to collect your thoughts.
 - Breathe (pray).
 - Engage with friends and family.
 - Have a real conversation.

The key to practicing temperance is in your mind.

- Safeguard your thoughts.
 - Learn the power of forgiveness (self and others).
- Monitor (regulate, modulate) your emotions.
 - Learn to release feelings of anger, grief, and fear (anxiety, worry, insecurity).
 - Learn to express your thoughts and feelings appropriately and effectively.
- Adjust your perceptions.
 - Learn to be humble, kind, and patient.
- Experience genuine empathy and compassion: > Thoughts < > Feelings < > Actions <

Your **mind** is the “springboard” for all of your **thoughts, feelings, and actions.** (Romans 12:2; Psalm 51:10)

If you learn to use your mind carefully and wisely, you will win the battle against intemperance (self).

A lifestyle of Temperance is a Self-Controlled, Victorious, Overcoming lifestyle!

Philippians 2:13 - For it is God which worketh in you both to will (desire) and to do of His good pleasure.

True Will Power

Many are inquiring, “How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?” You want to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and **controlled by the habits of your life of sin**. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand.

You **cannot** control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections. The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and *[these thoughts]* cause you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need **not** despair. What you need to understand is **the true force of the will**. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision – the power of **choice**.

Everything depends on **the right action of the will** (self-denial, surrender). The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but **you can choose to serve Him**. You can **give Him your will** (your power of choice, let God make your decisions); He will then work in you to will (decide) and to **do** (empower, act) according to His good pleasure (obedience to the natural laws of health).

Thus, **your whole nature** (thoughts, feelings, actions) will be brought under **the control of the Spirit of Christ** (partaking of the divine nature); your affections will be centered upon Him (Christ); your thoughts will be in harmony with Him. -- *Steps to Christ, p. 47.1*

Christ-centered and Christ-empowered temperance (self-control) is the ultimate “stress management technique” and will bring true health and happiness!

Temperance > self-control > surrendering your will to Christ in faith > Christ’s Righteousness

In achieving our goal of living to 120, practicing temperance is one of the most important habits that we should make part of our healthy lifestyle.