

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. Scripture text: **2Peter 1:5-8.**

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge; [6] and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness; [7] and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love. [8] For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### B. Peter writes his second epistle to his fellow brethren and asks them to grow. He desires for them to have spiritual maturity.

### C. He gives quite a list. Seven things are to be added to faith:

1. Moral excellence (virtue).
2. Knowledge.
3. Self-control.
4. Perseverance.
5. Godliness.
6. Brotherly kindness.
7. Love.

### D. This morning -- self-control. The lesson is developed along the lines of showing discipline. Vine says self-control is strength and power kept in restraint.

## II. SPIRITUAL SELF-CONTROL (DISCIPLINE).

### A. This is not an easy process. Self-control is not developed over night, or by one sermon (Heb. 12:11).

All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

### B. But good discipline means stability in life. People with self-control handle things better (Col. 2:5).

For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.

### C. One trait of developing good spiritual self-control is to remain focused on the task (2Tim. 2:3-6).

Suffer hardship with *me*, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. [4] No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. [5] And also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. [6] The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops.

## III. INTELLECTUAL SELF-CONTROL (DISCIPLINE).

### A. Attitude is so important in any area of life (Prov. 23:7).

For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you.

Note the following poem:

If you think you are beaten, you are;	Life's battles don't always go
If you think you dare not, you don't;	To the stronger and faster man,
If you want to win but think you can't	But sooner or later the man who wins
It's almost a cinch you won't.	Is the man who thinks he can.

If you think you'll lose, you're lost;  
For out in the world we find  
Success begins with a fellow's will;  
It's all in the state of mind.

### B. Too many times we fall into the same trap as did the unbelieving Jews. We have veiled our thinking and fail to see the truth that will help us (2Cor. 3:12-14).

Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in *our* speech, [13] and *are* not as Moses, *who* used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away. [14] But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ.

- C. We physically train our bodies so that they will function efficiently and properly. We must do the same with our mind or thinking (Phil. 2:3; 4:8).  
**(Phil 2:3)** Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself;  
**(Phil 4:8)** Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.
- D. You cannot change the amount of intelligence you were given by God but you can:
1. Learn to reach you intellectual potential.
  2. Learn to keep your thinking morally and ethically straight.

#### IV. **PHYSICAL SELF-CONTROL (DISCIPLINE).**

- A. We should not use Mk. 7: 18-20 as a license to eat anything we want, in whatever quantity. I believe that would be a misuse of the passage. Remember that Paul laid down the general principle that all things may be permissible, but not all things are profitable (Mk. 7:18-20; 1Cor. 6:12,13).  
**(Mk 7:18-20)** And He said<sup>^</sup> to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him; [19] because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (Thus He declared all foods clean.) [20] And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man."  
**(1Cor 6:12-13)** All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. [13] Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food; but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord; and the Lord is for the body.
- B. It is possible to sin by the abuse of one's body. Sexual immorality, abuse, and gluttony are all condemned in the NT (Rom. 1:24-26; 1Cor. 6:18; Ti. 1:12).  
**(Rom 1:24-26)** Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. [25] For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. [26] For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,  
**(1Cor 6:18)** Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.  
**(Ti 1:12)** One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."
- C. Again, do not misuse passages to justify an undisciplined lifestyle. Paul is not telling Timothy that physical discipline is without profit, but rather is secondary to godly discipline (1Tim. 4:8).  
 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.
- D. We must honor our body physically by not doing to it what we shouldn't and by treating right with exercise. Why wouldn't proper exercise be one way of "perfecting holiness?" (2Cor. 7:1; 1Cor. 6:18,19).  
**(2Cor 7:1)** Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.  
**(1Cor 6:18-19)** Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. [19] Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

#### V. **PRACTICAL ADVICE TO GROW IN SELF-CONTROL.**

- A. First, do not neglect the little things (2Kgs. 5:13; Lk. 16:10,11).  
**(2Kgs 5:13)** Then his servants came near and spoke to him and said, "My father, had the prophet told you *to do some* great thing, would you not have done *it*? How much more *then*, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean?'"  
**(Lk. 16:10-11)** "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. [11] "If therefore you have not been faithful in the *use of* unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true *riches* to you?"
- B. Second, begin slowly and don't expect too much too soon (1Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14).  
**(1Pet 2:2)** like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

**(Heb 5:12-14)** For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. [13] For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. [14] But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

- C. **Third**, respect your use of your time (Eph. 5:15,16; Gal. 6:10).

**(Gal 6:10)** So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

**(Eph 5:15,16)** Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, [16] making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

We don't seem to have time for anything anymore and one reason may be poor planning.

- D. **Fourth**, do not put it off--start now (2Cor. 6:2; Mt. 6:34).

**(Mt 6:34)** "Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. *Each* day has enough trouble of its own.

**(2Cor 6:2)** for He says, "AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU"; behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION"--

Procrastinate your procrastination! Get started today by organizing your life.

- E. **Fifth**, make three lists:

1. List One is--Spiritual discipline.

Example: read my Bible, prayer more, try to visit others.

2. List Two--Intellectual discipline.

Example: read Biblical literature, list daily blessings, think on good things.

3. List Three--Bodily discipline.

Example: go on a low-fat diet, exercise, get more rest.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Self-control is a greatly admired attribute. The meek (self-controlled) shall inherit the earth (Mt. 5:5).

"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

- B. Good discipline, organization, and self-control will set you apart from the world.

- C. Allow Jesus to be your example in self-control (1Pet. 2:21).

For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.