

ADDING TO OUR FAITH: SELF-CONTROL

2 PETER 1.6

INTRODUCTION:

1. Growing in the faith is not about crowd control, but about self control. Do you have a plank in your eye?
2. Self-Control: [Gk: egkrateia (ἐγκράτεια)] KJV: “temperance.” From the root meaning “strength”
3. Self-control is a learned characteristic that every Christian is expected to add to their faith.

I. GAINING CONTROL OF OUR THOUGHTS

- A. Why is it necessary to control our thoughts? The heart is the center of man. (Prov. 4.23; Matt. 15.18,19)
 1. With a carnal mind, man puts himself at enmity with God. (Rom. 8.7,8; 1 Cor. 3.3)
 2. Therefore Christians bring “*every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*” (2 Cor. 10.5)
- B. How do we get control of our thoughts?
 1. Set our mind on things above. (Col. 3.2)
 2. An idle mind is vulnerable. (Luke 11.24-26)

II. GAINING CONTROL OF OUR SPEECH

- A. Of all the things we are to control, the tongue is the most difficult and the most dangerous. (James 3.1-12)
 1. VERSES 1-5: The great power of the small member.
 2. VERSES 6-8: The deadly nature of the tongue.
 3. VERSES 9-12: Dangerous because of its inconsistency.
- B. How do we get control of the tongue?
 1. Measure twice. Saw once. (Prov. 29.11)
 2. Reduce the amount of words spoken. (Ecc. 5.3)
 3. When in doubt close your mouth.

III. GAINING CONTROL OF OUR ACTIONS

- A. Fearing the possibility of being disqualified, Paul brought his body into subjection. (1 Cor. 9.25-27; cf. Rom. 7.15,19)
- B. How do we get control of our actions?
 1. It requires the abandonment of the desires of the flesh and a complete surrender to the will of God. (Gal. 5.25)
 2. This is an ongoing battle. (Gal. 5.17; Luke 9.23)

CONCLUSION: There is hope only in knowing God. (2 Thes. 1.8).

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MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS :	9:00AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP:	9:50AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP:	6:00PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS	7:30PM

*Worshipping
God “in Spirit
and truth”
(John 4.23)*

MAY 3RD, 2009

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

Communication is fraught with the potential of taking things out of context, misunderstanding the meaning of words used, not appreciating the underlying cultural implications of an expression, etc. Consequently, leaders in our society are misquoted, the meaning of classic works such as Shakespeare is lost, and misunderstandings cause relationships between brethren in the church, or even our own spouses to become strained.

We apply, almost unconsciously, rules of communication in our day to day lives. If such misunderstandings can happen so easily among people who all speak the same language and live in the same location, then it is not surprising that the word of God gets so abused, misquoted, and misapplied. Peter acknowledged that his fellow apostle Paul wrote of some things that were “*hard to understand which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction...*” (2 Pet. 3.16).

Yet there is nothing that is as critical to understand correctly than the word of God, for only by this revealed message that one will be judged and only by this word can one have eternal life (John 6.63; 12.48; 2 Tim. 3.15).

God desires for man to understand His will, and has therefore communicated it in a way that we can understand (Eph. 5.17). While some are in a position to help us giving the sense (Neh. 8.8), we cannot lag in diligence in our endeavor to grasp the meaning and apply it to ourselves. (2 Tim. 2.15). The word of God is invaluable...but only if we understand it. CLP

THE ESSENTIALITY OF BAPTISM

MARK 16:16

INTRODUCTION:

1. That Jesus commands baptism makes it necessary that Christians understand it. Yet there are many differing views.
2. Consider baptism from three different perspectives.

I. BAPTISM FROM A LINGUISTICAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. Baptism: [Gk: *baptisma* (βάπτισμα)] “The process of immersion, submersion, and emergence” [VINE]
 1. Baptize: [Gk: *baptize* (βαπτίζω)] “signifies washing by dipping in water. (Mark 7.4; Luke 11:38)
 2. From the root “bapto” meaning “to dip” (2 Kings 5.14)
- B. Credited for knowing their own language, everywhere the Greek orthodox prevails, immersion is used exclusively.

II. BAPTISM FROM AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. Baptism into Christ was first recorded in the New Testament.
 1. Initiated by the authority of Christ. (Matt. 28.18,19)
 2. Performed first on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2.38)
 3. The baptism of John was not sufficient. (Acts 19.3,4)
 4. Baptism is into Christ, not man. (1 Cor. 1.12-15)
- B. With the departure from the faith, the practice of baptism began to be widely altered. (1 Tim. 4.1,2; 2 Thes. 2.3)
 1. Infant baptism was practiced as early as 189 A.D.
 2. Baptism by immersion remained unchanged until 1311 at the council of Ravenna.

III. BAPTISM FROM A PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. **MATTHEW 3.15:** “*Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.*” Because it is right!
- B. In every aspect, baptism must be performed right.
 1. It must be for the right reason. Righteous and Remission. (Matt. 3.6,11,14,15; Luke 7.29,30; 1 Pet. 3.21; Acts 2.41)
 2. It must be with the right method: Complete Immersion. (Heb. 9.13,14; 10.22; Col. 2.12; Rom. 6.4)
 3. It must be with the right candidate: Convicted Sinners. (Acts 8.36,37; 10.31-33; Rom. 10.14)
 4. It must be with the right elements: Water and Spirit (John 3.5; Acts 10.47; 1 Pet. 1.23,25; Titus 3.4,5)

CONCLUSION: He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

LEADERS WHO LEAD AND CONGREGATIONS WHICH GROW

The blame for Israel’s failure to please God is shared equally between the leaders and the rest of the congregation. How often it was that the children of Israel refused to accept the direction and commands of Moses, Joshua, and others who were charged with the task of leading God’s people. And equally as often do we find leadership, either through example or teaching, cause the children of Israel to fail at wholly following God.

Frequently, the leadership was responsible for the Israelites turning to idolatry. Fearing that he would lose the loyalty of the Israelites to his brother Rehoboam, Jeroboam set up idols and encouraged the children of Israel to sacrifice to them, In 1 Kings 12:28, he told them, “*It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!*”

Promising to punish Israel, God reveals his plans to bring Syria and the Philistines against them. Their departure from God was the result of bad leadership. Through the prophet Isaiah God observes that “*...the leaders of this people cause them to err, And those who are led by them are destroyed.*” (Isa. 9.16). While Israel was not absolved from their responsibility, the leaders were identified as the cause.

Leadership within the church can be responsible for both the growth of the body and the destruction of the church. Paul told the Ephesian church that God appointed leaders for the “*equipping of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*” (Eph. 4.11,12). However, when elders give more attention to the administrative affairs of the church rather than serving as shepherds teaching and guiding the flock (1 Pet. 5.2), the church will suffer. And when preachers are not an example “*in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity*” (1 Tim. 4.12), and fail to “*give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine*” (1 Tim. 4.13), then the church suffers.

Every member is responsible for their own spiritual condition (Phil. 2.12). However, we cannot ignore the need for leaders of quality and character. Otherwise we become “*blind leaders of the blind.*” (Matt. 15.14), and both will wind up in a ditch.