

## Lesson 40 - The Character of Temperance

1. What is the ninth item listed when one has the fruit of the Spirit? **Galatians 5:22-23**

**EGW:** A strict compliance with the Bible requirements will be a blessing, not only to the soul, but to the body. The fruit of the Spirit is not only love, joy, and peace, but temperance also. We are enjoined not to defile our bodies, for they are the temples of the Holy Ghost. The case of Daniel shows us, that, through religious principle, young men may triumph over the lust of the flesh, and remain true to God's requirements, even though it cost them a great sacrifice. What if he had made a compromise with those heathen officers, and had yielded to the pressure of the occasion by eating and drinking as was customary with the Babylonians? That one wrong step would probably have led to others, until, his connection with Heaven being severed, he would have been borne away by temptation. But while he clung to God with unwavering trust, the spirit of prophetic power came upon him. While he was instructed of man in the duties of court life, he was taught of God to read the mysteries of future ages. {PH100 51.2}

2. What affect did the topics of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," have on a person? **Acts 24:25**

**EGW:** How wide the contrast between the course of Felix and that of the jailer of Philippi! The servants of the Lord were brought in bonds to the jailer, as was Paul to Felix. The evidence they gave of being sustained by a divine power, their rejoicing under suffering and disgrace, their fearlessness when the earth was reeling with the earthquake shock, and their spirit of Christlike forgiveness, sent conviction to the jailer's heart, and with trembling he confessed his sins and found pardon. Felix trembled, but he did not repent. The jailer joyfully welcomed the Spirit of God to his heart and to his home; Felix bade the divine messenger depart. The one chose to become a child of God and an heir of heaven; the other cast his lot with the workers of iniquity. {RH, November 2, 1911 par. 20}

3. To master discipline and obedience to God, even developing perfection, how much temperance do we need to exercise? **1 Corinthians 9:25**

**EGW:** The Christian will be temperate in all things,--in eating, in drinking, in dress, and in every phase of life. "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." We have no right to indulge in anything that will result in a condition of mind that hinders the Spirit of God from impressing us with the sense of our duty. It is a masterpiece of satanic skill to place men where they can with difficulty be reached

with the gospel. {RH, August 29, 1907 par. 19}

4. What can we not achieve if we are not temperate? **2 Peter 1:6 [Hint: it is the next rung on Peter's ladder.]**

**EGW:** The apostle adds: "And to temperance, patience." Who ever saw an intemperate man or woman that exercised the grace of patience? How much unhappiness might be avoided if all would eat, and drink, and dress with an eye single to the glory of God! We cannot afford to make the world our criterion. We want to be right because it is right. It is the Bible standard that we are to reach. The Lord tells us to come out from the world and be separate, and his promise is, "I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." What an exalted position is here offered us! The privilege of becoming members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. Some seem to think that it is demeaning to become a Christian. Not so. The religion of Christ never degrades. It refines, purifies, and ennobles the receiver, and fits him for the society of heavenly angels. The work of overcoming is a grand, a noble work. It is a hand to hand battle with the powers of darkness, and in this battle we must individually engage. {RH, December 1, 1885 par. 8}

5. We know that Herod, the one that was alive at Jesus' death, was an intemperate person. What happened in the end for his intemperate actions? **Matthew 14:6-10, Acts 12:21-23**

**EGW:** She had tried, but unsuccessfully, to gain the consent of Herod to have John slain. Her revengeful spirit was now at work to accomplish her inhuman design by strategy. She knew that the only way to accomplish her purpose would be through the gratification of the king's intemperate appetite. So she covered her hatred as best she could, looking forward to the royal birthday, which she knew would be an occasion of gluttony and intoxication. The king's love of luxurious food and wine would give her an opportunity to throw him off his guard. She would entice him to indulge his appetite, which would arouse passions of the baser order, subvert the finer sensibilities, produce a recklessness of consequences, and an inability to exercise his proper judgment and decision. {2SP 76.3}

6. We know Belshazzar was also an intemperate king, what was his fate? **Daniel 5:1-5, 30**

**EGW:** In the same room where these societies have had their gatherings, the congregations have met to worship God. Can you during the sacred hour of divine service forget the scenes of merriment and feasting, and indulgence in the wine cup? All this God writes in His book as intemperance. How does it blend with eternal realities? Do you forget that at all these pleasure

gatherings there is a Witness present, as at the feast of Belshazzar? Could the curtain that separates us from the invisible world be rolled back, you would behold the Saviour grieved to see men absorbed in the pleasures of the table, in hilarity and witticism, that put Christ, the center of the world's hope, out of their thoughts. {2SM 126.2}

7. What are some areas people can be intemperate in? **1 John 2:16**

**EGW:** To the self-indulgent, the pleasure-loving, the sensual, Spiritualism presents itself under a less subtle disguise than to the more refined and intellectual; in its grosser forms they find that which is in harmony with their inclinations. Satan studies every indication of the frailty of human nature, he marks the sins which each individual is inclined to commit, and then he takes care that opportunities shall not be wanting to gratify the tendency to evil. He tempts men to excess in that which is in itself lawful, causing them, through intemperance, to weaken physical, mental, and moral power. He has destroyed and is destroying thousands through the indulgence of the passions, thus brutalizing the entire nature of man. And to complete his work, he declares, through the spirits, that "true knowledge places man above all law;" that "whatsoever is, is right;" that "God doth not condemn;" and that "all sins which are committed are innocent." When the people are thus led to believe that desire is the highest law, that liberty is license, and that man is accountable only to himself, who can wonder that corruption and depravity teem on every hand? Multitudes eagerly accept teachings that leave them at liberty to obey the promptings of the carnal heart. The reins of self-control are laid upon the neck of lust, the powers of mind and soul are made subject to the animal propensities, and Satan exultingly sweeps into his net thousands who profess to be followers of Christ. {GC88 555.3}

8. What was Eve intemperate about? **Genesis 3:6**

**EGW:** Eve was intemperate in her desires when she put forth the hand to take of the fruit-forbidden tree. Self-gratification has reigned almost supreme in the hearts of men and women since the fall. Especially has the appetite been indulged, and they have been controlled by it, instead of reason. For the sake of gratifying the taste, Eve transgressed the command of God. He had given her everything her wants required, yet she was not satisfied. Ever since, her fallen sons and daughters have followed the desires of their eyes, and of their taste. They have, like Eve, disregarded the prohibitions God has made, and have followed in a course of disobedience, and, like Eve, have flattered themselves that the consequence would not be as fearful as had been apprehended. {2SM 411.2}

9. What is something we should always guard against regarding temperance? **Proverbs 23:2**

**EGW:** Those who will gratify their appetite, and then suffer because of their intemperance, and take drugs to relieve them, may be assured that God will not interpose to save health and life which is so recklessly periled. The cause has produced the effect. Many, as their last resort, follow the directions in the word of God, and request the prayers of the elders of the church for their restoration to health. God does not see fit to answer prayers offered in behalf of such, for he knows that if they should be restored to health, they would again sacrifice it upon the altar of unhealthy appetite. {4aSG 145.1}

10. What did the scribes and Pharisees practice that is the opposite of temperance? **Matthew 23:25**  
**[Hint: last word in the verse]**

**EGW:** A similar condition of things exists now. That which is lawful in itself is carried to excess. Appetite is indulged without restraint. Professed followers of Christ are today eating and drinking with the drunken, while their names stand in honored church records. Intemperance benumbs the moral and spiritual powers and prepares the way for indulgence of the lower passions. {PP 101.3}

Those who have indulged the habit of racing through exciting stories, are crippling their mental strength, and disqualifying themselves for vigorous thought and research. There are men and women now in the decline of life who have never recovered from the effects of intemperate reading. The habit, formed in early years, has grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength; and their efforts to overcome it, though determined, have been only partially successful. Many have never recovered their original vigor of mind. All attempts to become practical Christians end with the desire. They cannot be truly Christlike, and continue to feed the mind upon this class of literature. Nor is the physical effect less disastrous. The nervous system is unnecessarily taxed by this passion for reading. In some cases, youth, and even those of mature age, have been afflicted with paralysis from no other cause than excess in reading. The mind was kept under constant excitement, until the delicate machinery of the brain became so weakened that it could not act, and paralysis was the result. {FE 163.1}

11. What are two areas primarily associated with temperance? **Daniel 1:5**

**EGW:** Nowhere shall we find a more comprehensive and forcible illustration of true temperance and its attendant blessings than in the history of the youthful Daniel and his associates in the court of Babylon. When they were selected to be taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans, that they might "stand in the king's palace," "the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank." "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank." Not only did these young men

decline to drink the king's wine, but they refrained from the luxuries of his table. They obeyed the divine law, both natural and moral. With their habits of self-denial were coupled earnestness of purpose, diligence, and steadfastness. And the result shows the wisdom of their course. {HS 209.6}

12. What is the primary thing associated with temperance and condemned especially in excess?

**Ephesians 5:18**

**EGW:** For those who would regain or preserve health there is a lesson in the words of Scripture, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Ephesians 5:18. Not through the excitement or oblivion produced by unnatural or unhealthful stimulants; not through indulgence of the lower appetites or passions, is to be found true healing or refreshment for the body or the soul. Among the sick are many who are without God and without hope. They suffer from ungratified desires, disordered passions, and the condemnation of their own consciences; they are losing their hold upon this life, and they have no prospect for the life to come. Let not the attendants upon the sick hope to benefit these patients by granting them frivolous, exciting indulgences. These have been the curse of their lives. The hungry, thirsting soul will continue to hunger and thirst so long as it seeks to find satisfaction here. Those who drink at the fountain of selfish pleasure are deceived. They mistake hilarity for strength, and when the excitement ceases, their inspiration ends, and they are left to discontent and despondency. {MH 246.2}

13. To be temperate in our viewing things in movies and TV, what should not be set before our eyes?

**Psalms 101:3**

**EGW:** The vows of David recorded in Psalm 101 should be the vows of all upon whom rest the responsibilities of guarding the influences of the home. David declared: "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. . . . I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave unto me. A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person." {RH, October 12, 1911 par. 12}

14. To be temperate in our hearing things, what should we be careful in listening to? **Ecclesiastes 2:8**

**EGW:** We as Christians should stand firmly in defense of temperance. There is no class of persons capable of accomplishing more and effecting the object more readily than the God-fearing Bible youth. In this age the young men of our cities should unite in a firm, decided army to set their faces as a flint against every form of selfish, health-destroying indulgence. What a power they might be for good! How many they might save from becoming demoralized because they visit the halls and

gardens fitted up with music and every attraction to allure the youth! Intemperance and licentiousness and profanity are sisters. {RH, April 19, 1887 par. 10}

15. What activity should we refrain from that seems so intemperate in society today? **1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Genesis 39:11-12**

**EGW:** "He that is joined to the Lord"--bound up with Christ in the covenant of grace--"is one spirit." "Flee fornication." Do not stop for one moment to reason. Satan would rejoice to see you overthrown by temptation. Do not stop to argue the case with your weak conscience. Turn away from the first step of transgression. {SpTB15 18.6}

Would that the example of Joseph might be followed by all who claim to be wise, who feel competent in their own strength to discharge the duties of life. A wise man will not be governed and controlled by his appetite and passions, but will control and govern them. He will draw nigh to God, striving to prepare mind and body to discharge aright the duties of life. {SpTB15 19.1}

16. What does the Bible call for all, but women specifically, to also be temperate or modest in? **1 Timothy 2:9, Matthew 3:4**

**EGW:** John separated himself from friends and from the luxuries of life. The simplicity of his dress, a garment woven of camel's hair, was a standing rebuke to the extravagance and display of the Jewish priests, and of the people generally. His diet, purely vegetable, of locusts and wild honey, was a rebuke to the indulgence of appetite and the gluttony that everywhere prevailed. The prophet Malachi declares: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Here the prophet describes the character of the work. Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ's first advent. The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred. Temperance in all things is to be connected with the message, to turn the people of God from their idolatry, their gluttony, and their extravagance in dress and other things. {3T 62.1}

17. What would a temperate person balance in their lives? **Proverbs 18:9, Proverbs 22:29**

**EGW:** The mind does not wear out nor break down so often on account of diligent employment and hard study as on account of eating improper food at improper times, and of careless inattention to

the laws of health.... Irregular hours for eating and sleeping sap the brain forces. The apostle Paul declares that he who would be successful in reaching a high standard of godliness must be temperate in all things. Eating, drinking, and dressing all have a direct bearing upon our spiritual advancement. --YI, May 31, 1894. {2MCP 388.1}

18. In the opposite of the word "work", what should we also be balanced with? **Proverbs 6:9, Proverbs 3:24**

**EGW:** Care needs to be exercised in regard to the regulation of hours for sleeping and laboring. We must take periods of rest, periods of recreation, periods for contemplation. . . . The principles of temperance have a wider range than many think. {AH 494.4}

19. In good things, what is another word is associated with being temperate? **Philippians 4:5**

**EGW:** Not all who profess to believe in dietetic reform are really reformers. With many persons the reform consists merely in discarding certain unwholesome foods. They do not understand clearly the principles of health, and their tables, still loaded with harmful dainties, are far from being an example of Christian temperance and moderation. {MH 318.1}

20. In evil things, how shall we be temperate? **John 5:14, Proverbs 4:15**

**EGW:** Soon after, Jesus met the man he had healed in the temple. He had come to bring a trespass-offering, a sin-offering, and a thank-offering for the great mercy he had received. Jesus, finding him among the worshipers, made himself known to him. The great Physician addressed him with a timely warning, "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." He who had suffered for thirty-eight years, as the result, in part, of his own dissipation, was thus plainly warned to avoid the sins that had caused him such suffering. {2SP 161.1}

21. What ought to be practiced by all of Jesus' disciples? **Matthew 16:24**

**EGW:** The light that the Lord has given on this subject in His word is plain, and men will be tested and tried in many ways to see if they will heed it. Every church, every family, needs to be instructed

in regard to Christian temperance. All should know how to eat and drink in order to preserve health. We are amid the closing scenes of this world's history, and there should be harmonious action in the ranks of Sabbathkeepers. Those who stand aloof from the great work of instructing the people upon this question do not follow where the Great Physician leads the way. If any man will come after Me," Christ said, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matthew 16:24. {6T 378.2}