

Temperance: Mind Over Matter

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet Sources)

Introduction:

- A. When we think of temperance, what commonly comes to mind?
 - 1. Alcohol; but, it can be related to anything addictive or harmful: drugs, video games, otc medicines, porn, television
 - 2. Gal 5:22-23; 2Peter 1:5-11; 1Cor. 9:24-25, 6:12-13
- B. Temperance - egkrateuomai - "to exercise self-restraint or self-control in diet and chastity; contain, be temperate; generic in form and application"
 - 1. Generic because there is a multitude of sins whereby one can become entangled and apparently unable to break free
 - 2. "Be temperate is a verb which is always implies an action; it is in the present tense and indicative mood.
 - 3. In short, everyone has the ability to refrain from sin that is destructive both to the spirit, flesh, and influence - Rom. 8:1-8

I. MATTER OVER MIND

- A. Thought - Sin always begins with a thought - James 1:13-15; Rom. 12:2
- B. Consideration - Contemplating sin in the mind - Psalm 4:4; Mark 7:18-23
- C. Attitude - Form or adjust a belief about the sin; begin to rationalize
 - 1. Prov. 4:23, 14:9, 17:15; 1Kings 16:31
- D. Action - Gives himself enough rationale to entertain the desires of the flesh, so he performs the sin he pondered - Psalm 7:14; Prov. 29:6
- E. Habit - At this stage the person has done it a number of times and gives it an ongoing place in his life - John 8:34; 2Peter 2:18-19
- F. Addiction - At this point the person has become addicted, and because of inertia and the power of sin, he becomes reprobate; he will be unable to remove it from his life
 - 1. Reprobate - a mind void of judgment or an un-approving mind (Strongs)
 - 2. Heb. 3:13; Rom. 1:28; 2Tim. 3:8; Titus 1:16
- G. At this point it is too late - Heb. 6:4-6, 10:26-27; Rom. 7:22-25

II. MIND OVER MATTER

- A. Realize that giving in to addition is sin and not a psychological deficiency or disease.
 - 1. Men minimize sin with familiarity, amusement, pop psychology, euphemisms, and comparisons - Prov. 14:9, 10:23
- B. Take responsibility for your actions
 - 1. Gen. 3:11-13; Matt. 27:24; Luke 19:8; 1Tim. 1:12-15
- C. Realize you cannot do it alone and seek God's help - 2Cor. 10:3-5; Phil 4:13
- D. Destroy everything associated with the sin including risky associations
 - 1. Eph. 4:22; Mark 9:43-47
- E. Begin rebuilding and reclaiming your mind - Eph. 4:23; Rom. 13:13-14, 12:1-2
- F. Get busy in God's work - Eph. 4:24, 2:10
- G. Rest in the promises of God - Heb. 13:5; Matt. 28:20; 1Peter 5:10; 2Tim. 4:8

“I have absolutely no pleasure in the stimulants in which I sometimes so madly indulge. It has not been in the pursuit of pleasure that I have periled life and reputation and reason. It has been the desperate attempt to escape from torturing memories, from a sense of insupportable loneliness and a dread of some strange impending doom. When I could stop I didn't want to, and now that I want to stop, I cannot.” (Edgar Allan Poe)
On October 3, 1849, Poe was found on the streets of Baltimore delirious from the long term effects of alcoholism. He never recovered coherency, and died four days later in agony at Washington College Hospital.