

Temperance, Galatians 5:23, 1 Samuel 26:5-12

Overview and Study Leader's Guide

Temperance and 'Self-Control'

It should be understood that ***“temperance”*** 1611 Holy Bible is a basic term that includes ***“self-control”*** 1984, 2011 NIVs, NKJV but embodies much more than ***“self-control”*** as will be seen. The term ***“self-control”*** is in fact misleading. It must be understood as *God* controlling self, not self-effort as such, which is what the term implies. The scripture condemns self-effort as ***“will worship”*** Colossians 2:23, such as the Devil exercised in Isaiah 14:13, 14. Note the five ***“I will”*** statements in those verses. So NIV, NKJV users should remember that ***“self-control”*** must be perceived as *Spirit control of self* not ***“self-control”*** as such. Better yet, NIV, NKJV users are urged to discard the NIV, NKJV as Bibles, which they are not, being instead corruptions of scripture, 2 Corinthians 2:17 (the word ***“corrupt”*** has been *changed* in the NIVs, NKJV, naturally), and stick with the 1611 Holy Bible ***“the scripture of truth”*** Daniel 10:21.

Concerning ***“temperance”*** Galatians 5:23, this particular aspect of ***“the fruit of the Spirit”*** Galatians 5:22 and indeed others may be illustrated from the life of King David. The passage under consideration for that purpose is as follows.

1 Samuel 26:5-12

“And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him.

“Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

“So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

“Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.

“And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?

“David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.

“The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

“So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.”

The Spirit in the Old and New Testaments

Before addressing the above passage, it should be understood that the Spirit of God bears a different relationship to the believer in the Old and New Testaments. In the New Testament, the Spirit of God permanently indwells the Christian believer, as the Lord Jesus Christ promised.

John 14:16, 17 ***“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”***

And as the Apostle Paul shows.

1 Corinthians 6:19 ***“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”***

As such, the Christian believer must always be ***“the temple of the Holy Ghost.”*** Note that ***“Ghost”*** is an Old English word¹ denoting ‘God’s host,’ so that the Holy Ghost is therefore God Himself, who indwells the Christian believer *permanently*. The term ***“Holy Ghost”*** is therefore found only in the New Testament.

In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God came *upon* men, as He did with Samson, David and Saul, Judges 14:19, 1 Samuel 10:10, 16:13. He also came *in* men, as He did with David because David was a prophet of God, Acts 2:30. 1 Peter 1:10, 11 state that ***“the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify.”***

But the Spirit of God did not permanently indwell or abide with men in the Old Testament. Samson loses the Spirit of God but gets Him back, Judges 16:20, 28-30, Saul loses the Spirit of God and doesn’t get Him back, 1 Samuel 16:14, 28:16, David is danger of losing the Spirit of God and he prays, ***“Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me”*** Psalm 51:11. The Spirit of God remains with David in answer to his prayer, because David has ***“sure mercies”*** from God, Isaiah 55:3, Acts 13:34.

It’s important to get those distinctions. In partaking of ***“sure mercies”*** from God, David is an exceptional Old Testament figure. He therefore manifests ***“the fruit of the Spirit”*** Galatians 5:22, as seen in 1 Samuel 26:5-12 including ***“temperance.”*** (At this point, the **Study Questions** may be used.)

David and Spiritual Fruit

Two other passages are important with respect to 1 Samuel 26:5-12. They refer to Saul in the cave near *“the rocks of the wild goats”* 1 Samuel 24:2.

1 Samuel 24:4, 6, 7 *“And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee...And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD’S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD. So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul...”*

1 Samuel 24:18, 19, Saul speaking *“And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.”*

Clearly it was established practice then to take out your enemy if you got the drop on him. David actually does this in 2 Samuel 8:2, where he puts to death two-thirds of the Moabites he captures*. Here he shows restraint with Saul, not once but twice. He does so in obedience to God’s command in Psalm 105:15 *“Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.”*

Saul is the anointed king of Israel *and* a prophet, 1 Samuel 10:1, 10, 11.

*Note that 2 Samuel 8:2 is an excellent *scriptural* illustration of the heresy of 5-Point Calvinism, with respect to *Unconditional Election*, the first of the 5 Points upon which the other four depend. Unconditional Election teaches that God arbitrarily elects or chooses some folk for salvation and the rest for damnation. That is in effect what King David does with the Moabites. It was a cruel and unjust act by King David, who wasn’t always Spirit-filled – note by contrast Elisha’s humane treatment of prisoners that Paul espouses in the New Testament as part of Church Age Christian doctrine, 2 Kings 6:21-23, Romans 12:20 - and Calvin’s God is a cruel and unjust God. See *The Other Side of Calvinism* by Dr Laurence M. Vance for the definitive work on 5-Point Calvinism.

David also spares Saul in spite of having motive, opportunity and peer pressure to kill him, each time, even when his peers purported to be speaking for God, because God had clearly *allowed* the situation, verse 23. This is like Catholic Crusaders² who would scream *“God wills it!”* when they massacred hostages and Catholic Hitler³ who insisted that he was doing the Lord’s work in exterminating Jews (*“defending”* himself, he said. He was a spin doctor long before the term was invented). This is also like the Jesuits⁴ declaring that *“It is just to exterminate heretical kings”* and the Muslims⁵ chanting *“Behead those who insult Islam!”* They should note that God avenges cruelty, Psalm 55:23, e.g. Saul, 1 Samuel 22, 31.

In sparing Saul, David shows several of *“the fruit of the Spirit.”*

“Love.” David shows a love for God’s word because he obeys it and a love for his enemy because he spares him.

“Peace.” This is an interesting one. Although David loses the plot in 1 Samuel 27, 1 Samuel 26 is the last time Saul persecutes him.

1 Samuel 26:21 ***“Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.”***

Note in passing the household expression ***“played the fool.”*** Saved and unsaved folk are quoting this Book all the time and never realise it. If you’ve ever wished anyone ***“a good day”*** Esther 8:17 or used expressions like ***“by the sea side”*** with a ***“sea side...resort”*** Mark 2:13, ***“many a time”*** Psalm 78:38, ***“learned by experience”*** Genesis 30:27, ***“hand made”*** Isaiah 66:2 and (generically) ***“God save the king”*** 1 Samuel 10:24, 2 Samuel 16:16 twice, 2 Kings 11:12, 2 Chronicles 23:11, you’re quoting this Book. The expression ***“known unto God”*** for our unknown war dead buried in Commonwealth War Graves Cemeteries is also from this Book, Acts 15:18, Philippians 4:6.

Concerning ***“peace,”*** Proverbs 16:7 states ***“When a man’s ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”***

Because David’s ways please the Lord, his spiritual life brings forth the fruit of peace in a very tense situation.

“Longsuffering.” David passes up two opportunities to dispatch his persecutor. He is prepared to suffer long, rather than go against God’s command.

“Gentleness, goodness.” In resisting peer pressure the way he does, David shows that he is a good man and a true gentleman. The best definition of a gentleman is: a gentle man. David, in showing love for his enemy, does good to him and certainly treats him gently.

“Faith.” David does show faith because he commits the situation to God.

1 Samuel 26:10 ***“David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.”***

David is prepared to let go and let God. That is faith.

“Meekness.” David does show meekness in the circumstances. He is forthright in addressing Saul but not spiteful.

1 Samuel 26:19 ***“Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the LORD have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the LORD; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, Go, serve other gods.”***

David is not out for personal revenge, *even though God created the opportunity for it*, verse 23. He wants to be right with God and the king and he wants ***“the punishment***

of evil doers” 1 Peter 2:14 to be carried out, as necessary. None of this has to do with self on David’s part and he is thereby showing **“meekness.”**

“Temperance.” Last but not least, David does display temperance in dealing with Saul. As indicated, he does not give in to personal motive, opportunity and peer pressure, even when he gets not one but two opportunities to kill Saul and his peers are telling him, *“God wills it!”*

That kind of restraint, of *Spirit-controlled* self-control is part of **“temperance”** but so are all the other fruit of the Spirit that David has displayed to this point. Together, they are **“temperance.”** 1 Samuel 18:14 states, **“And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him.”** **“Temperance”** is really wise or even-tempered behaviour that doesn’t give in to pressure, in dependence upon God, according to James 3:17.

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

Note the overlap with Galatians 5:22, 23. **“Temperance”** is the bringing together of all the fruit of the Spirit in right proportion and perfect consistency. That in itself is a spiritual fruit.

“Temperance” in Scripture

A scriptural principle for studying any part of the scriptures is to compare scripture with scripture. One part of the scripture sheds light on another, as the Psalmist shows. Psalm 119:130 says *“The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”*

The Lord Jesus Christ says in John 6:63 *“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”*

So Paul is talking about comparing scripture with scripture when he says in 1 Corinthians 2:13 *“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”*

In sum, the word **“temperance”** is found 3 times in the scripture, each time in the New Testament, Acts 24:25, Galatians 5:23, 2 Peter 1:6. The related word **“temperate”** is found 3 times, again each time in the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 9:25, Titus 1:8, 2:2. Note in passing that in Titus 1:8, 2:2, the word **“temperate”** is associated with the word **“sober”** so *The Women’s Christian Temperance Union*⁶ is quite scriptural. This is its pledge for teenage members.

“I promise, by the help of God, never to use alcoholic beverages, other narcotics, or tobacco, and to encourage everyone else to do the same, fulfilling the command, ‘keep thyself pure’” 1 Timothy 5:22. That’s quite refreshing, compared to the drunken ‘ladettes’ who infest the high streets of our towns and cities after closing time.

The New Testament verses show **“temperance”** and **“temperate”** as part of godly living but basic insights into the words are found in the Old Testament.

When you apply the principle of comparing scripture with scripture to a word like **“temperance”** the first occurrence of the word, or one of its derivatives, will be important. The word **“tempered”** is related to **“temperance”** and it first occurs in Exodus 29, 30.

Exodus 29:2 *“And unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil: of wheaten flour shalt thou make them.”*

Exodus 30:34, 35 *“And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight: And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy.”*

A similar verse occurs in Ezekiel 46:10.

Ezekiel 46:14 *“And thou shalt prepare a meat offering for it every morning, the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to temper with the fine flour; a meat offering continually by a perpetual ordinance unto the LORD.”*

5 other verses are important in this context. The first 4 refer to **“an holy anointing oil,”** the 5th to the perfume of Exodus 30:34, 35.

Exodus 30:25 *“And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil.”*

Exodus 30:30 *“And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.”*

Exodus 30:32 *“Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you.”*

Exodus 30:33 *“Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people.”*

Exodus 30:37 *“And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD.”*

The Nature of “Temperance”

Several related terms emerge; *“tempered,” “temper,” “anointed,” “holy anointing oil,” “a like weight,” “confection,” “compound,” “composition.”*

In Exodus 29:2, *“tempered”* is the same as *“anointed.”* When oil is applied to *“temper”* bread and cakes or flour, Ezekiel 46:10, it will infuse and saturate the texture. In scripture, oil often pictures the Spirit of God, because just as oil is used for anointing, Exodus 30:25, 30, 32, the Lord Jesus Christ was anointed with the Spirit of God and therefore He was full of the Spirit of God, fully infused.

Acts 10:38 *“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”*

Luke 4:1 *“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”*

According to the Apostle Paul, in the familiar passages on communion, bread pictures the body of the Lord Jesus Christ *“broken for you”* 1 Corinthians 11:24 and also the body of Christian believers.

1 Corinthians 10:17 *“For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.”*

Every Christian is anointed with the Spirit of God, Who *“shall teach you all things”* John 14:26, just as the anointing does and *“is truth”* 1 John 5:6, just as the anointing is. The Apostle John actually calls the Spirit of God *“the anointing.”*

1 John 2:27 *“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”*

Just like the bread, cakes and flour in Exodus 29:2, Ezekiel 46:10, every Christian should be fully infused or *“tempered”* as Paul says in Ephesians 5:18, *“be filled with the Spirit.”* You have to ask God to rid you of blockages so you can be fully infused or *“tempered”* with the Spirit of God.

This anointing or tempering is pictured with the **“holy anointing oil”** as applied to Aaron and his sons. It’s intended only for the priests of the Lord, just as the Spirit of God only anoints or infuses Christian believers, who are **“a royal priesthood”** 1 Peter 2:9*. Observe that this oil is a **“compound”** or **“composition.”** These are very strong words. A compound is actually a new substance and the Spirit of God makes you **“new creature”** in Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:17 and a composition is the word used for musical works, so the Spirit of God should make the believers’ lives a symphony unto the Lord, Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, **“singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”**

*The priesthood of all believers, 1 Peter 2:5, 9, is a major reason why no preacher or teacher has any business going to ‘the Greek’ etc. so-called to preach or teach the scriptures. Those that do are no different from 33rd Degree Royal Arch Masons⁷ with respect to **“the scripture of truth”** Daniel 10:21.

Observe in addition that components of the oil are designated in specific quantities, Exodus 30:23, 24. The same is true of the perfume in Exodus 30:34, 35, 37, except that the specification is simpler because the components are **“of a like weight.”** But they are said to be **“tempered together”** as **“a confection”** or **“composition”** that is fully consistent with all the right components in the right proportions such that the result is **“pure and holy.”**

With these components **“tempered together”** as **“a confection”** or **“composition”** that is **“pure and holy,”** you have a picture of a Christian fully infused with the Spirit of God. He manifests the fruit of the Spirit of God, in right proportion or balance, like each of the components of the **“composition,”** like David behaving **“himself wisely in all his ways”** and not giving way under pressure, however subtly or severely applied. He is **“temperate.”** Such a man could be described as resilient, or balanced.

By contrast, that which is **“untempered”** does give way under pressure.

Ezekiel 13:10 **“Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar.”**

Ezekiel 13:11 **“Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it.”**

Ezekiel 13:14 **“So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.”**

The untempered mortar is not of the right consistency or composition. Its wall is like the ungodly image of Daniel 2 so God knocks it down, whereas He builds up the temperate man, such as David because **“the LORD was with him”** 1 Samuel 18:14.

And the temperate man is like the perfume of Exodus 30:34, 35, 37, as Paul explains in 2 Corinthians 2:15, 16, **“For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them**

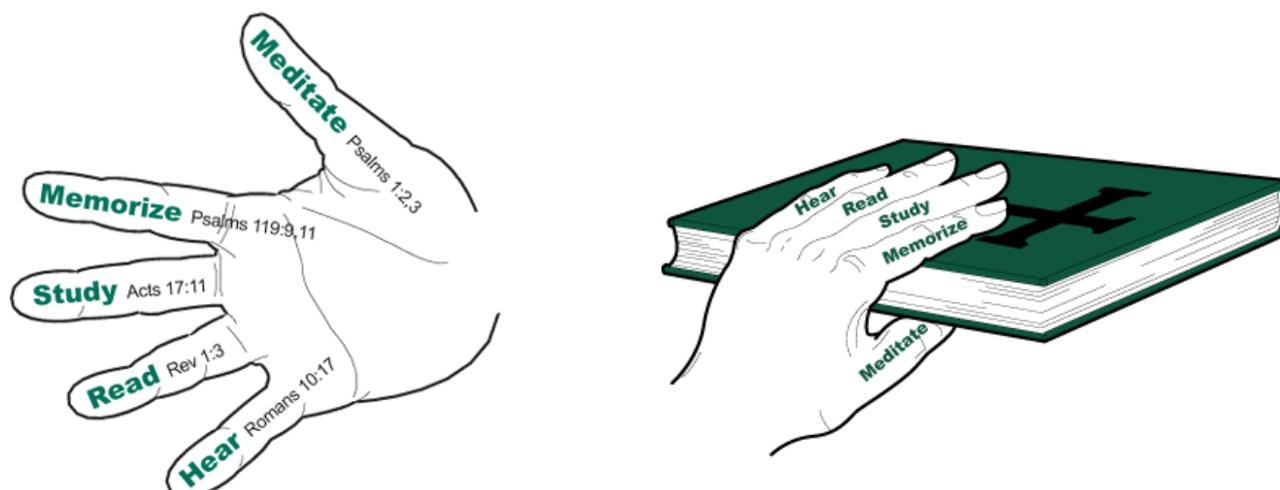
that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life...”

I believe that is “*temperance*” in action, the resilient, even-tempered outward manifestation of the Spiritual life infused by God’s anointing. Such a man is as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:58, is “*steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.*”

Finally, a practical application, with respect to the word of God itself and a “*tempered*” approach to learning the scripture, courtesy of *The Navigators*.

“Temperance” and the Bible – From *The Navigators*⁸

THE WORD HAND



The “Word Hand” shows five very important methods of learning from the Bible.

Hearing

Romans 10:17. Hearing the Word from godly pastors and teachers provides insight into others’ study of the Scriptures as well as stimulating your own appetite for the Word.

Reading

Revelation 1:3. Reading the Bible gives an overall picture of God’s Word. Many people find it helpful to use a daily reading program which takes them systematically through the Bible.

Studying

Acts 17:11. Studying the Scriptures leads to personal discoveries of God’s truths. Writing down these discoveries helps you organize and remember them.

Memorizing

Psalm 119:9, 11. Memorizing God’s Word enables use of the Sword of the Spirit to overcome Satan and temptations...to have it readily available for witnessing or helping others with a “word in season.”

Note especially that after 24 hours you may accurately remember:

- 5% of what you hear
- 15% of what you read
- 35% of what you study
- But **100%** of what you actually memorise.

Meditating

Psalm 1:2, 3. Meditation is the thumb of the Word Hand, for it is used in conjunction with each of the other methods. Only as you meditate on God's Word - thinking of its meaning and application in your life - will you discover its transforming power at work within you.

Conclusion

Many Christian believers including this writer can testify to this transforming power of the word of God achieved by means of this "***tempered***" approach to the scriptures.

Study Questions, Sample Answers

1. **What do you learn about David in 1 Samuel 26:5-12, 19?**
 - Leads from the front, tempts others to faith, verse 6
 - Gives clear directions, with specific explanations, verses 9-11
 - Fears God, Nehemiah 5:15, commands obedience, verses 9-12
 - Speaks truthfully and to the point, verse 19
2. **What fruit of the Spirit does David show in 1 Samuel 26:5-12, 19?**
 - See earlier study, **David and Spiritual Fruit**
3. **How does David benefit from resisting the ‘quick fix’ in verse 8?**
 - Avoids God’s judgement, 2 Samuel 1:14-16, 3:29, 1 Chronicles 10:13
 - Causes Saul to repent from harming him, 1 Samuel 26:21
 - Becomes king, fulfils God’s purpose, 1 Samuel 16:1, 2 Samuel 5:5
 - Experiences God’s deliverance, 2 Samuel 22:1 and spiritual **“joy”**
4. **How could David’s example in 1 Samuel 26:5-12, 19 apply today?**
 - **“Be not conformed to this world”** Romans 12:2
 - **“Prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”** Romans 12:2
 - **“Don’t sacrifice the permanent on the altar of the immediate”** – Dr. Bob Jones Senior
 - Maintain **“sound speech, that cannot be condemned”** Titus 2:8
5. **How could you make sure the Spirit of God ‘infused’ you?**
 - Ask God that you **“be filled with the Spirit”** Ephesians 5:18
 - **“Grieve not the...Spirit”** Ephesians 4:30, e.g. by neglecting the scripture
 - **“Quench not the Spirit”** 1 Thessalonians 5:19, e.g. by excessive activity
6. **How could young believers learn “temperance”?**
 - Walk **“in the fear of the Lord...”** Acts 9:31
 - **“Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin...”** Romans 6:11
 - **“Make not provision for the flesh...”** Romans 13:14

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References

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⁴ *Double Cross*, Chick Publications

⁵ www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article36799.ece

⁶ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woman's_Christian_Temperance_Union

⁷ www.timefortruth.co.uk/why-av-only/james-white-dr-divietro-and-dawaite.php *Seven aspects of 'the Greek' & Seven aspects of 'in the Greek' - the heresy of Waite's 'Greek-onlyism'/'originals-onlyism' EXPOSED!*

⁸ www.navigators.org/us/resources/