Pastor Rick Baker

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## These Things

# SELF-CONTROL

2 Peter 1:6

Tuesday night Bickergate!

In the ancient Hellenistic period this quality was the ability to be untouched by the pressure of people, agendas, or emotions.

**What is biblical self-control?**

Self-control (enkrateia) is a product (fruit) of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal 5:23) and divine energy to avoid falling prey to temptations (especially sensual) and to lead a stable and disciplined life (Acts 24:25).

* Having power from within over your powers/strength of might (Eph. 1:19; 6:10).
* A call to live responsibly and not destabilize your life or that of your family/ church (Is. 3:1-4,12; Rom. 1:18f; Rev. 6:5-6).
* The inner strength to say no to sin—the spiritual credential needed to become battle-hardened (Heb. 3:12-13; 2 Pet. 2:2; 3:3)—not so much “self” as control from within.
* BUT…It is NOT “let go and let God”, but rather, get God and do right—God doesn’t promise to animate passivity anywhere in Scripture (Rom. 6:13; 12:1)—“paristemi” place beside.

**Why do we need self-control?**

* “Sin always aims at the uttermost; the smallest sin is but one step to the biggest and most treacherous sin.” (John Owen)—called to mastery over your life; no longer ruled by evil desires.

How an Affair Happens (Tim Challies from Tom Nelson)

* + - * + Eliminate intimacy (create a need)
        + Encounter alternative attractiveness
        + Enjoy that person
        + Expedite opportunities
        + Express your feelings openly
        + Experience the enjoyment physically
* “There is a deceit to sin that tends to the hardening of your hearts from the fear of God.” (John Owen) –believable lies and attractive alternatives (Jer. 6:13-21)
* Practical training for ruling the universe (2 Tim. 2:12)—getting readied for eternal assignments!

**How can you invest in this kind of disciplined life of self-control?**

* Singlemindedness in loyalty to Christ—no rationalization of exceptions (2 Cor. 5:14; 2 Tim. 2:1-7)
* Purity of purpose—pursue holiness in everything (Rom. 6:16; 7:14-15, 18-19)
* Humility of heart—a life repenting of pride (1 Pet. 5:5,6 )
* Fasting—learning how to say no to the most basic needs, trains in saying no to ungodliness (Ps. 35:13; 69:10; 1Cor. 6:12; 9:27; Titus 2:12 )—“we cover up wrong controls with food and other good things” (Foster).
* Lock fully into God’s purpose for your life and the goals he sets for you according to his will—don’t get pulled to the right or the left (Is. 30:21; Rom. 12:1,2) This will prevent the pull of a bad direction gaining any traction.