

## Learning to possess our Vessels

Self-control (temperance) means that we have control over our bodies and our minds. Actions and thoughts do not control us; we control what we think, and what we do. When we know something is wrong, but we do it anyway, we aren't controlled by the fruit of the Spirit, one of which is self-control. When we feel like doing something we know we shouldn't, we are being tempted. Everyone is tempted to do wrong things sometimes. Even Jesus was tempted. We all sin and give into temptations now and again, but Jesus exercised God's spirit of self-control and never sinned.

*Heb. 4:15*

Growing up, Jesus must have been tempted many times to do wrong things, but God's Spirit enabled Him to resist temptation. The Bible tells of a time, just before He began His earthly ministry, when Jesus had to exercise a great deal of self-control, when He was tempted by the greatest of tempters, Satan the devil.

*Mat. 4:3*

Satan tried to destroy Jesus. Our battles aren't as big as the ones Jesus faced. But we do have many temptations, just like Jesus did. Jesus knew what was written in God's Word, and He didn't fall for Satan's tricks. If we know God's Word we, too, will know right from wrong. Jesus is our example and our strength. When we are tempted to do wrong we should rely upon the Word of God and remember how much God loves us and the trials and suffering He went through for us. That will help us resist the devil.

*John 3:16*

*John 15:13*

*Jas. 4:7 - Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

Because Jesus was tempted He knows what it is like to suffer temptation. When we are tempted and ask for help Jesus understands. He tells the Father what it's like to be human, and God gives us the help we need to resist temptation.

*Heb. 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are-- yet was without sin.*

*Heb 2:18*

Practicing self-control (temperance) means we say no to things that might harm our bodies or our minds. It's not always easy to say, 'That's enough'. That's why we need God's spirit of self-control. Some habits are hard to break. The best way to deal with bad habits is not to start them in the first place. Sometimes people lead us into bad things they think are fun. They don't know that doing such things can lead to a lot of trouble. God tells us that a Christian's body is the temple of His Spirit.