

INTRODUCTION

Jesus of Nazareth died the cruel death of crucifixion, being nailed to a wooden cross. There were two other men also crucified that day. They were being punished for crimes they had committed. But Jesus of Nazareth had done no wrong. Not only was He innocent of any crimes, but He was entirely innocent of any wrong at all. In fact, He is the only man who has lived His whole life on this earth utterly blameless. So He didn't deserve to die on that cross, but He died willingly, as a substitute for sinners who deserved it. After Jesus died, He was buried. But on the third day, which was the first day of the week, early in the morning, He rose from the dead, and is now alive forever.

Jesus has sent our men all over the world preaching that everyone everywhere should repent and be forgiven their sins; should believe in Him and look to be raised from the dead to eternal life with Him when He comes again on the last day. That good news, that gospel, is true. In the name of Jesus Christ there is full forgiveness of sins and everlasting life for all who repent and believe in Him.

All who so repent and so believe, in addition to the resurrection from the dead we expect at the last day, also are already raised from the dead in a way that you can't see. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, sent His Holy Spirit to work in us, making such a spiritual change in us that it is rightly called a new birth or being raised with Christ.

Since you who believe in Jesus Christ were so raised with Christ, seek those things which are of Christ in heaven above, where He sits enthroned at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. Instead of admiring the character of the prominent men and women of the world, in all their pride and vain glory, admire the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, in all His humility and true glory. As you follow Jesus Christ as His disciple, as you stumble forward through this life, do not aspire to be like the rich and the famous in Hollywood or Washington, but like the Lord Jesus Christ, who made Himself poor and despised for our sakes.

Whenever the times come for you to help decide what men can be set in office in Christ's church, to shepherd it through this world on the Lord Jesus's behalf until He comes, do not fall into the thinking that comes natural to our sinful flesh, but think of men in light of the beautiful character of Christ, as described in the Bible, where it says that a bishop must be blameless.

TEXT

1 Timothy 3:1-2a

BODY

I. Temperate or Sober

- A. The first two terms we see here describing the qualities of a man who is “blameless” both mean about the same thing: temperate or sober. In fact, some of our Bibles translate the first word as “temperate,” the second word as “sober,” while other of our Bibles do the opposite!
- B. Both of these terms describe a man whose way of living is moderate: not characterized by alarming extremes, but well within what is rightly considered normal for a Christian; both indicate essentially the same kind of speech and conduct: that which is modest, reasonable, prudent
- C. But each of these first two words indicates a different working by which temperance or sobriety is maintained in a person.

II. Temperate or Sober By Watching or Being Vigilant Instead of Being Sleepy or Drunken or Lazy

A. The meaning of the word G3524 *nephaleos*

1. literally watching or vigilant
2. used to mean “not drunk”
3. used to mean temperate or sober-minded

B. The concept

1. a man is watchful, attentive, alert, on guard
2. so temptation does not take him by surprise
3. so he is able to maintain a steady, moderate, temperate behavior

C. Examples

1. Peter on the night Jesus was betrayed and arrested
 - a) he was told by our Lord Jesus to watch and pray
 - b) but he was not watchful or vigilant
 - c) so temptations took him by surprise
 - d) he drew his sword and struck, injuring a person, when that was not called for
 - e) later he swore he didn't even know Jesus
2. our Lord Jesus on that same night
 - a) he watched and prayed
 - b) temptation did not take Him by surprise; He was ready for it; He had prayed for help from God the Father, which help He received in the strength of the Holy Spirit
 - c) so He did not strike those who came to arrest Him; and He did not deny His duty, as God the Father had ordained for Him

D. In order for a man to be chosen by the church to be a bishop, he must be blameless. Part of what that means is that he must be watchful or vigilant regarding his conduct, to maintain himself in temperance and sobriety. He knows the devil prowls like a lion, seeking whom he may devour. So he takes proper care, that temptation cannot easily sneak up on him and overtake him.

E. Examples

1. Vice President Pence has been criticised by his political opponents for a certain procedure that he maintains: he does not spend any time alone with a woman other than his wife
2. in a seminary class, I was advised to have a glass-paned door to my office

III. Temperate or Sober By Thinking Soundly Instead of Obeying the Passions

A. The meaning of the word

1. G4998 *sophrone* we had this word in another form when we studied how a Christian woman is to adorn herself with shamefastness and sobriety; that second word, “sobriety,” is from this term; so you can call on what you learned at that time
2. literally “safe in the guts”
3. used to mean temperate or sober-minded or self-controlled
4. the desires or passions or lusts or urges are kept safely guarded, under control; everyone is safe from any excessive behavior because those lusts or passions are kept under control

B. Examples

1. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden
2. our Lord Jesus in the Wilderness

C. In order for a man to be chosen by the church to be a bishop, he must be blameless. Part of what that means is that he must reject the lusts of the flesh, living instead by the truth of the Bible, exercising such control over himself that his conduct is temperate and sober.

CONCLUSION

Jesus Christ is utterly blameless in these things. He is temperate; He is sober; and He is those things perfectly.

Then let all sinners still in your sins despair of escaping God’s wrath by any quality of your own, because on the last day, sinners will be judged by Christ’s perfection and found wanting. Then all those not in Christ will be sent for everlasting punishment.

But let every sinner repent and trust in Jesus Christ, calling out for mercy from God through Him. God will forgive all who so trust in Christ.

Let every disciples of Jesus Christ strive to be more and more blameless in this life, more temperate and sober, more modest and self-controlled, while looking in hope to the return of Christ, when we will be perfected in these things through Him.

Let every church choose for its officers those men in whom, from watchfulness and self-control, these qualities of temperance and sobriety are well developed.

Chris - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer: 1 Chronicles 29:11-13

Dillon - Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:31-41

Jeremiah - Congregational Prayer

Jeff - Benediction Romans 15:13

Anna - Prelude (please pick something)

Anna - Trinity 89 "Come, Thou Almighty King"

Rita - Trinity 689 "One Day"

Allison - Trinity 302 "Lord of the Worlds Above"

Strong's Number	Greek	Geneva	KJV	NKJV	ESV
G3524	<i>nephaleos</i>	watching	vigilant	temperate	sober-minded
G4998	<i>sophrone</i>	temperate	sober	sober-minded	self-controlled

These two terms both mean sober or temperate. In our various translations, some use “sober” for the first word, and some for the second. Some use “temperate” for the first word, and some for the second.

The first word means that you are sober or temperate because you are watching or vigilant rather than careless or sleepy or drunken.

The second word means that you are sober or temperate because you are embracing the truth of the Bible, and rejecting the lusts of your flesh, exercising control over yourself

Think of a person who is surrounded by danger. It is his turn to stand watch, so that no danger can sneak up on his camp without him knowing it. But instead of staying awake and watching, he sits down, leans against a tree, and goes to sleep.

Think of a person in the army during a war. He is manning a guard post, so he can detect any enemy attack. But he gets out a bottle and starts drinking, and gets drunk.

(from John Wesley)

G3524 *nephaleos* (adjective) watching, vigilant, temperate, sober-minded

1 Timothy 3:11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

Titus 2:2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

G3525 *nepho* (verb)

1 Thessalonians 5:6-8 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. (7) For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. (8) But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

1 Peter 1:13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and

hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Peter 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

G4998 *sophrone* (adjective) temperate, sober, sober-minded, self-controlled

Titus 1:8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

Titus 2:2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

Titus 2:5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

G4993 *sophroneo* (verb)

Luke 8:35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. [also Mark 5:15]

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

2 Corinthians 5:13 For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

Titus 2:6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

1 Peter 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

G4995 *sophronismos* (noun)

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

G4996 *sophronos* (adverb)

Titus 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

G4997 *sophrosune* (noun)

Acts 26:25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

1 Timothy 2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

1 Timothy 2:15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

nephaleos

Calvin:

The word which we have translated *sober*, Erasmus has translated *vigilantem/watchful*. As the Greek word admits of either signification, the readers may make their own choice.

Trapp:

pale and wan with watching

Poole:

the word here translated *vigilant* signifieth also *sober*, but for that *sofrona* is after used.

He must be one that watcheth his flock, and is attentive to his work; one that will neither be long absent from his flock, nor yet sluggish while he is with them.

Gill:

or wakeful and watchful, who is diligent in his business, and attends to his care and charge; is watchful over himself, his words, and actions; and watches for the souls of men, to do them all the good he can

Wesley:

Lively and zealous...

Clarke:

not + to drink

Watchful; for as one who drinks is apt to sleep, so he who abstains from it is more likely to keep awake, and attend to his work and charge. A bishop has to watch over the Church, and watch for it; and this will require all his care and circumspection.

Barnes:

A minister should have a watchful care over his own conduct. He should be on his guard against sin in any form.

VWS:

In N.T. the meaning of the verb is always metaphorical, to be calm, dispassionate, and circumspect. The A.V. vigilant is too limited. Wise caution may be included; but it is better to render sober, as A.V. in 1Ti_3:11 and Tit_2:2, in the metaphorical sense as opposed to youthful levity.

JFB:

ever on the watch, as sober men alone can be; keenly alive, so as to foresee what ought to be done

Ellicott:

The presbyter or elder should be soberminded, self-restrained, temperate (not merely in wine, but in all things).

Bengel:

This is opposed to slumbering and sloth, which are sins in defect.

Carroll:

"temperate" – and I think that not merely means temperance in drink, but includes temperance in eating. A man may be a glutton as well as a tippler; and without raising the question as to whether the pastor should be a total abstainer, one thing is certain; no man should be made the pastor of a church who drinks intoxicating liquors as a beverage.

sophrone

Calvin:

I have preferred to translate as *temperate*, instead of *sober*, because [it] has a more extensive meaning than sobriety.

Trapp:

that can contain his passions and keep a mean

Poole:

one that is prudent, modest, temperate, that can govern his affections and passions

Gill:

in body, is temperate, and uses moderation in eating and drinking; and in mind, is modest, humble, and prudent

Wesley:

...yet calm and wise.

Clarke:

sober; prudent; a man of a sound mind; having a good understanding, and the complete government of all his passions. A bishop should be a man of learning, of an extensive and well cultivated mind, dispassionate, prudent, and sedate.

Barnes:

Properly, a man of "a sound mind;" one who follows sound reason, and who is not under the control of passion. The idea is, that he should have his desires and passions well regulated. Perhaps the

word "prudent" would come nearer to the meaning of the apostle than any single word which we have.

Ellicott:

better rendered *discreet*

Bengel:

under self-control. It is opposed to vehemence (impetuosity) of mind, which sins in excess.

Carroll:

"Sober minded" – in the sense of grave, the opposite of which is levity. Do not put a man in the office of bishop who is a clown.