

May 20, 2012
"Battling Yourself"

Galatians 5:16-23; Exodus 17:8-16; 1 Corinthians 10:1-12

Who has a greater combat than he that labors to overcome himself? Thomas 'A Kempis

The last fruit of the Spirit we are called to is self-control.

1466 ἐγκράτεια egkrateia {eng-krat'-i-ah}

Meaning: 1) self-control (the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, esp. his sensual appetites)

What appetites / passions does self-control have in view?

Eating, drinking, sexual passions, work vs. laziness, and our thoughts – do we indulge sinful thoughts or fantasies? This would include inordinate TV watching. Money – greed, outbursts of temper – anger, self-pity, etc... basically in anything other than our love for God, we are to be moderate / temperate.

Getting control in one or two of these areas is not what is in view, but getting control, self-control in all is the goal. This is where it becomes a battle!

Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil. (Jeremiah 13:23 NKJ)

I. *Realize how constantly you are dependent upon God's empowering –*

¹¹ **And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. (Exodus 17:11 NKJ)**

1. *This is why self-control is a fruit of the Spirit – It is something we do not have in our flesh. The drunkard thinks he can quit drinking ANYTIME and yet when he actually tries it is much more difficult than he thinks! The same applies to eating right / dieting.*

2. *Not an option for us to replace one sinful passion for another.*
3. *God makes His people dependent upon Him for victories –*

Amalek seemingly won, when they were winning, without God's help, God's people need to pray –
¹⁷ **pray without ceasing, (1Th 5:17 NKJ)**

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (John 15:5 NKJ)

II. *Realize you need a little help from your friends –*
¹² **But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. (Exodus 17:12 NKJ)**

1. *People here have been a big help to me!*
2. *Sometimes we need a special friend, there is no such thing as a spiritual superman.*

III. *Realize God in His providence allows real battles, enemies and temptations into our lives*

¹³ **So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. (Exodus 17:13 NKJ)**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. (Matthew 4:1 NKJ)

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. (James 1:12 NKJ)

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJ)

1. *Satan brings temptation in effort to destroy us –*
⁹ **So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"**

¹⁰ **"Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹ "But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" ¹² And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. (Job 1:9-12 NKJ)**

2. *God allows temptations to test and prove (improve) our faith –*
¹⁰ **But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold. (Job 23:10 NKJ)**

3. *God has also given us the option of praying ourselves away from temptation –*

And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. (Matthew 6:13 NKJ)

A. *Includes full deliverance from the very presence of temptation*

B. *Includes victory over very real temptations*

IV. *Realize how wholeheartedly and intimately God / Jesus Christ is involved with you in your struggle with sin –*

¹⁴ **Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." ¹⁵ And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD-Is-My-Banner; ¹⁶ for he said, "Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." (Exodus 17:14-1 NKJ)**

1. *The fact that God fought for Israel, and would continue to do so, was a matter worthy of memorial!*

2. *The fact that Jesus fought for us against sin and Satan, and continues to do so, is also (even MORESO) worthy of our memorial –*

²¹ **For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2Co 5:21 NKJ)**

²³ **For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. (1Co 11:23-26 NKJ)**

3. *In this we realize the Lord's Supper is primarily for our benefit, it reminds us of what Christ did to save us and what He also CONTINUES to do –*

Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. ²⁶ For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; ²⁷ who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. (Hebrews 7:25-27 NKJ)

V. *Realize if God is for you, no one can be against you*

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What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31 NKJ)

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:31-39 NKJ)

1. *The Lord's Supper reminds us of the LOVE of Christ – Romans 8:35*

2. *The Lord's Supper reminds us of His forgiveness – Romans 8:34*

3. *The Lord's Supper reminds us we will be "conquerors" over sin, self and Satan – Romans 8:38*