

Self-Discipline

TEXT: Philippians 3:7-15

KEY VERSE: He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

— Proverbs 25:28

Without a willingness to discipline oneself, and bring thoughts and actions into conformity with the Word of God, one cannot be a disciple of Jesus. Self-discipline, then, must be practiced not only by ministers and missionaries, but by everyone who desires to make Heaven his home. This means more than just forsaking sin and sinful pleasures. It includes a willingness to develop oneself spiritually and to make sacrifices for the Lord and His work.

1. Just as the physical heart is endangered by excessive fat from overeating, so is the spiritual life endangered by overindulgence in the affairs of this life. Explain how this could happen. See Luke 21:34.

2. How do the goals of Christians differ from those of non-Christians? What verse in our text indicates that Paul had realized this?

3. Referring to question 2, how do the means of reaching these goals differ? How are they alike?

4. Why did Paul say, “forgetting those things which are behind”? What do you think this has to do with self-discipline?

5. In the first half of verse 15, Paul directs his words to “as many as be perfect.” He writes, “Let us therefore . . .” (referring back to verse 3). Who were these people with whom he included himself? See 1 Corinthians 2:6 and 2 Timothy 2:5.

6. What assurance does Paul give to the Christian that God will be faithful to each individual and will help him align his life to the will of God?

7. In your own words, describe the condition of an individual who allows himself to yield to every whim and fancy. Use Ephesians 4:14 as a reference.

8. Self-discipline is a necessity if one is to succeed in attaining any kind of goal. Give your definition of self-discipline and then cite some examples showing why it is vital for spiritual success.