

Lesson 12

How to Develop Self-Discipline (2)

In lesson 11 we saw that to develop self-discipline we must begin with an “I can” attitude, refuse to dwell on what we need to deny, and think before we act. In this lesson we continue with how to develop self-discipline.

Recognize God’s Avenues for Fulfilling Your Desires

Desires and temptations are not wrong. Jesus was tempted, but he did not yield (Heb. 4:15). Desire for some things is natural. What we must realize is that God has a proper way for fulfilling legitimate desires.

Man has the desire to eat. God’s way of fulfilling that desire is that man should work so he can have food to eat (2 Thess. 3:10). His desire to eat should not cause him to violate Bible principles. He can’t steal his food. He must not be a glutton.

Man has a natural sex drive. However, he cannot fulfill that desire any way he chooses. Rather, God’s plan is for that to be fulfilled within the honor of marriage (1 Cor. 7:1-9; Heb. 13:4; Prov. 5).

We have desires to deal with or react to things that are said and done to us. Yet, God has a way for us to handle that. If someone has committed a crime against us, we are told, “do not avenge yourselves” (Rom. 12:19). The next chapter shows that God has a way of dealing with that through the civil government (Rom. 13:1-7).

The point is that our desires have to be controlled or channeled.

If we think of ourselves as stewards of all that we have, we can develop the self-control that we need.

View Yourself as a Steward

We all are stewards (1 Cor. 4:2; Luke 12:42). That means that God has entrusted us with a number of things in life. We are given the responsibility to properly manage them for God. We are stewards of our life, our money, and our time.

If we think of ourselves as stewards (who will give an account) of all that we have, we can develop the self-control that we need.

Remember the Word and What It Says

This is what Jesus did when he was tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1-11). Joseph did the same thing in recalling that fornication is “great wickedness, and sin against God” (Gen. 39:9). David considered the word as a deterrent to sin.

He said, “Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You” (Ps. 119:11).

Thus, we must study the word and ever keep it on our minds. We should meditate on it day and night (Ps. 1:2). Our hearts need to be saturated with the word (Deut.

6:6-9). Then, as we recall what the word says on a particular matter, it helps us develop and exercise self-discipline. We must discipline ourselves to be his disciple.



Questions

1. What is God’s avenue for fulfilling the natural desire to eat?

2. What is God’s avenue for fulfilling the natural sexual drive?

3. What is God’s avenue for handling someone who has committed a crime against us?

4. What is a steward?

5. How does stewardship relate to developing self-discipline?

6. How does our Bible knowledge and study of the word relate to self-discipline?

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7. Finish this sentence: God has made us stewards of _____
_____.

8. Desires and temptations are _____, _____. The point is
that our desires have to be _____ or _____.

9. In your own words summarize how to develop self-discipline.

10. List any practical lessons you have learned from this lesson.
