

Solid Rock Worship Center



Personal Development 101

Study 19 - "Common Sense"

Note: This series of lessons was first taught by Bishop Robert E. Henson at South Flint Tabernacle. He has graciously given permission that they be taught here at SRWC.

Along with excerpts from the Holy Scriptures, we will be drawing from a variety of other sources in this and succeeding lessons on the subject of character. Paramount among our sources will be the book *Common Sense: How to Exercise It*. The volume was written by Yoritomo-Tashi, was translated by Mme. J. Berthelot de la Boileverie and was published by the Funk & Wagnalls Company in 1915.

Common Sense and Self Control

"Where life manifests itself, antagonism always springs up."

- Yoritomo-Tashi

Key Points!

- Self-control is allied to Common Sense in order to maintain the equilibrium between individual sentiment and the ideas of mankind as a whole.
- We must not permit ourselves to overestimate our individual interests to the detriment of the general good.

Romans 12:16-19 NLT

16 Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!

17 Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.

18 Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

19 Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord.

"Tact is the knack of making a point without making an enemy."

- Sir Isaac Newton

One thing we should each avoid, for the attainment of our own balance and tranquility, is a perpetual conflict between individual and social interests!

Oft times, the things which keep us from blossoming into spiritual maturity or stall us from advancing into the higher realms of Apostolic Ministry, are *petty*.

- *Petty Indulgences*
- *Petty Arguments*
- *Petty Insults*
- *Petty People*
- *Petty Ideals/Causes*
- *Petty Grievances*

Key Understanding! Much like tar asphalt, pettiness has a certain glue to it which keeps us *stuck*.

1 Corinthians 13:11

KJV ~ "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

YLT ~ "When I was a babe, as a babe I was speaking, as a babe I was thinking, as a babe I was reasoning, and when I have become a man, I have made useless the things of the babe."

PGV ~ "I had to *grow up*."

Key Understanding! Common Sense offers us this sage advice: We must only pursue our interests, hobbies or diversions to the degree which God permits, not to the degree our flesh desires!

Paul's typical complaint towards the 1st century church was their chronic immaturity. Elsewhere he says, "...So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding..." **Hebrew 6:1a NLT**

Worth Remembering!

- Common Sense reflects the beauty of consistent actions.
- Never sacrifice great interests for paltry (petty) gratification.
- Morality is always closely related to self-interest.
- Self-control is a liberty that confers intellectual independence.

Common Sense invites us to always seek for *exact facts*. Such knowledge is the quest for those who do not wish to build on the flimsy foundations of *approximate truth*. A person of Common Sense will avoid being influenced by appearances, and will confine themselves to attention, observation, reflection and truth.

Psalm 19:14 KJV Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

If we let our desires lead our decisions, our lives can quickly spin out of control. The Disciple that has mastered Self Control can see the negative influence of their passions and fears upon them, and grip their steering wheel all the more tightly!

Proverbs 25:27

KJV ~ "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls."

NLT ~ "A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls."

Cool-Headedness

In 1939, The British government began to make its preparations for World War II. With Hitler and the Nazi's declaration of war, posters were created with the intention to raise the morale of the British public, threatened with widely predicted mass air attacks on major cities.

Posted all over London walkers and bicyclist could see and read the bright red posters that encouraged people to,

"Keep Calm and Carry On"

A lesser known poster was created circulated at the same time. It said,

"Your Courage, Your Cheerfulness, Your Resolution... Will bring us Victory"

Key Point! The essential factor in self-control is cool-headedness. This trait permits us to see things in their true light, and forbids us to gild them or darken them according to our state of mind.

Cool-headedness is not the absence of irritation, but the art of putting irritants in their proper place!

Cool-headedness produces a fixed resolution towards calmness, which in turn permits us to reflect. Such cool-headedness and reflection enlightens us to the nature of danger. It also suggests to us the way to avoid the danger, if indeed it does exist.

Anchor Truth! What soap and sanitizer does for the hands, prayer does for the mind. You may wash your hands, but don't forget to disinfect your thoughts.

In Matthew 5:44 Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" (KJV)

English poet E.V. Lucas paraphrased the truth behind Jesus words, saying...

"There can be no defense like elaborate courtesy."

Fear is the confession of weakness. One strong antidote to fear is to define it. Once defined, the fear either becomes a stupid illusion or a real enemy.

- *If indeed the fear reveals a real enemy, then one must determine how to successfully neutralize, combat and/or conquer it.*
- *If the fear is only an illusion, one must determine and act so as to never fall prey to that fear again.*

Cool-headedness requires that an individual win the victory over one's passions. This is more difficult than conquering ordinary enemies. Nonetheless, Common Sense causes one to succeed in ruling his or her self. Thus, it can be rightly stated that...

Self-Control is a sort of superior Cool-Headedness!

When God Steps on your Battlefield...

“A Disciples true battle is fought between their ears.” ~ Anonymous

We cannot always control our circumstances, but we can make fundamental choices that will help us to control our reactions to our circumstances and keep toxic input out of our minds.

Acts 16:25-27, 28, 30 KJV

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas *prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison *awaking out of his sleep...*

Point! While everyone else was awake listening to the supplications and praises of Paul and Silas, the jailer was fast asleep.

- *To the prisoners, their songs were fascinating hymns of freedom.*
- *To the jailer, their songs were nothing more than children's lullabies.*

Key Understandings!

- Souls who are trapped in sin and desire freedom are looking for someone whose life displays the earmarks of Common Sense, Cool-headedness & Self Control!
- The prison keepers spiritual awakening did not occur as a result of Paul and Silas preaching, singing or other ministry efforts; He woke up when God honored *their attitude*.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, **Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.**

30 And brought them out, and said, **Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**

At their chance for escape, Paul and Silas's cool-headedness, coupled with their sensitivity to God's voice, opened the door for this man to receive the Gospel!

Remaining cool-headed is especially difficult when we are *exhausted, stressed and irritable*. Covid-19 and the *extreme lacking* of Common sense & Self-Control displayed all around us has exacerbated these feelings. Rest assured, however; We have a great promise from a marvelous Savior!

Isaiah 40:31

KJV ~ *“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”*

TPT ~ *“But those who wait for Yahweh's grace will experience divine strength. They will rise up on soaring wings and fly like eagles, run their race without growing weary, and walk through life without giving up.”*

May you receive the divine strength to run your race with honor & dignity!

NEVER GIVE UP!