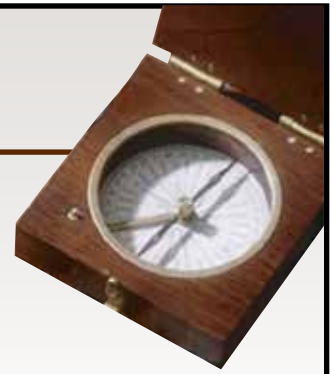


The Self-Government Principle of Restraint



***“Self-control means controlling the tongue!
A quick retort can ruin everything.” Proverbs 13:3***

Underline the key concepts found in this principle.

A wound in the body can take months to heal, but wounds to our spirit can last a lifetime. Words have power that can bury dreams, demolish self-esteem, and destroy potential. Many times we point out the faults and bad habits of people, but fail to recognize and express their talents and potential, this makes people lose hope in the now and for the future. Words can bring solutions or actually tie us to problems. Words are hard to harness because they spring out of us if we are impulsive and reactive. We think twice before striking someone, but many times we don't think twice before we strike out in anger with cruel, insulting and intimidating words.

When we talk too much we may embarrass ourselves, and people will judge us as loose talkers or gossips. If we then try to justify ourselves or deny it we add to our problem, it becomes a vicious circle that is never ending. Hurtful words that were so easily spoken can take years of mending to bring correction and healing. Things we say will come back to us. We do not have to communicate everything that comes to our mind. How many times have we gotten ourselves into trouble by talking too much?

Gossiping and spreading rumors create all kinds of fighting that will separate us from our family members and friends. It is good to be friendly and sociable, but we must discipline the tongue when it comes

to bragging, exaggerating, or talking about others. Words can come so quickly, that is why it is important to have self control over our tongue. Choose the words we speak, and the attitude we have when delivering them. The principle of restraint means to hold back our words; learn to keep our mouths shut and take time to think before we speak. It is impossible to retract words once they are spoken, but it is possible to restrain the words in our mind.

BENEFITS

1. When we control the impulsiveness of our words, we will eliminate the anguish produced after saying something wrong.
2. Restraint helps us grow in our ability to analyze. When we learn to hold something inside of our mind and not allow it to spill out of our mouth it will make us good listeners and we will gain insight into people and situations.
3. Because we restrain our thoughts and words, we will be consistent. Many times our integrity is compromised because of words spoken in haste. The person who has integrity has a unity of thought, word, and action; they recognize that their principles and convictions are manifested in what they say.

An old proverb says “It is better to say nothing and be thought of as stupid rather than opening your mouth and removing all doubt!” A very common answer of wise

Action Plan for Restraint



people is simply, “I don’t know.” That may be a good answer. Many people are reluctant to admit that they don’t know. They always want to give an answer. There is nothing wrong with saying, “I don’t know.”

STEPS TO FOLLOW

1. Have a deep understanding of the power of your words, recognizing that you have the ability to bring pain or blessing through them.
2. Practice being kind. Congratulate others and encourage them. Recognize the lasting effect of inspiring and stimulating, it is powerful! On many occasions this could transform lives, circumstances, and change destiny.
3. Use your words to build up. When we build someone up we receive something in return. There is a universal law called sowing and reaping. Words are seeds. When we sow good seeds, they will bring a blessing but when we sow bad seeds, they produce problems.
4. When in a conflict with someone, write the things down that we want to say, we will then have the possibility of correcting, evaluating, and polishing those words, smoothing them out to find a better way to express them so when we speak, the emotional burn will be gone.

Words are very important because they remain in the minds of people. When they are written down, they are only graphic

representations, but when they are spoken, they bring immediate response, many times an emotional response. Be sure of this: The words that we say will forever be in the air.

Restraint is a discipline that is achieved through a steady and conscientious practice. We have the ability to create good or bad situations by the power of our words. So be careful with your tongue, for your future depends on it.

Remember... thoughts produce actions, actions become habits, habits form our character, and character determines our destiny!

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. In what situations is it the most difficult to control your quick response?
2. What good seeds have you planted with your tongue?

Evaluate yourself from 1 to 10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
What specific action can you put into practice to test the benefits of this principle?										
Check list for the daily reading of this principle	M	T	W	T	F	S	S			

Completed

Not completed