

Y.R.P. - Success & Self-Control

“A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.” (Proverbs 25:28)

In Solomon’s time, a city depended on strong fortifications and gates (*with great walls surrounding it*) to withstand attacks by bands of foreign armies. If the defensive walls, gates or towers were broken down and the walls taken away, a city was totally exposed to be invaded by any enemy that wished to conquer it. If a city did not invest sufficiently in these means of protection, it could very easily be captured. When you choose to not exhibit self-control, your life communicates that you’ve failed to invest in any means of protection. And like a city broken into and left without walls, you too are at risk of being captured by your sin nature.

Solomon’s life gives us a clear example of what happens when self-control is not given the attention it deserves. His life was marked with deep patterns of sin and failure - especially in the realm of sexuality. In Deuteronomy 17:17, the Bible clearly forbade the king from having multiple wives, unless he was willing to let his devotion be turned away from the Lord. And yet, Solomon acquired no fewer than 1000 wives and concubines (*I Kings 11:3*). In the ancient world, polygamy was a way to flaunt your wealth, ensure many offspring, and cement strategic alliances. On a human level, those reasons seemed wise, designed to give security to the royal house. But acquiring one thousand lovers is a sign of an individual who has little, if any, self-control.

Solomon went on to pay a heavy price for favoring human reasoning over what God had said. Like him, you & I often face the temptation to substitute human wisdom for the apparently restrictive wisdom of God’s word. So here’s the unrelenting truth you need to internalize: **your success in this life depends greatly on how well you exhibit self-control.** A person without self-control is exposed and vulnerable like a defenseless city. His spirit is ready to sin, and he will not be able to muster up the courage or strength to do battle with himself. Not only is this person helpless and at the mercy of his feelings, but he’s also prone to give in to his emotions and his temptations.

If you need self-control, you need the wisdom of God. If you need the wisdom of God, you need to know James 1:5 – *“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”*

P2R (Point 2 Remember): “Sometimes, the most difficult advice to live is the very advice we give.”