

## 2 Peter 1:5-6

In 2 Peter 1:2-15 Peter makes it clear that his goal, for the rest of his life, is to communicate 3 major truths to his followers.

1. God has provided you with every thing you need for life and godliness, along with precious and magnificent promises so that you can be partakers of the divine nature.
2. Because of these great graces, you must apply all diligence in your faith-walk to add to this faith moral excellence, and to moral excellence knowledge etc.
3. If these qualities become yours and are increasing...you will not be useless, unfruitful, blind, or at risk of falling away, but you will have the kingdom abundantly supplied to you!

We have been walking through the qualities Peter identifies in vs 5-7

1. We have unpacked the qualities of faith, moral excellence, and knowledge thus far.
2. Today we come to the quality of self control.

*Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6 and in your knowledge, self-control*

The word self control here literally means “self mastery.” “Self restraint.” Even “spirit control” for the believer.

1. Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*
2. This is a fruit of the Spirit...a product of the Spirit which reminds us of the logical progression we see implied in Peter:
  - a. You come to saving, biblical faith by God’s grace alone
  - b. You through that God given faith gain, maintain, and increase in fortitude, moral excellence and energy
  - c. You hone in that moral excellence through an increasing and consuming knowledge of Christ
  - d. And you then, bring yourself under His control, His teaching!

Ultimately self control, is simply remaining under the control of the Holy Spirit who will always subject us to Jesus Christ and His teachings.

1. There is another place where this word “self control” is used.
2. In 1 Corinthian 9...the word here is not just self control but “to be self controlled.”
  - a. We don’t need to just learn what the word “self control” means
  - b. We want to learn “to be self controlled”

*1 Cor 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; 27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.*

The word literally means in the Greek, self mastery, self restraint, holding oneself in.

1. In Peter's day it was used in athletics.
2. Athletes were self-controlled, self-restrained, self-disciplined.

*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize?*

1. The Greeks had two great athletic festivals, the Olympic games and the Isthmian games.
2. The Isthmian games were held at Corinth, so they knew exactly what Paul was referring to.

Contestants in the games had to go through rigorous training for ten months.

1. The last month was spent at Corinth, with supervised daily workouts in the gym and athletic fields.
2. No one would train so hard for so long without intending to win.
3. Everyone purposed to win, desired to win, and wanted to win, yet out of the large number of runners, only one would win.

*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.*

1. Are we running the Christian race in a way that say, "we are running to win"?

2. *Heb 12:1-2 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

3. Are we running in this way? If not, can we really say we are running to win?

*25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.*

Athletes exercise serious self control

1. If an athlete expects to excel, he voluntarily and often severely restricts his liberty
2. His sleep, diet, and his exercise are not determined by his feelings but by the requirements of his training.
3. They lay down their all for the sake of a perishable wreath at the end of a race.

#### 4. What a tragedy

- a. Think about the Olympic athlete who has been training day in and day out since childhood to run in a single race in the Olympics or play in a game.
- b. The day finally arrives.
  1. They have sacrificed food
  2. They have sacrificed sleep
  3. They have sacrificed their bodies
  4. They have sacrificed vacations and extra curricular activities for this moment
- c. The firing shot is made and the race begins and they win
- d. Sad, that they made such a sacrifice for such a superficial goal, that moth and rust corrupts and that thieves break in and steal.
  1. That isn't even gold
  2. That everyone will soon forget
  3. And we make so little effort to win the race that does count.

We are the same way with our kids...all about baseball, basketball, football, soccer etc.

1. Hoping for the big break! For what? So they can be rich and famous?
2. I am longing for Isaiah 32:5 *No longer will the fool be called noble, Or the rogue be spoken of as generous.*
3. The NLT translates that verse: *In that day ungodly fools will not be heroes. Scoundrels will not be respected.*

We can invest our lives in an imperishable wreath, that will not fade away

1. What do we sacrifice?
2. How do we train?
3. How disciplined are we?

Paul was disciplined. He was self controlled.

*26 Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;*

Paul said, I am not running through this life aimlessly

1. He isn't just boxing shadows
2. He is always training, always fighting the real fight, the good fight.
3. Phil 3:12-14 *Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

*27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.*

Even the Apostle Paul had to discipline himself

1. Discipline here literally means to hit under the eye.
2. He figuratively would give his body a black eye, knock it out if necessary.

He not only disciplined his body, but he goes on, *and make it my slave!*

1. Paul puts his body into subjection, into slavery to his purpose.
2. This is self control!
3. To put our bodies, our lives into slavery, into subjection to His purposes for us.

If we are to win this race...we must discipline our bodies and keep them under control

1. We must discipline our minds, our mouths, our hands, our stomachs, our desires and keep them under HIS control
2. Our bodies, must be our slaves, His slaves, and not the other way around
3. John MacArthur said, *“Most people including many Christians, are instead slaves to their bodies. Their bodies tell their minds what to do. Their bodies decide when to eat, what to eat, how much to eat, when to sleep and get up, and so on. An athlete cannot allow that. He follows the training rules, not his body. He runs when he would rather be resting, he eats a balanced meal when he would rather have a chocolate sundae, he goes to bed when he would rather stay up and he gets up early to train when he would rather stay in bed. An athlete leads his body; he does not follow it. It is his slave, not the other way around.*
4. *We are all to practice temperance, discipline, self control. We are all to mortify these members.* D. Martin Lloyd Jones

*27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.*

A contestant who failed to meet the training requirements was disqualified.

1. He could not even run, much less win.
2. Paul did not want to spend his life preaching the requirements to others and then be disqualified for not meeting the requirements himself.

Do you understand the warning that Paul just issued to us, even though he issues it to himself first

1. If Paul who ran, trained, and disciplined himself like he did could be disqualified
2. What does that say for us?
3. That we should just kick back and presume upon His amazing grace? Take His grace for granted?

4. No! It means that we should be all the more diligent to discipline ourselves, train, and run as though we could be disqualified at any moment...or as Peter said in our primary text for this series...

*Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6 and in your knowledge, self-control*

5. This is serious!

*When we have no discipline in planning and managing our time, it is easy for Satan to divert us and hinder us from doing what we should. We never get around to fulfilling our tasks and responsibilities. Many Christians have had plans for serving the Lord, being a more conscientious witness, even going to the mission field, but they never get around to it. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:26-27, "Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; 27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified." I have always been intrigued that Paul, of all people could be concerned about being disqualified and no longer useful to God—he who had planted churches and been used so effectively in evangelism. But this should be a helpful clue to us. Paul realized that he must stay focused on God's calling and purpose. That focused commitment is much more than time management, but he understood that unless he disciplined his body, even he could be distracted by secondary and trivial things and no longer useful to God.*  
Jerry Rankin in *Spiritual Warfare*

We know how Paul's story ends don't we.

1. He practiced self control equal to that of the olympic athlete
2. And the promise of 2 Peter 1 was his reality.
  - a. He was not useless, unfruitful, blind, or at risk of falling away. No, instead entrance to the enteral kingdom is granted to him.
  - b. 2 Timothy 4:7-8 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.*