



SYNOPSIS

While our culture prescribes instant gratification as freedom, real freedom is found when we control our impulses, appetites and desires.

“Self-discipline liberates us.”

“A life without self-discipline doesn’t lead to happiness—it leads to ruin. Every area of our life- physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, professional and financial- benefit from self-discipline.

Your temperament is not an excuse to act a certain way. With God’s help you can change how you respond to stressful situations. “Are you in control of your temper or is your temper in control of you?”, Matthew Kelly asks.

“Our temperaments are not set at birth: they are changeable by choice and consciousness.”

Mastery of yourself and happiness are connected. Your relationships also are affected by your ability to control your body, thoughts and actions. “To love, we must be free”.

Fasting is part of the Lenten tradition and will help with self-mastery.

Fasting is denying yourself in a small way and gaining self-mastery. When we are free we are better able to love ourselves, our loved ones and God, and to be the best version of yourself.

DISCUSSION

1. John of the Cross wrote, “A bird, whether it is tied down by a thread or a chain, still cannot fly. “What ‘s tying you down? What do you turn to instead of to God? Shopping, food, caffeine, wine, Facebook, chocolate/sugar, gambling, pornography, cigarettes? Jesus came to set the prisoners free. Have you asked Him to help you to be set free?
2. The 2nd reading states in Romans Ch. 8. That God will give us everything we need. That Jesus is interceding before God’s throne for you. Jesus came to set you free from sin and death. Do you walk in that freedom?
3. Jesus declares “The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” Are you living in Abundant life? Freedom? Have you repented of these sins in confession and asked for help to control your impulses? Self-mastery is a process of each day asking God for help and pausing and seeking for a way out when faced with temptation.

REFLECTION

In the first reading, Gen. 9:8-15: Abraham was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice and trust that God would provide.

In the responsorial Psalm 116: The author offers up thanksgiving as his sacrifice.

If you don’t understand why something in your life is not going the way you want, can you trust God to provide and offer up a sacrifice of praise? To look for the good and thank him for small gifts He has given within the tough situations?

