

## The Measure of a Man, “Maintaining Balance” By Gene Getz

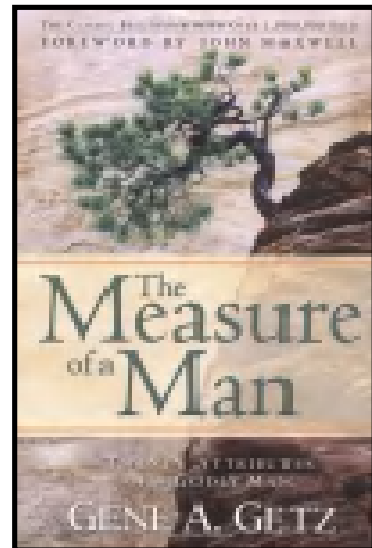
In the introduction, Gene uses a term (or attribute) that is seldom heard *today*; the term is “temperance” or to be described or known as a temperate man. Basically, a temperate person is one who maintains control of their senses or behavior. In the movie, *The Patriot*, the main character, Benjamin Martin describes himself as “intemperate in his youth” as cause for his reputed conduct as a soldier of the British army.

Gene describes temperance (in a man) as:  
 ...has the right perspective on life in the world.  
 He knows where history is going. He knows  
 God is in control of the universe as well as the  
 affairs of mankind...he is responsible for doing  
 all he can to carry out God’s purpose for him  
 in the world.

He continues (to describe) his as a person who does not go to extremes; but he does give attention to human problems without neglecting Godly obedience and attention.

On the “concerns of the world” – or even the conscience of the changes happening around us – is the possibility or risks of falling into worry and despair. The condition of caring (about people, community, country, etc.) lends to the circumstance of such feelings or attitudes – and to some degree is justified as sorrow over sin, corruption and the basic depravity of heart of man.

Temperance (as described) may involve sorrow – a Godly sorrow that was characteristic of Christ and is experienced among the children of God. This sorrow stems from the longing for the future world (Christ’s return) and the present “circumstance” described in the last paragraph. To be devoid of sorrow would be to remove or disconnect from all matters of the present world; it would be to simply not care...or to be ambivalent.



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Ambivalence is lacking any attention to the matters at hand, and clearly is not what God had in mind for his children. As Gene makes mention of the “early church” of the New Testament, ambivalence (the lack of any conviction or sense of sorrow) was evident in the indifference to the general community. In 1 Thessalonians, chapter 5, Paul writes:

Let’s keep our eyes open and be smart. People sleep at night and get drunk at night. But not us! Since we’re creatures of Day, let’s act like it. Walk out into the daylight sober, dressed up in faith, love, and the hope of salvation.

### **What of temperance in the testimony of God’s child; how do you conduct temperance while maintaining sorrow...or a sense of caring?**

By keeping the “circumstances” in the context of Christ and his promise; or by living your life placing all hope in Christ and trusting in him regarding the matters of this present world. You cannot maintain temperance and detach yourself from caring – but you can live for Christ and, as he modeled, experience both...

A favorite scripture of mine, Hebrews, chapter 12:

Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we’d better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. **Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we’re in.** Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever.

The present world offers many diversions; it offers roads that lead *here and there* – but not to anywhere like the future world (of Christ). These diversions will entice and enthrall, but cannot provide eternity – or the everlasting freedom of Christ. Jesus said, “I stand at the door and knock...” Thus, the crucial question (amid all diversions): **“Will you answer the door – the call of Christ?”**

The present world – and its diversions – is not about maintaining balance; but on the contrary, it is about self-centeredness, self-aggrandizement, and self-fulfillment. Yes, the present world places you at center and the balance in revolution about you; you are a god!

The future world – and the scripture of God – places you as part of the Creator’s creation, with the freewill to put your hope in the present or the future. In regard to your answer (of the call...), **will you answer the door...?**