

Control Over Our Lives!

In any air crash the passengers on board have no control over their future life.

As Christians we, at times, may feel we have lost control over our lives as we repeatedly fall into the same sin again and again or find ourselves being tempted in some new way.

Yet we can however have control over our future.

One thing that will help us to do this is found in one scripture.

Luke 8:18 [Amplified Bible] *“Be careful therefore how you listen, for to him who has spiritual knowledge, will more be given, and from him who does not have spiritual knowledge, even what he thinks, guesses or supposes that he has will be taken away.”*

How we hear and what we do with what we hear determines what control we have over our lives now and on into the eternal future.

James 1:21-26 [New King James] *“Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless.”*

It is important to listen to what God’s Word, the Christian Bible, tells us but it is much more important to obey what it tells us.

We can measure the effectiveness of our study of the Christian Bible by the effect it has on our behaviour and attitudes.

Do you put into action what you have studied?

God’s Word the Christian Bible is likened to a mirror which shows us exactly what we are like, **not** what we imagine we are like.

A casual glance now and again will **never** give us the true picture, for we soon forget what it told us if we do **not** put it into action right away.

The control of the tongue is one major area we have to bring under the control of God’s Word, the Christian Bible.

There are many scriptures that tell us that control of the tongue is a key factor in any success we may have in life, these are found especially in the Wisdom Books of Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

Another way we can be assisted towards an eternal future is to accept the correction that we receive from our Heavenly Father.

Hebrews 12:5-11 [NIV] *“And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: ‘My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.’ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If*

you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

We may respond to this discipline in several ways –

- a) We can accept it with an attitude of resignation.
- b) We can accept it with self-pity, thinking we do **not** really deserve it.
- c) We can be angry and resentful towards our Creator God.
- d) We can accept it gratefully as the appropriate response we owe to a loving Heavenly Father.

The writer of Hebrews then mentioned Esau, who for one meal when hungry gave up his birthright.

Genesis 25:29-34 [New King James] *“Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. And Esau said to Jacob, ‘Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary.’ Therefore his name was called Edom. But Jacob said, ‘Sell me your birthright as of this day.’ And Esau said, ‘Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?’ Then Jacob said, ‘Swear to me as of this day.’ So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.”*

Our birthright through Jesus Christ, [Romans 8:16-17] is a place in the created family of God.

What value do we place on this future that can be ours?

We need to evaluate the long-term effects of our present-day decisions and actions.

Proverbs 29:18 [King James] *“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”*

The revealed vision of a true Christian’s future, given to us in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, will help us to avoid eternal death.

A vision is a clear mental picture of what we cannot see with our physical eyes, which we receive through applying God’s Word to our lives.

Romans 2:4-8 [New King James] *“Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds’: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honour, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,”*

Our Saviour and God the Father wants us to be part of His created family, [**2 Peter 3:9**] that He extends great mercy and patience towards us, but we must **not** despise this.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 [New King James] *“Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”*

We need to be well aware of this part of our human nature.

Proverbs 29:1 [New King James] *“He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.”*

God patiently corrects us to help us to change, to become more like Him in character.

But without our desire to change that is motivated by a clear vision of our possible future this can have the very reverse effect in our lives that God is seeking.

Proverbs 19:24 [New King James] *“A lazy man buries his hand in the bowl, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.”*

God has provided all the *“spiritual food”* we need in His Word, the Christian Bible, but we have to digest it if we are to continue to live. We do this through at least as much time each day as it takes to prepare our physical food and eat it, spent in digesting our *“spiritual food.”*

Esau ate just to satisfy his physical needs and he lost out on his future inheritance.

We as true Christians who can be among the *“firstborn”* in the created Kingdom of God need to eat *“spiritual food”* for strength to serve others as teachers of God’s true way of life in the future.

Revelation 5:10 [New King James] *“And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.”*

This is referring to all those who had *“overcome”* in the seven churches of **Revelation chapters 2 and 3.**

Who were to reign with Jesus Christ after His Second Coming, [**Revelation 20:4, 11-13**].

This is how we can have control over our future lives past our physical death.