

blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way."

And Colossians 3:17 tells us to control our actions: "Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

Thus the Bible instructs us to govern the whole range of character and conduct, including the heart, the thought-life, evil desires and emotions and their expressions, the tongue, and outward actions.

Yet in each of us there is a sinful tendency to daily decide for ourselves how we're going to live our lives, without anyone (not even God!) telling us what we should or should not be or do!

What can we do to control our sinful tendency to live our lives for ourselves? Well, first of all we must judge this sinful tendency (condemn it), surrender it (give it up), repent of it (turn away from it), and crucify it (put it to death each time it rears its head, before it has opportunity to take hold and express itself). And secondly, we must submit to the Lordship of Christ, and surrender our desires and our will to His will, as that will is expressed in His Word and actualized by His Spirit. Peter says, "and to knowledge, self-control."

D. The fourth quality we are to add to our faith is patient endurance, perseverance.

In verse 6 Peter says, "and to self-control, perseverance."

One of the difficult things about patient endurance is that it frequently involves enduring the imperfections, faults, and mistakes of others. Permit me to use myself as an illustration.

Frequently when traffic on the road is heavy and I'm trying to get somewhere on time, I find myself sitting in a line of cars waiting for a light. Now ideally the driver of the first car in the line should keep alert and be ready to pull out as soon as the light turns green, as long as no other cars are entering the intersection. But so often I notice that the driver in that first car is talking to a passenger or listening to the radio or looking around or wool-gathering or otherwise not paying attention; so that instead of a dozen or so cars getting through when the light turns green, only a few make it.