

1 Corinthians 9:17-27 (NLT) If I were doing this on my own initiative, I would deserve payment. But I have no choice, for God has given me this sacred trust. What then is my pay? It is the opportunity to preach the Good News without charging anyone. That's why I never demand my rights when I preach the Good News.

Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ. When I was with the Jews, I lived like a Jew to bring the Jews to Christ. When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law. When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law, I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ.

When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings.

Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

Matthew 26:47-56

Matthew 26:26-42

Self-control empowers self-sacrifice, not self-worship.

Study Guide

This last Sunday we spoke about how self-control empowers self-sacrifice, not self-worship. As you look at the world around us, how does it view the role of self-control? How would that be different from the way the Bible talks about the role of self-control?

Take a moment to read Romans 12. As you read that, what stands out to you about how Paul views our relationship to the world, God, and others? How do you think Paul would view self-control in light of this?

What sounds challenging about living this way? Does it seem possible to do so? Why or why not?

Whenever we really consider things like this, it can be deeply discouraging as we learn just how hard it would be to embody this type of selflessness; this type of self-sacrifice. But, it is important to remember that self-control is a fruit of the ***Spirit***, not a fruit of the ***self***. Take some time to talk about how you have learned to let God guide you in your life, and how you have learned to allow Him to grow these fruits in you. Pray for each other that you might see more and more of that same Fruit of the Spirit, and that God would empower you to live a life of self-control that would glorify Him!