

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: WEEK 10

SELF-CONTROL

MEANING



THE GREEK WORD FOR SELF-CONTROL IS:

ENGKRATEIA (EN-KRAH-TAY-AH)

THE SPIRIT-ENABLED MASTERY OF DESIRES, IMPULSES, AND HABITS

SO THAT THEY SERVE RATHER THAN RULE THE BELIEVER.

IT IS NOT MERE HUMAN ASCETICISM BUT A GRACE-DRIVEN CAPACITY TO BRING

EVERY FACULTY UNDER THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

FOR HOLY LIVING AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE.

SCRIPTURE



1 CORINTHIANS 6:12	PROVERBS 25:28	GENESIS 1, 2, 3	TITUS 2:11-12
1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20	LUKE 9:23	LUKE 13:24	GENESIS 39-41
DANIEL 1:6-8	1 CORINTHIANS 9:27	LUKE 4	MATTHEW 26:36-46
JAMES 3:2	PROVERBS 18:21	MATTHEW 5:27-28	1 JOHN 2:15-17
2 CORINTHIANS 10:4-6	ROMANS 6:12-13	2 TIMOTHY 1:7	PROVERBS 27:17
PSALM 119:9-11	LUKE 4:1-2	1 JOHN 1:8-10	1 PETER 1:13-16
			2 PETER 1:5-9

GOING DEEPER



SELF-CONTROL:

- This is the last of the 9 characteristics of the Fruit of The Spirit.
- It is by no mistake that God's Word list these characteristics in the order that they are in.
- We start with love and end with self-control.
- God's love keeps us afloat and self-control keeps us anchored!
- The Greek word for Self-control is **engkrateia (en-KRAH-tay-ah)**
- It is the Spirit-enabled mastery of desires, impulses, and habits so that they serve rather than rule the believer.
- It is not mere human asceticism but a grace-driven capacity to bring every faculty under the lordship of Jesus Christ for holy living and effective service.



- **Egkrateia** is built on the word **kratos (cra-toes)**, which is one of the Greek words for power or authority.
- In Greek, **dunamis** is the word for power, ability, the potential to accomplish a task.
- **Exousia (ex-SUE-see-ah)** is the word for authority, the legal right to do something.
- **Kratos** is power exercised to exert control over something, authority in action.
- Self-control, sometimes called temperance, is the discipline of restraining one's thoughts, words, and actions so that they align with righteous living.
- Scripture consistently upholds self-control as integral to spiritual maturity and godly character.
- The opposite of **engkrateia is akrasia (ah-krah-see-ah)**; meaning excess or self-indulgence.
- The Greek word for "mastered" is "exousiazo" (ex-sue-see-AH-zo); means to be ruled by or be under the power of, to be in bondage to; root word is "exousia" which means authority, right and power.
- The key to self-control is the refusal to allow our enemies (the flesh, the world, or Satan) to rule or hold us captive in ANY way.
- Christ has given us the victory over our flesh, our world, and our accuser.
- Only "self" can re-extend authority to one of the 3 enemies!
- They cannot presume authority over us, but as a believer they can only rule where they are invited!
- Self makes the choice over the issue of control; Self-control is an issue of mastery, of authority, of boundaries.
- From the opening stories of Genesis, we see creation as designed with order and boundaries (Genesis 1-2).
- Where that order is disregarded, as in Genesis 3, the result is a breakdown in character and relationship.
- Thus, self-control stands out as a safeguard against the discord that arises whenever one dismisses God's design and boundaries.
- In ancient architecture, a city was only as secure as the walls that surrounded it.; A city's walls were its fortification.
- The Greek word for wall is **chowmah** meaning **wall of protection**. Anything of value had to be protected.
- Nineveh, 3 chariots could ride side by side on the walls; Babylon, 6 chariots!



- Their wall lent to the reputation that those cities were practically impenetrable.
- God demanded walls in every dwelling place He chose to grace.
- Even the tabernacle in the wilderness had a portable wall to provide security.
- We are the temple of God!
- Self-control is our wall of protection, fortifying all that is within!
- Self-control is the ability to make choices which invite and enhance the authority and filling of the Holy Spirit.
- Self-control is the decision to remain within the boundaries of victory!
- The biblical vision of self-control applies not only to anger or outward behaviors but to every area of life: thoughts, cravings, finances, speech, and habits.
- The very concept of “self-control” implies a battle between a divided self.
- It implies that our “self” produces desires we should not satisfy but instead “control.”
- There is never a “convenient” or “comfortable” time to consider the issue of self-control.
- Daily our “self” produces desires that should be “denied” or “controlled.”
- The path that leads to heaven is narrow and strewn with temptations to abandon the way.
- Therefore, Jesus says, “Strive to enter through the narrow door” (Luke 13:24).
- The Greek word for “strive” is agonizesthe, in which you correctly hear the English word “agonize.”
- Far from being a mere moral ideal, self-control in Scripture takes root in one’s relationship with God.
- We are desperate for self-control, and in its absence we drown in self-defeat!
- Through the Spirit’s guidance and the power of grace, believers find the strength and ability to resist destructive, ungodly impulses.
- Self-control is not a gritting of teeth in self-effort.
- It’s not something we can do in our own strength, but it is the evidence of God and His Holy Spirit working and developing through those who trust Him.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF “SELF-CONTROL”:

1. JOSEPH:

- In (Genesis 39-41): When Potiphar’s wife attempted to entice him, Joseph refused.



- In Genesis 39:9, he confesses, “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?”
- His restraint derived from a deep sense of accountability to God’s holiness, and it is this faithfulness that opened a path to leadership in Egypt.

2. DANIEL:

- (Daniel 1-6): Daniel and his friends resolved not to defile themselves with the royal food and wine from the king’s table.
- (Daniel 1:8). Their careful discipline set them apart for God’s glory and ensured they thrived even under a foreign empire.

3. PAUL:

- (1 Corinthians 9): The Apostle Paul frequently uses athletic imagery to illustrate self-control.
- In 1 Corinthians 9:27, he writes, “No, I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”
- Paul’s example highlights a lifelong devotion to holiness and discipline of both body and mind.

4. JESUS:

- (Luke 4) His temptation in the wilderness
- (Matthew 26:36-46) and in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Jesus models perfect self-control by yielding to the will of the Father.
- Although fully divine, He demonstrates true humanity by showing restraint and unwavering obedience to the Father’s plan.

AREAS THE BIBLE ADDRESSES THE NEED FOR SELF CONTROL:

1. OUR SPEECH:

- James 3:2 notes that “If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man.”
- Words wield power, either building up or tearing down (Proverbs 18:21).
- The tongue is the most unruly member of the body!
- Death and life are in the power of the tongue and the words we speak.
- Through careful management of speech, believers exhibit reverence for God and respect for others.



2. OUR THOUGHTS:

- Jesus teaches that sin can begin as a thought in the heart (Matthew 5:27-28).
- Because of this, taking every thought captive is a crucial discipline that aligns the mind with righteous desires and helps prevent sinful actions.

3. OUR APPETITES & DESIRES:

- Paul cautions believers not to let sin rule in their bodies (Romans 6:12-13).
- This includes moderating physical cravings such as food, sexual desire, or material greed.
- Through self-control, individuals place earthly appetites under God's authority, recognizing that He alone truly satisfies.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO DEVELOP SELF-CONTROL:

- While God works in the believer to cultivate self-control, Scripture offers practical approaches:

1. TOTAL RELIANCE ON GOD'S POWER:

- 2 Timothy 1:7 declares, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control."
- Recognizing and leaning on the Spirit's power is essential for true transformation.

2. ACCOUNTABILITY & COMMUNITY:

- Proverbs 27:17 illuminates the benefit of mutual accountability: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."
- Healthy Christian fellowship can provide encouragement, correction, and support.

3. STUDYING & MEDITATING ON GOD'S WORD:

- Psalm 119:9-11 suggests hiding God's Word in one's heart to resist sin.
- Regular engagement with biblical truth renews the mind, shapes desires, and invokes the Spirit's reminders when temptation arises.

4. PRAYER & FASTING:

- Jesus Himself fasted (Luke 4:1-2).
- Fasting cultivates discipline over physical impulses, fostering dependence on God.
- Prayer likewise grounds believers in humility and reliance on divine guidance.

5. SELF-EXAMINATION & REPENTANCE:

- Daily surrender and self-examination, asking the Holy Spirit to show us the patterns needing correction.
- When we fail in this area, Scripture directs believers to repentance

**SELF-CONTROL'S ETERNAL IMPACT:**

- The Bible teaches that self-control has eternal impact, anchoring us in a hope that far transcends temporary struggles or gratifications.
- Self-control evidences a life focused on and living toward eternal truths rather than fleeting indulgences.
- This eternal focus reinforces the conviction that every choice aligns with an ultimate purpose: to honor and glorify God in all things.
- Believers look forward to Christ's return, where every fruit of obedience (including self-control) will be displayed as part of their faithfulness.
- This perspective reminds followers of Jesus that discipline in daily pursuits is not just about personal betterment or maintaining social acceptability-it reflects a consecrated life lived under God's sovereignty.

CONCLUSION:

- Any out-of-control area in our lives, no matter how big or how small, is an open invitation to the enemy.
- He has memorized every strength and every weakness in our lives.
- He is always on the lookout for that one crumbling section of your protective wall; that one out-of-control area where he can enter and wreak havoc in your life.
- His weapons are your greatest temptations; Your wounds, your guilt, shame, frustration, and failure.
- His goal is to hold you captive for as long as possible.
- By leaning on the Spirit, saturating one's mind with Scripture, engaging in prayer, and purposefully living in Christian community, believers find an oasis of strength to resist temptation, bridle impulsive desires, and walk in godliness.
- In this age and the age to come, self-control remains crucial for reflecting God's character, serving others well, and honoring the Creator who calls us to holiness.
- As a believer chooses daily discipline under God's guidance, that believer bears witness to the power of redemption and stands secure in the promise that every act of tempered obedience contributes to a life that glorifies the Creator.

SCRIPTURE OF REFLECTION



1PETER 1:13-16:

13. *Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober,
and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought
to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*

14. *as obedient children, not conforming yourselves
to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;*

15. *but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,*

16. *because it is written, **“Be holy, for I am holy.”***



REFLECTION/NOTES

