



FRUIT(FULL) Self-Control

#npfruitfull

Week 10
10 of 10

June 13, 2021

Bottom Line: Surrender to the Spirit's control leads to self-control: inner strength and sound judgment that enable us to think, do, and say the things that are pleasing to God.

Icebreaker: Night owl/morning person? Alarm or not? Snooze button, how often? Food most likely to make me a glutton?

Key Verse: *A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.* Proverbs 25:28 ESV

One of the greatest causes of hypocrisy in the Christian church is a Christ-follower who ignores the fruit of self-control. You can have the fruit of love, joy, patience... but without self-control you don't have any means to protect these fruits from escaping your life, or toxic behaviors from entering. The Bible describes being out of control as "the work of the flesh." As a Christian, you are either controlled by the flesh or the Spirit. You will never obtain self-control until you yield control of yourself to the Spirit of God. The purpose of self-control is that we may be fit for God, fit for ourselves, and fit to be servants of others. Self-control is protection. It is the difference between victorious living and defeated living, between standing firm against temptation and giving in, between keeping our witness and losing our witness. People with self-control master their moods, watch their words, restrain their responses, stick to their schedule, manage their money, and maintain their health. The literal meaning of self-control is "inner strength," and a second meaning denotes soundness of mind or sound judgment. Both are necessary for Spirit-directed control. There are three practical ways we can exercise self-control in our daily lives: **1) Honor God with your body.** When we lack self-control we justify uncontrolled behaviors. God gave mankind everything to enjoy, but in our sin we have corrupted what He has given. Physical control should be aimed primarily at gluttony in food and drink, laziness, and sexual immorality. **2) Honor God with your mind.** Every action and attitude in our lives begins first as a thought in our mind. Self-control of our thoughts means entertaining in our minds only those thoughts that are acceptable to God. Don't focus on things that don't deserve your attention or give Satan access to your life. The quality of your inner response (where you focus your heart and mind) determines the quality of your outer response (what you do and how well you do it) *what you focus on → how you talk to yourself → how you feel → action you take.* **3) Honor God with your soul.** Take charge of your emotions. The emotions that need to be controlled are any that don't honor God. An uncontrolled emotion is a contradiction in the life of a person who is seeking to practice godliness. Uncontrolled emotions damage the self-respect of others, create bitterness, and destroy relationships. The battle for self-control is different for all of us, and the emphasis must be on growing. We tend to judge others in areas that are not a problem for us. Wisdom requires that we know ourselves. "What is predictable is preventable." Self-control begins with surrender to Christ's control. It is impossible in our own strength.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What was the most significant part of Sunday's message to you?

It should be our desire to reveal the characteristics of Jesus. What are some areas where Christ is challenging you?

Self-control is not the mind, emotions, and senses being brought under the control of the human will; it is a result of the human will being brought under the control of the Holy Spirit. Reflect and discuss.

How does our culture discourage self-control? What forms of lack of self-control seem particularly acceptable to Christians?

Why are some of us so quick to lack self-control and excuse it?

Sound judgment enables us to determine what we should do and how we should respond; inner strength provides the will to do it. Both are essential to self-control. When you struggle, is it more about your judgment or your desire to take the right action?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

It is impossible to realize and reach your full potential in Christ without giving diligent attention to the grace of self-control in your life. How have you found this to be true?

Just before Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 he lists illustrations of the sinful life without control: *"When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these."* As honestly as possible, share what you find easiest to control and what is most challenging? Why do you think so?

Why do you think self-control in Jesus-followers is so important? How could a controlled life point someone to Jesus?

What do you think you could do to cooperate with the Spirit in developing this vital fruit?

NEXT STEPS

1. Look back over the fruit of the Spirit God wants to develop in you. Where do you most need His help?
2. Consider how developing self-control with your surrender to Christ's control can change your life and your positive impact.
3. Make a written commitment to work with God on the growth of self-control, which will enhance every other fruit. Share with an accountability partner and give them permission to check in regularly. Be proactive in letting them know how you are doing.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: Surrender to the Spirit's control leads to self-control.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: 2 Peter 1:5-7

Tuesday: 1 Corinthians 10:13

Wednesday: 1 Corinthians 9:25-27

Thursday: Proverbs 12:16; Proverbs 29:11

Friday: Titus 2:11-12; 2 Timothy 1:7

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)