



“The Fruit of the Spirit is SELF-CONTROL!” **HOW TO BE A FRUITFUL CHRISTIAN SERIES (PART 8)**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, SELF-CONTROL.

Galatians 5:22-23

> Defining SELF-CONTROL (gk.- *egkrateia*) – *Speaks of the control of one's actions or emotions by the WILL, the act of denying yourself, controlling your impulses, the trait of resolutely controlling your own behavior. Self-control is to exercise self-discipline, to engage in self-restraint, to have willpower, to maintain levelheadedness.*

The Christian is to be governed by God, not by self. *Self-control* is therefore repeatedly set forth in the New Testament as among the important Christian virtues. The virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites; it is the ability to have dominion over one's impulses or desires.

- Observe the following antonyms of *self-control* which may represent areas of change for your life: *dissipation, drunkenness, excess, extravagance, intemperance, intoxication, pigging out, revelry, self-indulgence, addiction to drugs / to pornography, wantonness, anxiety, nervousness, irrationality, instability, discomposure, panic, laziness, disorganization, permissiveness, confusion, impatience, wrath and chaos.*

> Old Testament Examples of being OUT OF CONTROL:

Let's evaluate various escapades which reveal the lack of self-control and its consequences as found throughout the Old Testament:

- *Adam and Eve* (lust, pride)
- *Cain & Able* (envy, jealousy, anger, murder)
- *Abraham & Hagar* (selfish ambition, impatience)
- *Samson & Delilah* (lust, power, ego)
- *David & Bathsheba* (the vanity of fame and fortune)

- Each of these people decided to be out of control, to make a poor choice, a deliberate action against God's will. Yet, during poor judgment and willful disobedience, God desires us to REPENT of our sins and rebellion, to RECEIVE His grace and mercy, to be RECONCILED to Him and RESTORED in fellowship, whereas, He will teach us *self-control*.

> Great examples of self-control in the O.T. - *Joseph* (Gen. Ch. 39) & *Daniel* (Dan. Ch. 1)

> Let's go to Christ's School of SELF-CONTROL

- Jesus teaches *self-control* regarding the FLESH in John 8:1-12 (Let's learn.)

- Jesus teaches *self-control* regarding SPIRITUAL matters - Matthew 16:21-28 - *From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Chuck Swindoll conveys great insight to the adherence of *self-control*, he writes, "The exercise of this discipline called self-control prevents desire from becoming dictator. For the person without Christ, the desires dictate and he or she obeys. Those in Christ, living under the authority of His Spirit and ruled by Him, can defy this once powerful dictator. As a result, we experience a transforming change that others notice."

> Embrace seven life lessons for *SELF-CONTROL*:

(1) *Self-control* is a daily **EXERCISE**, like an athlete! - 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 - *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

(2) Add to your **FAITH** *self-control*! - 2 Peter 1:5-6 - *But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control,*

(3) Exercise *self-control* by getting **MARRIED**! - 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 - *But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.*

(4) Practice *self-control* in **COMMUNICATION & EMOTION**! - James 1:19-20 - *So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.*

(5) **TEACH** and **TRAIN** children *self-control*! - Deuteronomy 6:4-9 - *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

Proverbs 22:6 - *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Colossians 3:20-21 - *Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.*

- "Children Learn What They Live!" by Dorothy Law Nolte

*If a child lives with **criticism**, he learns to **condemn**.*

*If a child lives with **hostility**, he learns to **fight**.*

*If a child lives with **fear**, he learns to be **apprehensive**.*

*If a child lives with **pity**, he learns to **feel sorry for himself**.*

*If a child lives with **ridicule**, he learns to be **shy**.*

*If a child lives with **jealousy**, he learns **what envy is**.*

*If a child lives with **shame**, he learns to **feel guilty**.*

*If a child lives with **encouragement**, he learns to be **confident**.*

*If a child lives with **tolerance**, he learns to be **patient**.*

*If a child lives with **praise**, he learns to be **appreciative**.*

*If a child lives with **acceptance**, he learns to **love**.*

*If a child lives with **approval**, he learns to **like himself**.*

*If a child lives with **recognition**, he learns that **it is good to have a goal**.*

*If a child lives with **sharing**, he learns **about generosity**.*

*If a child lives with **honesty and fairness**, he learns **what truth and justice are**.*

*If a child lives with **security**, he learns to have **faith in himself and in those about him**.*

*If a child lives with **friendliness**, he learns that **the world is a nice place in which to live**.*

*If you live with **serenity**, your child will live with **peace of mind**.*

With what is your child living?

(6) BEWARE of the world being out of control in the last days! – 2 Timothy 3:1-7 - *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

(7) It's good to preach self-control! - Acts 24:17-27 - *"Now after many years I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation, in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult. They ought to have been here before you to object if they had anything against me. Or else let those who are here themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council, unless it is for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.'"*

But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the Way, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case." So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him. And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you." Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.