

## Session 8: Self-Control

### ***Lack of Self-Control***

**“A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.” –Proverbs 25:28**

**Self-Control:** “It is a governance or prudent control of one’s desires, cravings, impulses, emotions, and passions. It is saying no when we should say no. It is moderation in legitimate desires and activities, and absolute restraint in areas that are clearly sinful.” (pg. 110)

- Is not a product of one’s own natural will power.
- Biblical Self-control covers every area of life and continually battles against the flesh.
- Self-control is the control of oneself through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Lack of Self-Control:** “A tendency to indulge our desires so that they control us, instead of our controlling those desires.” (pg. 112)

### **3 Areas Where Christians Often fail to Exercise Self Control**

1. Eating and Drinking
  - a. We cannot pick and choose the areas of life in which we will exercise self-control.
    - i. Ways we exercise self-control.**
      - 1. Removing or getting away from whatever tempts us to indulge our desires.**
2. Temper
  - a. Short Fuse- “A person with a short fuse is a person who tends to become easily angry or irritable and who exercise little or no control over his emotions.” (112)
    - i. “He easily flies off the handle.”
  - b. “Outbursts of temper are usually directed against anyone who displeases us.”
    - i. Family Members- usually directed towards
  - c. Proverbs 14:17, 16:32, James 1:19 (Help exercise Self-Control over our anger)
    - 2. Place Scripture in our hearts.**
    - 3. Accountability**
3. Personal Finances
  - a. Average American household has a credit card debt of \$7,000.00.
  - b. Americans are spending beyond their means.
  - c. We are indulging our desires for what we want: new clothes, the latest electronic or digital devices, video games, ipods, music, you name it.
  - d. “Indulging in whatever my heart desires, even if I can easily afford it, is not the way to gain that self-control, which is a fruit of the Spirit.” (113)
4. Other Areas We need to Learn Self-Control
  - a. Computer
  - b. TV
  - c. Hobbies
  - d. Sports
  - e. Boys or Girls
5. Questions
  - a. Are there desires, cravings, or emotions that may be out of control to some degree? If so what are they?
  - b. Why is it so difficult to remove the things that we so desire and eventually control us?
  - c. What must we do to exercise self-control?
  - d. How do we minister to our friends, which lack self-control?
  - e. Why is self control really that big of a deal and why is it a fruit of the Spirit?

## ***We Must Have Self-Control In These Areas of Our Life***

- **We must show self-control over our moods/emotions.** They live by their commitments, not their emotions. They do the right thing, even when they don't feel like it. "A person without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls" (Proverbs 25:28 NLT).
- **We must show self-control over our words.** They put their minds in gear before opening their mouths: "Those who control their tongue will have a long life . . ." (Proverbs 13:3 NLT).
- **We must show self-control over our reactions.** How much can you take before you lose your cool? "People with good sense restrain their anger; they earn esteem by overlooking wrongs" (Proverbs 19:11 NLT).
- **We must show self-control over our schedule.** If you don't determine how you will spend your time, you can be sure that others will decide for you! "So be careful how you live, not as fools but as those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days" (Ephesians 5:15-16 NLT).
- **We must show self-control over our money.** They learn to live on less than what they make, and they invest the difference. The value of a budget is that it tells your money where you want it to go rather than wondering where it went: "The wise have wealth and luxury, but fools spend whatever they get" (Proverbs 21:20 NLT).
- **We must show self-control over our health.** That way they can accomplish more and enjoy their achievements: "Control your body and live in holiness . . ." (1 Thessalonians 4:4 NLT).

Now, where do you need to develop self-control?

The disciplines you establish today will determine your success tomorrow. But it takes more than just willpower for lasting self-control. It takes a power greater than yourself. Think about this promise from the Bible: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:7 NLT).

The more I accept God's control over my life, the more self-control he gives me!

**Romans 6:12-14** Therefore do not let sin reign ( basileuo) in your mortal body so that you obey its desires, **13** and do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. **14** For sin will have no mastery over ( kurieuo) you, because you are not under law but under grace.