

# The Fruit of the Spirit

## Week 7: Self-Control

### Introduction:

This week is the final week on our discussion of the Fruit of the Spirit. This week our flavor is 'Self-Control'. Self-control isn't just some old-school, stuffy word from the past—it's a powerful, freeing gift from God that will express itself as we walk in the Holy Spirit. Self-control is defined as the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in the face of temptations and impulses. However, this concept goes beyond mere restraint; it embodies the ability to align ourselves with God's will. Throughout the Bible, self-control is portrayed as an essential quality for those who follow Christ. Ultimately, self-control is not just about saying no to harmful impulses; it's about saying yes to the abundant life God has for us. As we explore this fruit of the Spirit, let's open our hearts to the transformative power of self-control in our lives and learn how to walk in the freedom it brings.

Here are the three main points from this week's message:

- 1. Self-Control Prioritizes What's Good For Us, Over What's Good To Us:** Self-control helps us choose long-term benefits over short-term pleasures. It empowers us to pursue what truly benefits our lives and spiritual growth, even when it's not immediately gratifying.
- 2. Self-Control Brings Freedom, Not Restriction:** True freedom comes from living under the Spirit's guidance, not by indulging every desire. Self-control frees us from being enslaved by impulsive decisions, helping us live with purpose and peace. It gives us victory over things like fear, flesh, and failure.
- 3. Self-Control Keeps Our Lives Moving in a Forward Direction:** When we practice self-control, we avoid distractions, stay on course, and progress toward the goals God has for us. It helps us stay focused and keeps our lives moving in a positive, forward direction.

### Discussion Questions:

1. In what areas of life do people normally find difficult to maintain self-control in? What is one specific area in your life where you may struggle with this issue? What are some triggers that make it hard for you to maintain self-control?
2. Read Proverbs 25:28 and Proverbs 16:32. What principles about self-control do these verses teach us? How can you model or teach the importance of self-control to others in your life (e.g., family, friends, children/grandchildren), especially in a world of instant-gratification? How can we help them understand the long-term benefits of self-control in their lives?
3. What are some natural feelings and reactions that come when we may have failed at having self-control? How do you handle situations where you've lost self-control? What are some biblical truths or strategies that help you recover and move forward when you fall?
4. How does the idea that "self-control brings freedom, rather than restriction", resonate with you? Can you think of an example where you exercised self-control or delayed gratification and experienced more freedom or long-term satisfaction as a result?
5. Read Titus 2:12. What role does God's grace have in our self-control? What do you think are some of the differences between relying on the Holy Spirit for self-control and trying to control things by our own willpower? How do you experience the Holy Spirit's help in your daily life when it comes to self-control? Are there any spiritual practices that have helped you grow in this area?"
6. In conclusion of our series, which 'flavor' of the Fruit of the Spirit would you like to cultivate more in your life, and why?