

"WE THE CHURCH... SELF CONTROL"

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WE, THE CHURCH...

(Vs) Gal. 5:22,23 ESV – "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

The last characteristic listed in Galatians 5 as a fruit of the spirit is self-control.

- "The fruit of the Spirit is the change in our character that comes about because of the Holy Spirit's work in us."
- The Bibles clear that we cannot grow Spiritually on our own...

(Vs) Phil. 2:13 – "It is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

- This means every good thing we do is the Fruit of the Spirit's work in our lives...

Self-control

- Def: "Self-control ('Temperance' in the KJV) is, of course, the ability to control oneself. It involves moderation, constraint, and the ability to say 'no' to our baser desires and lusts."
- One of the proofs of God's working in our lives is the ability to control our own thoughts, words, and actions.
- It's not that we are naturally weak-willed... But our fallen nature is under the influence of sin.
- The Bible calls it being a... "Slave to Sin"

(Vs) Romans 6:6 – "We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin."

- Def: One insightful definition of... "Sin is filling a legitimate need through illegitimate means."
- Without the power of the Holy Spirit, we are incapable of knowing and choosing how best to meet our own needs.

- And so, return over and over to illegitimate ways of meeting legitimate needs...

In total contrast... “When we are saved by Christ’s sacrifice, we are free.”

(Vs) Gal. 5:1 – “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.”

- Believers need to regularly exercise self-control because the outside world and internal forces are constantly attacking... Looking for our submission!

(Vs) Rom. 7:21-25 – “So, I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.”

As the Spirit gives us self-control, we can refuse sin.

- Especially as we value the long-term good instead of the instant gratification of the world...
- In this way... Self-control is a gift that frees us.
It frees us to enjoy the benefits of a healthy body – Addictions!
- It frees us to rest in the security of good stewardship – Debt!
- It frees us from a guilty conscience – Shame!
- Lives lived in Freedom like this are a rare and beautiful thing to behold!
- They move with direction and purpose, unrestricted or entangled.

Unlike lives lived without Self-control...

- Consider the last few months as people lost their way and began selfishly hoarding and openly caring for their own needs above all others...This came from a truly legitimate need to feel okay when all was chaotic and vulnerable around them.
- Causing them to fail to recognize that God was still working and in control.

“Spirit sourced Self-control restricts the indulgence of our foolish desires, and so shows us how to find the liberty to love and live as we were meant to.”

- And so... Provides security in who God is and who we are to Him...

(Vs) Psalm 100:3 – “Know that the LORD, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.”

A Community that smiles and proclaims... “He is God!”