

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MBC:

1. Our next Proverbs for Life session will be on October 12th. We look next to see what the book of Proverbs says about self-discipline.
2. Our next Communion Sunday is October 26th! If you are interested in joining our church that Sunday, please fill out a new visitor's card digitally or at the welcome table.
3. To prepare for the preaching of the word on this coming Lord's Day, we would encourage you to meditate on the passage ahead of time. The worship service's sermon will be from 1 Corinthians 9:1-18.

WHAT WE BELIEVE: "They who are united to Christ, effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, are also farther sanctified, really and personally,¹ through the same virtue, by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them;² the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed,³ and the several lusts of it are more and more weakened and mortified,⁴ and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces,⁵ to the practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." 1689 London Baptist Confession, Chapter 13 Paragraph 1

WISDOM: "Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw thoughts, affections, desires, and expectations entirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly state, where there is fullness of joy; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, and delightful love without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where there is the enjoyment of this love without ever parting; and where those persons, who appear so lovely in this world, will be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. How sweetly will those, who thus mutually love, join together in singing the praises of God and the Lamb. How full will it fill us with joy, to think that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease or come to an end, but will last to all eternity." Jonathan Edwards

WORD: *"A Vessel for Honorable Use", 2 Timothy 2:20-22*

Suggested questions:

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:20-22. Was there anything that particularly challenged, impacted, or confused you from this Sunday's message?
2. Why is it important for a vessel for honorable use to be cleansed, to be available, to be self-controlled and disciplined, to fellowship?
3. What are some practical ways in which we can move towards better self-control? What are some practical ways in which we can move towards better discipline?

DIGGING DEEPER: Self-Control: Evidence of Salvation and Protection of Faith

<https://biblicalcounseling.com/resource-library/articles/self-control-evidence-of-salvation-and-protection-of-faith/?srsltid=AfmBOopg98fT6aC1ulFY74AwT5D0rbcp6BHbE3YHw3n3Zz4J0yxSb3jI>

Self-Control

Evidence of Salvation and Protection of Faith

Greg E. Gifford

Ancient Greek philosophers considered self-control (i.e., temperance) to be a cardinal virtue. If you were a person that possessed self-control, then you were disciplined, focused, restrained, and intentional. We often think of self-control in similar terms—we must deny, we must discipline, we must restrain, and we must focus. Scripture nuances self-control a bit more to distinguish it from self-mastery by showing that self-control is a work of the Spirit of God to enable a person to deny themselves. In this article, I'll demonstrate how self-control is an evidence of salvation and a protection of our faith.

Self-Control as Evidence of Salvation

Galatians 5:22-23 demonstrates that when a person walks in the Spirit, they will bear the fruit of the Spirit. It's the fruit of the spirit that is antithetical to the desires of the flesh and it's also the fruit of the Spirit that demonstrates being in the Spirit. In verse 23, Paul says that one of the aspects of the fruit of the Spirit is "self-control." Literally, the "restraint of one's emotions, impulses, or desires." ¹ What Paul is saying is that when a believer is walking in the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and keeping in step with the Spirit, the Spirit of God produces self-control in that person.

This is different from self-mastery. Self-mastery says, "Work harder. Get up earlier. Go on a diet. Eat kale chips." (Okay, maybe not the last one!) That's self-mastery, not self-control. This is what the Greeks praised as so admirable—the ultra-rigid discipline of a person toward themselves. It's obvious how this can lead toward rigidity and asceticism.

The Spirit of God produces self-control in that you will deny your sinful passions, desires, and impulses when you are walking in the Spirit. This is not self-mastery but Spirit-filled living! Perhaps we could say, "God-mastery"? You surrender to the work of God in your life and an evidence of that surrender is that the Spirit of God produces self-control in your life.

Self-Control as Protection of Faith

Second Peter 1:3-10 adds another layer of complexity to the understanding of self-control. Peter says to supplement your faith with virtue (v. 5), the same virtue that God bids you to participate in, according to verse 4. The virtue you supplement faith with is none other than self-control. "For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness" (2 Peter 1:5-6). Yes, the Spirit of God produces the self-control within you and Peter says pursue self-control so that you would "confirm your calling" and "never fall" (1:10).

As a believer, we are to pursue denying ourselves as a means of protecting our faith. We deny ourselves, our impulses, our sinful desires, so that we can continue to confirm and demonstrate our faith. Yet, it is the Spirit of God that gives us the ability to do that, according to Galatians 5:23. Furthermore, Titus 2:11-13 says that the grace of God appeared so that we

could live self-controlled lives. Self-control is an evidence that you are a follower of Jesus and pursuing self-control protects that walk with Jesus.

Conclusion

Perhaps you've counseled an individual who seemingly cannot resist temptation—they impulsively give into their sin? It's quite possible that they are not filled with the Spirit of God and thus really cannot deny themselves. Galatians 5 informs them that their need is to follow Jesus and they will be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). Yet, most of our counseling is helping a person to supplement their faith with virtue (to use the words of Peter). Our counselees learn self-control as they are keeping in step with the Spirit, and then intentionally seek to deny themselves with the help of the Spirit of God. In your counseling process, help your counselee grow in self-control in a way that represents a biblical understanding of self-control.