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One of the evidences of a truly wise spirit-filled woman is self-control. It is the fruit of a mature Christ follower, who is walking closely with our Savior and King. Self-control takes a strength way beyond anything our own humanity could muster up on its own. This is the kind of restraint that is built upon GOD'S word and TRUTH. Not every woman of faith I have met is able to yield such fruit, myself included. Self-control requires a disciplined tongue and a heart over flowing with the Spirit of GOD. Living life with daily self control is a merging of mind, heart and body ever focused on one thing, JESUS.

The very DNA of our humanity wants desperately to be right and seek self-edification. When we feel wronged or unjustly treated, it is embedded in our sinful nature to want such indignation avenged. We are naturally quick to fiercely defend ourselves, and those we love. Sadly, such defenses create roadblocks to our purpose as children of God. When we allow our feelings to take the driver seat, we can feel hurt, frustrated and angry. This type of unleashing can be found laced throughout our relationships with our spouses, children, family, friends, and co-workers.

What is the course of action we can take to build our strength and ability to exhibit the strength required for self-control? We can saturate our brains, hearts and thoughts with scripture. It is Truth; memorize it, embed it into your brain. There are many verses, which address the various aspects of obtaining and exhibiting self-control.

James 1:19-21 tells us

*"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of GOD.
Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." KJV*

I have always struggled with self-control. Especially when I was an unsaved adult trying to navigate through my life, allowing my passion and feelings to steer my ship. I can look back over my teenage years and the way I interacted with my mother. Then my college years and how I aggressively pursued academics and friendships. After that, the level of sexual and emotional abuse in my first marriage, caused feelings of overwhelming shame and captivity, which I had to force my way through. The build up of rage and anger I have stuffed down into my body is enough to make my blood boil and erupt lava, destroying everything joyful in my life. Even motherhood is another example of my inability for self-control. I can out yell any toddler alive.

Self-control. I had none, until I met Jesus and began reading, and meditating on His Word. Redirecting my own lack of control into the hands of my Savior has been a journey of discovery. I still wrestle between my own attempts and failures with trying to control an uncontrollable human surge of emotion, and surrendering it all to Jesus. The more I read my Bible, and pray on this, the more I realize that 'self control' is really about putting all of my thoughts, responses, reactions and emotions through the filter of scripture. This is why memorizing it is so impactful. I am blessed to know and be shepherded by a few Godly women who are more mature than I in their walk. They help me by pointing to verses that shift perspective from my own, to God's. I am humbled daily by the opportunities the Lord puts in front of me to work at getting better at self-control.

The more I pray for a sharper and stronger filter, the more opportunities HE gives me...funny how that works.