

## Self-Control

Lesson 03 of the series, "Training Camp"

### I. God wants us to live godly lives and promises to help us become like Him.

"By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires." 2 Peter 1:3-4 (NLT)

*Note:* God promises to give us power, love and self-control.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."

2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT)

"So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions... When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives." Galatians 5:16-25 (NLT)

*Note:* Ironically, we grow in self-control by surrendering control of ourselves to God.

### II. The more self-control we have the more useful we become.

"In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins." 2 Peter 1:5-9 (NLT)

a. To gain more self-control we need to set our minds on God's priorities.

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." Colossians 3:1-2 (NIV)

"So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will." Romans 8:6-7 (NLT)

"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things." Philippians 4:8 (NASB77)

*Life Application:* A time-tested discipline that helps develop self-control in our minds is a daily devotional / quiet time.

b. To gain more self-control we need to intentionally set healthy limits on all of our desires.

"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified."

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NASB77)

Note: We need self-control in every area of our lives.

- “The wise have wealth and luxury, but fools spend whatever they get.” Proverbs 21:20 (NLT)
- “Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags.” Proverbs 23:20-21 (NIV)
- “If you claim to be religious but don’t control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless.” James 1:26 (NLT)
- “Control your temper, for anger labels you a fool.” Ecclesiastes 7:9 (NLT)
- “A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls.” Proverbs 25:28 (NLT)
- You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. And even though “I am allowed to do anything,” I must not become a slave to anything. 1 Corinthians 6:12 (NLT)
- “An evil man is held captive by his own sins; they are ropes that catch and hold him. He will die for lack of self-control; he will be lost because of his great foolishness.” Proverbs 5:22-23 (NLT)

*Life Application:* Two time-tested disciplines that help develop self-control are fasting & observing the Sabbath.

c. To gain more self-control we need relationships with other believers.

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)

“As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.” Proverbs 27:17 (NLT)

“Let the godly strike me! It will be a kindness! If they correct me, it is soothing medicine. Don’t let me refuse it...” Psalm 141:5 (NLT)

“Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:1-2 (NLT)

*Life Application:* A time-tested method that helps develop self-control is joining a small group.

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## Connect Group Questions

To prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the following questions and write out a few brief answers. Be prepared to share them with your group.

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching on self-control was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?
2. What do the following Bible passages teach us about self-control?
  - Proverbs 5:22-23
  - 1 Corinthians 6:12
  - Proverbs 25:28
  - 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
3. Read 2 Peter 1:3-9. Peter wants Christians to live productive and useful lives. How does self-control contribute to our usefulness for God's kingdom?
4. According to the following verses how can the members of your connect group help each other gain self-control?
  - Hebrews 10:24-25
  - Proverbs 27:17
  - Psalm 141:5
  - Galatians 6:1-2
  - James 5:16
6. Spend some time as a group discussing areas in which each you need to gain self-control. Then spend some time praying for each other.

## Resources

How to have a daily quiet time

Fasting for dummies

Tips for observing the Sabbath

Joining a Connect Group