

The key to self-control

September 6, 2021

Self-control has been defined as the ability to control one's emotions and behavior in the face of temptations and impulses. It means remaining master of your own domain not only in the hunky-dory, but also when faced with trial or temptation. Self-control may be the epitome of "easier said than done. **Self-control** is a fruit of the Spirit. ... This **self-control** which Peter describes leads us into the fear of God, into a life before God's face. Already in the old covenant we have been given wise counsel concerning a life of confidence in God.

We will address the **Fruit of the Spirit** series by discussing **self-control**, which is one of the most important fruits to possess. **Self-control** helps us to resist temptation and avoid conforming to the things of this world. It guides our decisions, and it correlates with how we show the other fruits in our lives.

Alongside love and godliness, self-control serves as a major summary term for Christian conduct in full flower (**2 Timothy 1:7; Titus 2:6, 12; 1 Peter 4:7; 2 Peter 1:6**). It is the climactic "fruit of the Spirit" in the apostle's famous list (**Galatians 5:22-23**) and one of the first things that must be characteristic of leaders in the church (**1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8**). Acts summarizes the apostle's reasoning about the Christian gospel and worldview as "righteousness and *self-control* and the coming judgment" (**Acts 24:25**). And **Proverbs 25:28** likens "a man without self-control" to "a city broken into and left without walls. True self-control is not about bringing our selves under our **own** control, but under the power of Christ. **To master self-control, one must be:**

TRANSFORMED – (ROMANS 12:1-2 AMP) – (1) Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies [dedicating all of yourselves, set apart] as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, which is your rational (logical, intelligent) act of worship. **(2)** And do not be conformed to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be transformed *and* progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you].

And one must not be:

CONFORMED – (1 PETER 1:14 AMP) – (14) [Live] as obedient children [of God]; **do not be conformed** to the evil desires which governed *you* in your ignorance [before you knew the requirements and transforming power of the good news regarding salvation]. Also, mentioned in **ROMAN 1:2**.

The Christian and the world are not to be "like-shaped." That is, we should not allow ourselves to be pressed into following the corrupt customs, ungodly principles, or evil plans of action promoted by worldly men. The blessed man, according to **PSALM 1:1**, resists being conformed to the pattern of the world: "Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers." Don't be deceived, to control yourself you must be able to relate to God.

SCRIPTURE READING

HEBREWS 6:5

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Outward sacrifice without inward change is a mockery. And God will not be mocked!

"A JOURNEY OF THE HEART"