



COMMUNITY
gr:ups **DISCUSSION**
GUIDE



SERMON
PASSAGE:

1 Corinthians 9:24-27



REVIEW THE
SERMON

1. Read the prep verses (Galatians 5:16, 22-23; Colossians 1:9-10; 1 Corinthians 10:31) and the sermon's Bible passage to recall the content
2. Briefly review the sermon outline
 - a. Introduction-review the series
 - i. Galatians 5:16
 - ii. Bearing fruit is
 1. Gospel work (Galatians 2:20)
 2. An essential part of the Christian life (Galatians 5:19-23)
 3. A spiritual guarantee (Galatians 5:24-25)
 4. Aided by being in the company of others (Galatians 5:26)
 5. Continual work and we all have room for growth (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - b. Self-control
 - i. "Self-control is the exercise of inner strength under the direction of sound judgment that enables us to do, think, and say things that are pleasing to God," Jeff Bridges (The Fruitful Life).
 - ii. "Self-control is the ability the Holy Spirit gives you to choose the important thing (Loving of God, Loving of Others) over the urgent thing (Worldly Passions, Idolatry)," Tim Keller
 - c. We are at war
 - i. War
 1. Spiritual war (Ephesians 6:12; 1 Peter 2:11)
 2. Ongoing conflict (Galatians 5:16-17)
 3. Civil war between flesh and spirit (Romans 7:18-25)

4. Self-control is our wall of defense against the onslaught of spiritual attacks that we face as we do battle with our flesh/souls. (Proverbs 25:28)
 - ii. What must be guarded
 1. Our minds (2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8)
 2. Our hearts (Proverbs 4:23)
 3. Our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
 - iii. Our weapons
 1. Spiritual armor (Ephesians 6:10-17)
 2. Word of God (Ephesians 6:17)
 3. Prayer (Ephesians 6:18)
 4. Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 22-23)
 - iv. Endurance (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
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DIGGING DEEPER

1. Penultimate Example of Self-control – Jesus

The fruit of the Spirit of self-control allows us to resist temptation and to avoid conforming to the things of this world. Jesus is the greatest example of self-control. He was tempted by Satan to respond using His human emotions and to not trust in God's promises. Rather than giving in to temptation Jesus models how to have self-control by responding with the Word. The Word is the offensive weapon in the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18).

Read and reflect on Luke 4:1-12.

Satan tempted Jesus over a 40-day period. Would you cave into Satan's constant attack after 40 days? 40 hours? 40 minutes? 40 seconds?

At the end of the 40 days, the Bible give us an account of three more temptations Satan attacks Jesus with. Let's look at the three instances which mirror temptations common to all of us.

A. Temptation 1: Lust of the flesh (Luke 4:1-4)

- a. Jesus, fully human, was naturally h_____ after not eating for 40 days. Satan tempts Him to convert stones to bread. (note that Satan acknowledges Jesus' power over Creation!)
 - b. Satan wanted Jesus to act based on how He was f_____, not based on the Word of God.
 - c. Jesus replies by quoting the Word (Deuteronomy 8:3)
- B. Temptation 2: Lust of the eyes (Luke 4:5-8)
- a. Satan tempted Jesus with the world – all its riches, pleasures, and people. All Jesus had to do was w_____ Satan, giving allegiance to him.
 - b. Jesus had the opportunity at this point to bypass the crucifixion.
 - c. Jesus replies by quoting the Word (Deuteronomy 6:13)
- C. Temptation 3: Pride of life/self-preservation (Luke 4:9-13)
- a. Satan thinks two can play the "Scripture game." Satan incorrectly uses Psalm 91:11-12 against Jesus.
 - b. Jesus replies by quoting the Word (Deuteronomy 6:16)

God has given believers the Holy Spirit's fruit of self-control to resist temptation. He promises not to let us to be tempted beyond what we can bear (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Galatians 5:25 reminds us that the fruit of the Spirit must be cultivated. Believers must be intentional. Thus, commit to saturating yourself with God's Word so you:

- A. Have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16),
 - B. Walk in the Spirit (Ephesians 5:16), and
 - C. Properly wield the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17)
2. New Creations with Self-Control

It is interesting that Paul names self-control last in the list of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) since all the others rely on self-control. It is what must occur in our lives before we bear the fruit of the Spirit. For instance, self-control is being gentle when it would be easier to be harsh, self-control is choosing patience when you don't want to

wait on something or someone, self-control is seeking joy in the midst of difficult times, etc.

Read and reflect on 2 Timothy 1:7.

Self-control is not an aptitude or personality trait; it is nothing that is birthed from humanity. God has given us self-control. It is a spiritual gift.

Yet, as Paul reminds us in Romans 7:18-25, there is a tension between our sinful flesh and the Spirit. We ALL experience this tension, and we will until we are glorified in Heaven.

Our five senses and our minds are constantly immersed in battle. What are some areas that you are wrestling with self-control, areas where your flesh is in conflict with the Spirit?

- Food?
- Alcohol?
- Drugs?
- Money and things?
- Sex?
- Speaking (with tongue and thumbs)?
- Entertainment?
- Thoughts?
- Emotions?
- Disciplines of the believer (serving, generosity, studying God's Word, etc.)?
- Other: _____

Satan has had millennia to perfect his strategies that take advantage of our weaknesses, those areas where we struggle. Satan wants believers to be ineffective. 2 Peter 1:3-8 informs us that if we do not have self-control we will be "ineffective or unfruitful."

The good news is that we are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:9-10)! We are not to be imprisoned by the areas we struggle with self-control.

2 Timothy 1:7 proclaims WE HAVE a spirit of self-control. Although admittedly difficult and we may need co-laborers to come alongside us to help, we can (with the Spirit's power) overcome the tension between the flesh and Spirit.



PRAYER

1. In the midst of our sinful lives and chaotic world, praise God for the fruit of the Spirit of self-control. Praise Him that He is sovereign and He is in control.
 2. Ask God to help you cultivate the spiritual gift of self-control and to help you be intentional in seeking Him in the Word and prayer.
 3. Commit areas you are struggling with self-control to God.
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