



The Fruit of the Spirit
Lesson 5: The Fruit of Self-Control

Main Text

Galatians 5:22, 23

Galatians 5:22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

Galatians 5:23 *gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

The Fruit of Self-Control

1. What is self-control?

Self-control has nearly the exact same meaning as **gentleness**.

It was translated self-control. But, unlike gentleness, which is a control over one's emotions, self-control denotes power over one's passions, appetites, and desires.

The word could be translated **restraint, moderation, discipline, balance, or self-control**.

“Self-control” is derived from a Greek word, which means “strength”.

The same Greek word sometimes translated “power”.

Self-control gives us the strength and power to crucify the flesh and live victorious over it.

Galatians 5:24 *And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

1 Corinthians 9:24 *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.*

1 Corinthians 9:25 *And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*

1 Corinthians 9:26 *Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.*

1 Corinthians 9:27 *But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

Definition of TEMPERATE: **To exercise self-restraint**

Temperate and self-control are the same.

They involve bringing the **flesh into subjection.**

Definition of SUBJECTION: **To be a slave driver; to enslave**

The body (flesh) should be a slave to the spirit.

Like a slave, the body should have no legal rights. It should be bound by law to obey its master.

Disqualification is the result of not bringing the body into subjection.

Only the fruit of self-control can accomplish this.

Paul compares the Christian life to running a race. You become disqualified when you drop out of the race due to a lack of self-control.

1 Corinthians 10:1-12

1 Corinthians 10:1 *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea,*

1 Corinthians 10:2 *all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,*

1 Corinthians 10:3 *all ate the same spiritual food,*

1 Corinthians 10:4 *and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.*

1 Corinthians 10:5 *But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.*

1 Corinthians 10:6 *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.*

1 Corinthians 10:7 *And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND ROSE UP TO PLAY."*

1 Corinthians 10:8 *Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;*

1 Corinthians 10:9 *nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;*

1 Corinthians 10:10 *nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.*

1 Corinthians 10:11 *Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.*

1 Corinthians 10:12 *Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

1 Corinthians 10:11 – The children of Israel are our example.

Why were the children of Israel overcome in the wilderness?

1 Corinthians 10:6 – They were overcome because of the desires of the flesh.

Romans 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

1 Corinthians 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

Everyone goes through trials and temptations, and we can overcome them.

In this text, there are four areas in which the children of Israel gave into the lust of the flesh.

They are examples for us so that we will not give into the same things.

The four areas of the flesh that the children of Israel struggled with were:

- Idolatry
- Fornication
- Tempting Christ
- Murmuring

2. The fruit of self-control aids believers in overcoming idolatry.

1 Corinthians 10:7 *And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND ROSE UP TO PLAY."*

Exodus 20:4, 5

Exodus 20:4 *You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;*

Exodus 20:5 *you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,*

Definition of SERVE: **To work; enslave; keep in bondage**

Colossians 3:5 *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*

Whatever we work for and put all of our energy towards becomes our idol.

That idol enslaves us and puts us in bondage.

Ephesians 5:5 *For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

The degree of idolatry in a Christian's life can be measured by the amount of time he or she devotes to pursuing things other than God.

It is possible to covet "good" things that God has blessed you with.

1 Corinthians 9:25 *And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*

"All things" can include even what God has blessed you with.

It is possible to seek **provision** rather than the **provider**.

For example, it is possible for your job, which God blessed you with, to become an idol.

Luke 21:34, 35

Luke 21:34 *But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.*

Luke 21:35 *For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Jesus warned us that in the last days there would be a lack of self-control.*

Definition of CAROUSING: **To indulge to excess in anything**

When you cultivate the fruit of self-control it will empower you and give you strength to not be overly indulgent.

3. The fruit of self-control gives believers strength and power to crucify the flesh and live victorious over it. This includes overcoming fornication.

Galatians 5:24 *And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

We are aware of sexual fornication. However, we are going to look at this in a different way.

James 4:4 *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

Friendship with the world = **Spiritual fornication**

If you do not cultivate the fruit of self-control you are in danger of becoming a friend of the world, which is an enemy of God.

1 John 2:15-17

1 John 2:15 *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

1 John 2:16 *For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.*

1 John 2:17 *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

Galatians 5:13 *For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

We have not been set free to now do whatever we want to do. We have been set free so that we can do everything God desires us to do.

4. The fruit of self-control aids and prevents believers from tempting Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:9 *nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;*

What exactly did the children of Israel do that was classified as “tempting Christ”?

Answer: **They spoke against the authority God placed in their lives.**

Numbers 21:5, 6

Numbers 21:5 *And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread."*

Numbers 21:6 *So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.*

Galatians 5:19-21

Galatians 5:19 *Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,*

Galatians 5:20 *idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,*

Galatians 5:21 *envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

This describes the works of the flesh.

Definition of DISSENSIONS: Incitement of resistance to or insurrection against lawful authority

Our flesh naturally does not like to submit to authority. The fruit of self-control helps you to do what your flesh does not want to do.

5. The fruit of self-control helps believers to resist the temptation to murmur and complain.

1 Corinthians 10:10 *nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.*

Israel was guilty of a lot of grumbling and complaining.

Whenever we complain and talk about other people we think we have a good reason for it.

There is nowhere in the Bible that states that unpleasant circumstances are an excuse to murmur.

6. The fruit of self-control is cultivated by learning to control what you say.

James 3:2-4

James 3:2 *For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.*

James 3:3 *Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body.*

James 3:4 *Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.*

Proverbs talks about controlling what we say.

Proverbs 21:23 *Whoever guards his mouth and tongue Keeps his soul from troubles.*

Proverbs 6:2 *You are snared by the words of your mouth; You are taken by the words of your mouth.*

Proverbs 15:23 *A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, And a word spoken in due season, how good it is!*

7. The fruit of self-control is cultivated by strengthening your inner man.

Galatians 5:16, 17

Galatians 5:16 *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

Galatians 5:17 *For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

You are flesh and spirit. Whichever one you feed is the part of you that will dominate your life.

Definition of CONTRARY: **Tending to an opposing course**

Ephesians 3:16 *that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,*

How do you strengthen your inner man?

- **The Word of God**

2 Peter 1:5, 6

2 Peter 1:5 *But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,*

2 Peter 1:6 *to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, Knowledge comes before self-control.*

- **Praise to God**

Psalm 8:2 *Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.*

Definition of STRENGTH: Boldness, might, and power

Strength silences the enemy.

But where does strength come from?

Matthew 21:16 *(Religious leaders) said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES AND NURSING INFANTS YOU HAVE PERFECTED PRAISE'?"*