

# Lesson #3: Self Control

**Ask about self-control:** What are some examples of having self-control?...Being calm instead of getting angry about something, doing what is right even when you have a temptation to do something wrong, being sober instead of being drunk, etc.

**Read Proverbs 25:28**...Without walls a city is vulnerable to enemy attacks.

**Ask about vulnerability:** Regarding our self-control, when can we be vulnerable?...If we don't set boundaries in relationships, don't regard rules, laws, etc. One who lacks self-control is undisciplined.

**Ask about discipline:** What does a disciplined Christ follower look like?...One who obeys the laws, obeys God, quick to respond, obeying those who are in charge to your full potential regardless the difficulty.

**Restate the scripture:** In other words, "The one who lacks self-control is vulnerable to trouble".

**Ask about the statement:** How is this statement true?...Drugs, Pre-marital sex, Violence, Abuse, other sin... The lack of self-control could lead you down a path of sin in a downward spiral.

**Read 1 Thess 5:1-11**...vs 6 says "so then let us not sleep as others do, but be alert and sober"

**Ask about sleep:** What could 'sleep' mean?...being spiritually lazy

**Ask about spiritual laziness:** What could 'spiritually lazy' mean?

**Ask about the scripture:** In vs 6, what could 'be alert and sober' mean?...be watchful and soberly waiting for the Lord's return and maintain self-discipline in the view of the great events to come.

**Re-read 1 Thess 5:7-11**...Those who are unsaved are like those who are drunk, neither awake nor alert, unable to respond as they should.

**Ask about being drunk:** What happens to your senses when you are drunk? Your senses are inhibited and you seem to be controlled by forces outside of yourself. Symbolically, those who are unbelievers (drunk) are being controlled by the expectations of society (forces outside of yourself). These forces include peer pressure, Satan, addiction, sin.

## **Read Gal 5:19-21**

**Ask about society's controlling ways:** Are the ways of the world controlling you?

**Define Self-Control:** "control of one's feelings, desires or actions by one's own will". Synonyms: restraint, self-discipline, will-power.

**Ask about self-control:** Do you have this?

**Talk about the society's view of teens:** This is our society's view of young adults and teenagers: "Teens do not and cannot have mastery over their own desires. Basically, they cannot control themselves." Richard Keeling M.D. said, "Teenagers are going to drink no matter what the legal age is".

**Read 1 Tim 4:12...**Even though you may be young, it doesn't mean that you won't be able to have self control. In my opinion, young people have greater potential to positively influence others if they express their maturity and self-control to others. Individuals expect teens to be careless and they expect older individuals to be wise. If you do the unexpected, you can influence the lives of so many.

## **Read Proverbs 23:31-35**

**Ask about scripture:** What does this mean to you? Why could this be a bad thing?

**Talk about the scriptural message:** This verse is expressing how immature we get when it comes to sin. We try to push our limits and try to find loopholes to sin, which still winds us up in trouble.

**Ask about laws:** If we are under the legal age of drinking, why shouldn't we drink?

**Read Romans 13:1-5...**We must obey the laws of the land. When we obey the laws of the land, we are obeying God.

**Talk about an example of self-control:** The greatest example of self-control is Jesus when he fasted for 40 days and 40 nights.

**Read Matthew 4:1-17...**All around us, we are tempted here and there. We have an easy access to porn, T.V. shows based off of dating (and the contestants have perfect figures), lies that are told from peers, media, and politics, etc.

**Talk about other temptations:** What other temptations do we come across?

**Talk about excuses to sin:** Whenever we lie, cheat, steal, commit adultery, idolatry, etc, our excuse tends to be the same: “I was vulnerable”. “I was bound to give in”. “Everyone does it nowadays”. “It’s normal”.

**Talk about an excuse to sin:** Let’s analyze the first excuse: “I was vulnerable”. Honestly, there is always a way to reach God instead of giving into sin. Look at Jesus for an instance. Jesus was extremely vulnerable because he was hungry, deprived and thirsty. Satan was speaking truth to Him: Angels could catch Him if He jumped off the cliff. He could create bread from rocks. Instead of giving into the temptations that Satan was spewing at Him, He resisted.

**Ask about self-control:** How do we demonstrate self-control all the time? When will self-control become a skill?

#### **4 Steps to achieve self-control:**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Step:** Be aware...“**Watch** (be aware) and pray so that you will not fall into temptation” (**Matthew 26:41**). Be aware of what you should and shouldn’t do, know God’s principles, know Satan’s schemes. Read the stories in the Bible about people resisting temptation and read the stories about people giving into Satan’s schemes.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Step:** Seek and know God...“Watch and **pray** (seek God) so that you will not fall into temptation” (**Matthew 26:41**). If you put effort into reaching out to Him, He will help you learn and maintain self-control.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Step:** Get out of your comfort zone...Don’t try to blend in with your culture. You need to stick out like a sore thumb. We are called to serve God and live like Christ.

#### **Read Hebrews 5:11-14, 6:1-3**

**Back Story to scripture:** These Jewish-Christ followers were being immature. They were unwilling to go beyond the basic teachings and understandings of Christ. They were uneasy because the commitment to Christ would require them to go out of their comfort zone.

**Say:** We need to grow from being *infant* Christians (feeding on milk) to mature Christians (feeding on whole food). This first requires us to train our senses, our mind, and our bodies to distinguish good and evil. In result to training, we will have the ability to recognize a temptation before it traps you. Also, we will be able to distinguish an incorrect use of scripture and a correct one. All of these aspects of recognition and drawing closer God are the results of properly practicing self-control.

**Self-Analysis of Faith:** In your relationship with God, where do you feel like you are at?

- **Infant:** “feeding on breast-milk”...You know and understand the basics of Christianity and you aren’t ready to fully commit your life to God.
  - **Child:** “feeding on some solid foods”...You have made the decision to fully commit your life to God but you don’t know what that beholds entirely. You have the desire to learn more about Christianity but you don’t necessarily understand how to apply all of it to your life.
  - **Young Adult:** “mainly feeding on solid foods”...Knows and understands most of God’s principles, you try everything to maintain a close relationship with God.
  - **Adult:** “always feeding on solid food”...Fully-devoted Christ follower
- **Conclusion of Analysis:** Which category best represents your relationship with God?

**Ask:** Instead of being controlled by society and sin, what should we be controlled by?...Everything that is considered good to God: The fruits of the spirit is a great example.

### **Read Galatians 5:22-23**

**Conclusion:** All of these are considered ‘good’ to God. These are what He wants you to do every day, every minute, and every second. He doesn’t even want us to have an ounce of hatred toward others, lust, lies, covetous thoughts, etc. He wants love. Doing what is good will help you overcome and turn away from those sins that seem to harm you. In result, we will develop good self-control.