

Self-Control in Perspective

Text: 1st Corinthians 9:24-27

Holy Spirit, I pray that this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in my life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

**...against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:23)
Paul, was referencing this common phrase from the classic philosopher to say the same thing, in effect: You can't go wrong with any of these qualities.**

**The fruit of the Spirit can be summed up in one word.
Character.**

The fruit of the Spirit is most evidenced in your interactions with others. That's why Jesus said...

"By their fruit you will recognize them." (Matthew 7:16)

You can't become spiritually mature *by* your own effort, and neither can you become spiritually mature *without* your own effort.

The ancient Greeks loved this word — in the original language it is *egkrateia* — and they wrote about it often. Socrates considered it to be the foundational human virtue. His teaching was that all of the knowledge in the world won't do you any good if you can't control your own passions and desires.

God is holy and good. He's not like us. However, when we practice self-control, we are able to become like him.

Your natural desires, left unchecked, will produce that inevitable result. Chaos. Turmoil. Misery. Without self-control, the other eight qualities of the fruit of the Spirit will always be hit-and-miss.

Three new perspectives that will help you get a handle on self-control.

1. Understand the significance of all that is at stake. . Every action has future implications.

**2. Understand the significance of each particular moment
There are no throw-away seasons in the Christian life.**

3. Understand the significance of every minor victory.

"You have been faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things." (Matthew 25:21)

There's a principle in the Christian life that smaller victories lead to bigger victories.

Like every aspect of the fruit of the Spirit, self-control is a quality that you cannot develop by your own effort. Neither can you develop without your own effort.

