

I. REVIEW/INTRO

A. Living under the influence

- Who's in control?

Galatians 5:16-17 (NLT) So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. ¹⁷ The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.

B. Why do I feel so out of control?

- Personal strength and effort may change behavior temporarily, but only the Holy Spirit can change what governs or controls us internally.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT) ²² But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

C. Self-Control

- Culture does not get to define the terms or definition of the fruit of the Spirit, God does.

II. WHAT IS SELF-CONTROL?

A. Self-Control

- Biblical self-control is not something I accomplish independently of God.

The Greek word translated **self-control** is **enkrateia**. It carries the idea of: mastery over desires, restraint over impulses, dominion over appetites, and the ability to govern one's actions. It describes having power over something that would otherwise have power over you.

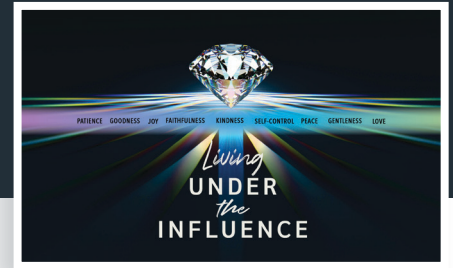
Self-control is the Spirit-produced ability to bring my desires, emotions, appetites, reactions, words, and decisions under the authority of God.

B. Who is actually in control?

- There will come a time in our followership of Christ when what I want for me is different from what God wants for me...and that moment reveals who is actually in control.

C. Jesus surrendered in the Garden

Luke 22:42 (NLT) "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."



- Self-control is having the power to do what I want and choosing what God wants instead.

III. DEVELOP THE FRUIT OF SELF CONTROL

A. Why is this important?

- We tend to think of the word “control” as negative or restrictive, I have the right to do or feel what I want
- But God asks a deeper question: “Are you really free?”
- The places that comfort us are usually the places where we lack self-control.

B. Self-control doesn’t restrict, it protects

Proverbs 25:28 (TLB) A man without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls.

- Self-control is not God restricting my life. It is God protecting my life.
- A life without boundaries eventually becomes a life without protection.

Proverbs 16:32 (NIV) Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city.

C. Self-Control protects future Fruit

- Self-control keeps a temporary desire from sabotaging a permanent purpose.

D. How to build the wall

Psalms 119:11 (NIV) I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

- When anger rises, the Spirit reminds us: **“A soft answer turns away wrath.”**—Proverbs 15:1
- When temptation comes, the Spirit reminds us: **“Flee youthful lusts.”** —2 Timothy 2:22
- When we want to retaliate, the Spirit reminds us: **“Repay no one evil for evil.”** —Romans 12:17
- When we want to quit, the Spirit reminds us: **“Let us not grow weary while doing good.”** Galatians 6:9
- When anxiety tries to control our thoughts, the Spirit reminds us: **“Be anxious for nothing.”** Philippians 4:6
- **Who gets the final say?**
 - Self-control is not me gaining greater control of myself. It is me surrendering every part of myself to the control of the Holy Spirit.
 - What area of my life have I not fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit?