



SUNDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2020. MESSAGE DELIVERED BY
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THEME: Secrets of Self-Control part (1)

SCRIPTURES: Galatians 5:22-23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and **self-control. Against such things there is no law.**

INTRODUCTION: Self-control is listed in the Bible as one of the Fruits of the Spirit – a sign that Christ is in us. If we let our desires lead our decisions, our lives (and our bodies) can quickly spin out of control. Self-control is a discipline that God grows in us when we continually choose to die to our flesh and live in Him. Fulfilling those cravings feels so good at the time, but Christ offers us a freedom that is only found in honouring those healthy boundaries. The book of Romans 7:18 says: “For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.”

Before I start this message in full, I want us to be quiet for 1 minute and examine ourselves on things we are struggling with that we cannot control ourselves. Is it eating too much, is it telling lies, is it stealing, is it deception, is it sexual sin, fornication, adultery, anger, or anything that has become your habit that others don't like?

SILENCE ----- SILENCE ----- SILENCE

THE MESSAGE

It is so frustrating to know what is right and still not be able to manage to do it. So, what is the missing piece between our knowledge and action? **Jesus**. The book of James 1:14-15 (N I V) says “14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death”

Sin runs deep inside of us, but as Christians, we have the One in us who can give us the strength to stand up and say no to temptation. We don't have the strength on our own to be able to choose what is right, especially when it doesn't feel good. Fortunately, we serve a very good, ever-faithful God who works wonders in our weakness as we seek Him. Proverbs 25:27-28 says; “It is not good to eat too much honey, nor is it honourable to search out matters that are too deep. Like a city whose walls are broken

through is a person who lacks self-control". You see, the bible tells us that Honey itself is not a bad thing. It tastes so sweet and wonderful. Food is such a blessing when you eat it for the right reasons! But it seems as humans, when we get a taste of something good, our appetite becomes greedy and we crave more and more and more. Have you ever thought to yourself, "Well, I've already had 3 cookies...what's 1 more?" That's how the enemy works. He convinces you that just a little bit more is okay. And then a little bit more after that. Don't be like a city whose walls are broken. Stand firm, knowing when enough is enough.

As I mentioned about, small lapses in our judgement with the cookies, giving in to just a little bit of temptation doesn't always feel sinful. It doesn't always feel like we need to fight it. When we give in to temptation once, even just a little bit, it's like Satan sticking his foot in the door, giving him more power to tempt you even more. That's the lie of temptation. It tells you that when you give in, it's going to feel so good and you'll feel so satisfied. But that satisfaction never comes and all you're left with is that feeling that you want more.

In the book of 1 Timothy 3:2-3 which says: "Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, **self-controlled**, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money." In this verse, Timothy was explaining what they should look for in a person before appointing them as an overseer. In their list of character traits, **self-control** is the biggest and applicable to just about everything else on the list. It takes self-control to accomplish all of those things - staying faithful to your wife, keeping your cool in frustrating situations, not drinking too much, not losing your temper, not arguing (even when you think you're right), and not becoming too focused on money and the list goes on.

WHAT IS THE SECRET AND ANTIDOTE TO SELF-CONTROL?

For the next few Sundays, we will look at how to develop self-control.

Here's the first step: **Accept responsibility for your lack of self-control.**

Admit your problem. "A man's temptation is due to the pull of his own inward desires, which greatly attract him." The main reason you do things—is because you like to! When you know something's bad for you but you still do it, it's because you want to. Sometimes we try to ignore the problem of self-control or deny it: "What problem? I don't have a problem," or "It's just the way I am," or "Everybody else is doing it."

Sometimes we blame others: "If I just had different parents," or "The Devil made me do it." As long as you waste your energy making excuses, you can't make progress. James points out that we like to take the path of least resistance, and giving in to temptation is usually the easiest course. The starting point for developing self-control is to face what God has already said in His Word: "Everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (Jn 8:34 NIV). Do you want more self-control? Then admit you have a problem, and be specific about

it: "I have this problem. This is where I need help." You may have a problem with food, drink, drugs, words, your temper, money, exercise, sex, TV, clothes, time—all these areas need self-control. So today get down on your knees and talk to God about the problem, believing that with His help you'll be able to solve it.

Step no.2. which concludes our service for today: Read **2 Timothy 3:1-5**. "But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, **without self-control**, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.

I included 5 verses here because they are all so powerful. This is a strong warning to **avoid people lacking self-control**. It uses strong wording, saying that people without self-control love pleasure more than God. **Oopsy!!!!!!** I never want that to be something that defines me!

And the end of the verse instructs them to, "**Have nothing to do with such people.**" Don't be such people. Be an example of Christ that others can look up to. Titus 2:11-12 teaches us that; "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" What an encouragement?

The book of Titus is full of encouragement to be self-controlled. It mentions that elders need to be self-controlled (Titus 1:8), older men should be taught to be self-controlled (Titus 2:2), older women need to be self-controlled (Titus 2:5), and younger men should be encouraged to be self-controlled, as well (Titus 2:6). Are you up for the challenge?

**IF YOU NEED PRAYERS TO COMBAT SELF-CONTROL ON
ANYTHING THAT IS TAKING YOU CAPTIVE, PLEASE
COME FORWARD OR CONTACT US ON
0405125759 OR 0450206636
MEDITATE ON THIS AND GOD BLESS YOU**