**Self-control BY: Jesse Garcia**

Self-control is one of the fruits of the spirit and is essential for every Christian to learn in order to make it to heaven because without self-control you cannot overcome the works of the flesh. To help us understand what self-control is let begin by looking at several definitions.

Webster defines it this way, “restraint exercised over one’s own impulses”

From the Greek Thayer defines it this way, “the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites.

From these definitions it should be very clear that we must posses this virtue in order to overcome the works of the flesh and make our way to heaven. So, this afternoon we are going to be examining this topic of self-control and what we need to do in order to obtain it.

First of all the word self-control is only used a few times in the Bible and is not used at all in KJV. The KJV usually uses the word “temperance” instead which carries the same meaning. Lets look at some of these verses.

[**2 Peter 1:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Peter%201.5) **But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,**

Peter is letting us know that self-control is something that we are to be adding to our faith.

[**Galatians 5:22**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Galatians%205.22) **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**

There is no law against these things with self-control being one of them.

**Acts 24: 25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."**

Here Paul was confronting Felix about the will of God and self-control which is our response to God’s instructions and the judgment which will be based on our self-control in how we followed Gods commands. Based up on these verses we can now define Biblical self-control as controlling yourself based upon the perfect will of God. It’s a whole lot easier to define self-control than to put into **practice**. Notice what Paul says about it.

**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.* 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.* 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.**

Many Paul eludes to Christianity as being a battle and he loves to use the athlete as an example. Notice he said those who are competing for the prize are temperate in all things. This means they are exercising self-control in their life. They have to discipline themselves everyday to go out and practice and put forth their best effort so they can run the race to the best of their ability. Without exercising self-control it would be easy for them to sit back and take it easy and be unprepared to win their prize. Well, the same thing is true when it comes to Christianity. We must discipline ourselves everyday by exercising self-control so that we don’t indulge ourselves in sin. We to must but our best foot forward and work daily to add to our faith self-control and I can promise you this is not an easy task but is very important that have self-control.

[**Proverbs 25:28**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Proverbs%2025.28) **Whoever *has* no rule over his own spirit *Is like* a city broken down, without walls.**

In other words you are defenseless without self-control.

**Proverbs 16:32 *He who is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.**

Those who do have self-control have more strength than a person who has the power to take over a city.

The Bible doesn’t just mention self-control it also shows it in action and also the results of not having self-control.

Our first example comes from the sin of adultery.

Tell background of Joseph

[**Genesis 39:6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Genesis%2039.6) **Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. 7 And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what *is* with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 "*There is* no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you *are* his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" 10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her *or* to be with her. 11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house *was* inside, 12 that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside. 13 And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside,**

Joseph exercised self-control etc…

**2nd example comes from David and Bathsheba**

[**2 Samuel 11:1**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Samuel%2011.1) **It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out *to battle,* that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. 2 Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman *was* very beautiful to behold. 3 So David sent and inquired about the woman. And *someone* said, "*Is* this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" 4 Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house.**

Unlike Joseph David didn’t exercise self-control and he had pay the consequences both physically and mentally.

Our next 2 examples has to do with the use of tongue

Our first example is Job.

**Job 1: 13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; 14 and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, 15 "when the Sabeans raided *them* and took them away -- indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 16 While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 17 While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 18 While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, 19 "and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." 22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.**

Even though the devil hit Job hard Job exercised self-control of his tongue by not cursing God and we know in the end God blessed Job with more than he had the first time.

Our next example comes from Moses who for the most part was very good at exercising self-control that is until he was provoked by the children of Israel.

[**Psalm 106:32**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Psalm%20106.32) **They angered *Him* also at the waters of strife, So that it went ill with Moses on account of them; 33 Because they rebelled against His Spirit, So that he spoke rashly with his lips.**

Moses was suppose to speak to the rock but because of is anger he lost control of himself. He did 2 things wrong first of all he struck the rock instead of speaking to it and second of all he did not give God the glory for the water. Notice tells Moses in,

**Numbers 20: Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."**

Now that we have examined several examples that show the importance of maintaining self-control in our lives let us now take a look a few of the things that we need exercise

Self-control in our own lives.

First of we need to exercise self-control over our emotions like anger. Self-control will keep up from acting upon on anger. For instance if a person is provoking you and getting in your face without self-control you probably punch that person in the face but self-control will make it to where you keep your composure and you walk away. You see there is nothing wrong with becoming angry unless you act in a sinful way because of your anger. Notice the Bible teaches us this.

**Ephesians 4:26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,**

[**Proverbs 19:11**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Proverbs%2019.11) **The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory *is* to overlook a transgression.**

This last verse is saying that if you have the understanding the importance of exercising self-control you will be slow to anger in the first place. This leads us right into our next point which we must exercise self-control of our tongue.

[**James 1:19**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.19) **So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;**

James gives some great advice in many places about having self-control over the tongue. Notice James is basically telling us to prepare yourself to learn to listen first, don’t jump to conclusions and after you have had time process what has been said then take time to think about your response so you can speak in kind way. I would also say this if you find yourself in situation where you feel like you are about to lose it don’t continue your conversation and say something you may regret simply walk away and say nothing. While this may seem rude some people I can promise you that they will get over your silence a lot faster then whatever you were about to say out of anger. James also says this,

[**James 1:26**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.26) **If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless.**

An uncontrolled tongue can render your religion useless and make it to where you no longer have a positive influence on those around you. Out of all the things that we need to exercise self-control over I personally believe that that tongue is the hardest one for ever single Christian. James gives great detail about the tongue in James 3

[**James 3:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%203.5) **Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! 6 And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.**

**We must also exercise self-control when it comes to the opposite sex**

We need to follow after Joseph’s example and run as fast as we can away from situations that would cause us to sin before God. This best way to do this is to avoid this is not putting yourself in situations that you know will tempt or give you an opportunity to commit a sexual sin. Jesus tells us this,

[**Matthew 5:27**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Matthew%205.27) **" You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.**

**There is also a need for us to exercise self-control when it comes to our physical appetite.**

This means we that we should not over indulge ourselves in those things that are allowable.

[**Proverbs 25:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Proverbs%2025.16) **Have you found honey? Eat only as much as you need, Lest you be filled with it and vomit.**

It possible abuse anything and many people in America have a great temptation to over abuse the use of food. Just because we have lots of food and it taste wonderful we shouldn’t eat so much that we get to point that we puke. This is talking about the gluttony. Paul talks about this sin in regards to Cretans,

**Titus 1:12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans *are* always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."**

You see the Cretans would eat and eat some more until they puked and then they would eat some more.

Now we have examined several things that we need to exercise control over in our lives and now I would like to offer several suggestion on how to exercise self-control.

1. We need remember that when we were baptized into Christ that our old man died and we are now a new creature and because of this we can get help from God.

[**Hebrews 4:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Hebrews%204.15) **For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are, yet* without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

If you want help with self-control pray to God to help you and he will.

2. We also need to keep in mind that self-control doesn’t happen over night that is why Peter told we must continue to add to our faith self-control. This means that we will make mistakes as Christians but what God wants from us it to continue to get better at exercising self-control in our life.

3. We need to try and spend our time around those who can influence and encourage us to exercise self-control instead of hanging around those who tempt us to lose it.

[**Proverbs 13:20**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Proverbs%2013.20) **He who walks with wise *men* will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.**

4. One of the greatest helps for us to maintain self-control is by reading and studying Gods word.

[**Proverbs 30:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Proverbs%2030.5) **Every word of God *is* pure; He *is* a shield to those who put their trust in Him. 6 Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.**

You see everything we need to know on how to exercise self-control can be found in god’s word.

[**2 Timothy 3:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Timothy%203.16) **All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

Finally focus on keeping your thoughts on righteousness.

[**Proverbs 23:7**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Proverbs%2023.7) **For as he thinks in his heart, so *is* he.** [**2 Corinthians 10:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Corinthians%2010.5) **bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,**