

# Fruit of the Spirit - Self-Control

Galatians 5:22-23

**PPT Title**

## Fruit of the Spirit: Self-Control

**Main Point:** God's Spirit helps us control our thoughts and actions.

**Key Verse:** *(God's grace) teaches us to say no to godless ways and sinful longings. We must control ourselves. We must do what is right. We must lead godly lives in today's world. – Titus 2:12*

**Props:** A chocolate cake

### BACKGROUND/REVIEW

**Say:** For the past several weeks, we have been studying all the Fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Can anyone tell me what this verse says?

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

*As we have seen, the Fruit of the Spirit grows in our lives when we are living with the Holy Spirit in us. This week, we will study the last fruit, self-control – which means this is our last week of studying the Fruits of the Spirit.*

### INTRO

**Teacher Note:** The Greek word for self-control in Galatians 5:23 is "egkrateia" which means "temperance: the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites."

**Say:** Who can name some wild animals? Take a look at these wild animals! (Show pictures of animals).



Which animal is called the "king of the jungle"? Why do you think lions are called "king of the jungle"? They can do anything they want; they are fierce and wild!

## VIDEO

Let's take a look at a short video clip. (Show clip of lion tamer act.)

That lion tamer had control of those lions, didn't he? That man can make the lion (which is naturally wild) do whatever he wants it to do. The man can make the lion do something it doesn't want to do (like roll over), or the tamer can keep the lion from doing something that it does want to do (like biting the man). Clearly, the man was in **control** of the lion.



Today we're talking about self-control. Can anyone guess what that means? With self-control, we control ourselves. We control our desires – our "want to's". Through self-control, we keep ourselves from doing something bad that we shouldn't do, and we make ourselves do good things that we should do.

### SELF-CONTROL IN JESUS



**Say:** Once again, the perfect example of this fruit, self-control, is found in Jesus. Jesus is the one person who had perfect self-control His entire life. The Bible calls Jesus the one who "had no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21), which means He never sinned at all. Think about that kind of self-control! He never thought, "Just this one time, I can lie to my parents," or, "No one will know if I punch my brother."



We might think, "Well, Jesus must have lived a life very different from me. He didn't have to live with *my* sister!" We might think that no one ever bothered Him, or nothing ever went wrong for Him. This is not true at all! For one thing, the Bible tells us that Jesus had lots of brothers and sisters (Matthew 13:55-56). Is it easy to live with brothers and sisters without ever being annoyed or frustrated with them? *No way!* In fact, the Bible says that Jesus was tempted to sin in every way that we are tempted (Hebrews 4:15) which means His brothers and sisters probably bugged Him sometimes, but He never sinned. He was not mean to them, He didn't hit them, He never stole their candy. He didn't even think bad thoughts about them! That is amazing self-control!



But Jesus not only had self-control to keep Himself from doing wrong things. He had so much self-control that He was always able to do the right things! He always did what God wanted Him to do, even when it was very, very difficult and painful. Do you remember the story that we talk about at Easter - when Jesus was arrested and taken to the cross? On the night that Jesus was arrested, before the soldiers came to take Him, He was on the Mount of Olives praying to God. Jesus prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup of suffering away from me. But do what you want, not what I want." (Luke 22:42) Jesus knew that He would go through terrible suffering when He was arrested and nailed to a cross. No one would want to suffer by hanging on a cross! But by His incredible self-control, Jesus chose to obey God's will rather than doing what He wanted to do.

Think about all the **power** that Jesus had. He had done so many miracles – He had healed the sick, created food to feed thousands, and cast out demons. He even raised people from the dead! Could Jesus have stopped the soldiers and the people from nailing Him to that cross? *Yes!* Of course! Jesus had all the power of God at His fingertips. He could have easily stopped the people from crucifying Him (Matthew 26:53). But He had the self-control to do exactly what God asked Him to do, even through all that pain and suffering. Jesus trusted that God's plan was perfect. He wanted to save you and me from the punishment of our sin, so He willingly went to the cross. And after He did, God raised Him from the dead and now Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God (Acts 7:56)!

Jesus always had the self-control to keep Himself from sinning, and to obey God. The reason He had this amazing self-control was because He was full of the Holy Spirit, and He spent as much time as He could with His Father. The more time we spend with God, the more good fruit God will grow in our lives – and Jesus had the most spiritual fruit of anyone.



## SELF-CONTROL IN US

**Say:** So how do we have that kind of control over our own thoughts and actions?

Let's pretend that you went to the Spring Festival at your school. There were all kinds of games to play. You decided to try the Cakewalk. When the music stopped, you were on the right number, so you won a cake! Let's say you chose a huge chocolate cake, because chocolate cake is your very favorite thing to eat. (Hold up a chocolate cake.) You love chocolate cake so much, you wished you could eat the entire cake yourself. But should you? *No!* Why not? *That would be terrible for your body; you would get really sick.*



There are two ways to keep you from eating that entire cake. Someone could stop you, or you could stop yourself. Your mom could take the cake away and hide it, or you could just resist eating the whole thing. Which option sounds more like self-control? Is self-control when somebody keeps you from doing something, or when you can keep yourself from doing that thing? Self-control is when you control you, when you make yourself do the right thing.

Just like a lion *naturally* wants to prowl the jungle or roar at a human, our *natural* self (our sin nature) wants to do bad stuff sometimes. What are some bad things that we are tempted to do sometimes? You might want to grab what you want right when you want it; you might want to hit someone or yell at someone when you are angry; you might want to push someone when they get in front of you; you might want your own way instead of thinking of others. These are all actions that we must control for ourselves.

Also, there are some good things that we should do, that our natural self just doesn't want to do. We should get up and get ready for school in the morning; we should do our homework; we should do our chores that our parents ask us to do. Again, it takes self-control to do the right things that we are supposed to do.

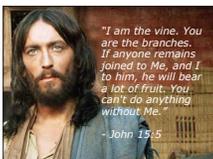
The term "self-control" is sort of a tricky phrase. It is "self"-control because no other person is doing it for us. But that doesn't mean we are all on our own! God's Holy Spirit that lives inside of each believer is the One who is really giving us the power to have self-control. When we believe in Jesus, God's Spirit fills us – just like it filled Jesus (Luke 4:1). We can have self-control just like Jesus did when we depend on the Spirit to guide us. So no matter what is going on around us, we can keep from doing wrong things and we can do right things.

### PPT Key Verse

*(God's grace) teaches us to say no to godless ways and sinful longings. We must control ourselves. We must do what is right. We must lead godly lives in today's world. – Titus 2:12*

## CONCLUSION

**Say:** We've talked about many fruits of the Spirit, and the Bible tells us that there are even more. Don't ever think that you have to grow this fruit on your own! In fact, you **can't** grow it on your own! Jesus said, "I am the vine. You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to Me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without Me." (John 15:5)



When we believe in Jesus, we enter God's kingdom and God's Spirit comes to live in us. The fruit of God's Spirit grows and grows in us as we remain with Jesus – as we talk to Him, listen to Him, and read His word. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control grow in us and show in us because of our relationship with Jesus.

**PPT Main Point**

**Main Point:** God's Spirit helps us control our thoughts and actions.