



## Message Discussion Guide Week of November 20, 2022

**Message:** Fruitful, Part 10: Self-Control

**Key Scripture:** [Galatians 5:16-26](#)

**Preacher:** Tom Parkinson

### Message Highlights:

The greatest barrier to seeing the fruit of the Spirit grow in my life is me. Self-deception, self-centeredness, self-importance, and self-pity cause us to make decisions that hinder our ability to pursue God's path for our lives. That's why Paul lists self-control as the ninth and final quality of the fruit of the Spirit. Without it, we will not be able to make godly choices.

#### The need for self-control

- Within each of us there is a battle between the Spirit and the flesh. Self-control is what allows us to choose the Spirit.
- Self-control is needed at every age of life. Even mature believers will have to battle against sinful desires.

#### The nature of self-control

- Self-control means saying "no" to the flesh, by crucifying the flesh. There are places I should not go, things I should not see, words I should not say, relationships I should not have.
- The recipe for sin is desire + opportunity + temptation. Self-control means fleeing from the opportunity.
- Self-control also means saying "yes" to the Spirit and taking on the spiritual practices that God provides: prayer, fasting, scripture reading, and public worship.

#### The normalizing of self-control

- Alistair Begg said "the beginning of self-mastery is to be mastered by Jesus." Self-control is about giving Jesus control of every facet of our lives: our bodies, emotions, and thoughts.

### Discussion Questions:

1. When are some moments in your life when you have needed to demonstrate self-control? How did you do it? What made it difficult?

2. What is the relationship between self-control and the other eight qualities of the fruit of the Spirit?
3. Read [James 1:14, 1 Peter 2:11, and Ephesians 4:23](#)
  - What do these verses tell us about our inward desires?
  - Can you think of a time when your inward desire misled you and carried you away to a place you didn't want to go?
  - If these verses are true, then why do so many people think it is wise to "follow your heart," or "go with your gut?"
4. Read [Galatians 5:22-25](#)
  - What is the relationship between self-control, crucifying the flesh, and walking in step with the Spirit?
  - Do you experience the battle between the Spirit and the flesh in your own life? What strategies do you employ to walk in step with the Spirit?
5. Pastor Tom said that self-control starts when you give control of your life to Jesus. Is there an area of your life where you are living out of control? What practical steps can you take to give control of that area over to Jesus?

**Call to Action:** Take pre-emptive action to remove the opportunity to give in to a temptation. For example, if unhealthy snacks are your temptation, get them out of the house.