



LIFEGROUPS

Series: *The Four Gifts*
Message: *Self-Control*

Scripture: *2 Peter 1:3-9;*
Galatians 5:16-25; Rom. 7:15-20

Date: December 28-29, 2019

—[LET'S START]—

Pastor Heather asked three questions to the 53 people she texted this week. Let's answer those questions as a group. 1) On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the best, how would you rate your own self-control? 2) What is the hardest aspect of gaining self-control for you? 3) What freedoms do you experience when you are living a self-controlled life?

—[LET'S TALK]—

1. **GRATITUDE AND PRAYER:** What happened last week for which you are thankful? What challenges do you see in your life? Your family? The World? Thank God for the beautiful ways that He has been at work. Pray for the challenges that those in your group are currently facing.
2. Do you make New Year's Resolutions? If so, what is one of your New Year's Resolutions for 2020?
3. How would you define self-control? What does Galatians 5:16-25 teach us about a life that is controlled by the Holy Spirit and one that is not controlled by the Holy Spirit? What are some of the contrasts that you notice about a person who lives a Spirit-controlled life and a person who does not? Can the same person struggle with living Spirit-controlled and trying to do things on your own? What does the Spirit have to do with self-control? If the Spirit controls us, then why is it called self-control?
4. Read 2 Peter 1:3-9. Pay special attention to verses 5-8. What do you suppose that Peter means by possessing these qualities "in increasing measure." How have you seen this truth played out in your own life with Christ? How does Peter's teaching in 2 Peter 2 compare with Paul's teaching in Galatians 5? Are there some things that these two passages are revealing to you about God and about Christ's followers? What?
5. Read Romans 7:15-20. What is it that Paul is trying to teach us in this passage? Contrast what Paul says here with what he writes in Romans 12:1-2. How do these two passages relate to each other?
6. Which of the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22, 23 would you like God to most produce in you in 2020? Someone has said that the Fruit of the Spirit is more like a tree that produces fruit punch than a tree that produces a singular fruit. With that in mind, take a moment ask God to produce each of these fruit in your life.

—[LET'S ACT]—

Pastor Heather gave us a great challenge this weekend. This is the week we enter 2020. What areas of your life do you need more self-control in? Let's take time to pray for each other. Pray that we would 1) Feed the Spirit, 2) Believe that God is for us, and 3) Live an open life.

—[SERMON REVIEW]—

- Self-control: a restraint exercised over one's own impulses, emotions, or desires.
- Without fail, the two most lacking fruit of the Spirit demonstrated in people's lives are patience and self-control. The life of the average person is about now, movement, fast, and what I want. Patience and self-control don't grow naturally in that kind of environment.
- Patience and self-control go hand in hand. Often choosing self-control requires me to be patient.
- We can't make hope appear. We can't convince our way into peace. We can't love fully on our own. We can't buy joy. And we can't experience true, freedom-giving self-control without the power of the Holy Spirit.
- It seems that even though I have learned how to exercise self-control in my life, that discovery actually reveals to me more areas in which I need self-control. Even when I seem to get control of one area, there is more to do.
- True Christian faith leads us further in our faith journey. Out of love, gratitude and surrender to God, we work out our faith.
- During the time of Paul and Peter's writings, Greek philosophers prized self-control. They saw it as the ability to act in accordance with one's own will, not giving into any other person, pressure or philosophy. The New Testament writers saw self-control differently. It's not philosophical, it is a reality that comes because of the power of the Spirit in us. It's not of me, it's of Christ. You experience far greater joy when you know you're receiving that which you do not deserve!
- Our lives as Christ followers are to be marked by freedom—freedom that comes from life in the Holy Spirit. We have a choice every day whether we give power to the flesh or to the Spirit.
- Going to the Spirit for our self-control brings true freedom. How do we get that kind of freedom?
 - Feed the Spirit.
 - Believe that God is for you.
 - Live an open life.

—[NOTES]—
