

## Community Group Discussion Questions

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### “The Fruit of Self-Control”

### Galatians 5:22-23, Matthew 4:1-11

**Sermon Series Title:** “The Fruit of the Spirit”

**Sermon Series Summary:** In Christ, we have received new hearts and new life. With this new life, God bears the Fruit of the Spirit. It’s not something we do. It’s something that God grows within us through His Spirit.

**Passage Setting:** Matthew is the first of the Synoptic Gospels in the New Testament, emphasizing the kingship of Jesus. Matthew 4 is right after Jesus’ birth and baptism accounts.

**Summary:** We live in a time when our hearts dictate all that we do and live for. The idea of self-control and self-denial may be offensive to some. But self-control is the ability to pursue the important over the urgent, the eternal over the temporal. It is the ability to choose what is necessary over what is desired. This fruit is what is needed in all the other fruits. We are able to display this fruit in the strength of Jesus, who was self-controlled to the point of death for us.

**Central Truth:** *“May we display the fruit of self-control through the resolve of Christ.”*

**Sermon Points:**

1. The Difficulty of Self-Control
2. The Distortion of Self-Control
3. The Duties of Self-Control
4. The Deliverance of Self-Control

**Opening Question:**

1. Who comes to mind when you think of self-control? Why?

*(Answers may vary.)*

***We are looking at our last Fruit of the Spirit, Self-Control, as we look at the temptations of Jesus.***

***Read Galatians 5:22-23, Matthew 4:1-11***

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1. Why is the idea of self-control so difficult in our times today? Why is it hard for us to be self-controlled?

*(Temptation is everywhere. Pleasure and indulgence are at an all time high. We love the dopamine hits we feel, scrolling through reels, watching shows through streaming, shopping on Amazon/Costco (and in general), playing video games. There are shows dedicated to the best restaurants in the world and reels talking about how we should check out various restaurants. We have porn right at our fingertips. We can sleep with anyone with a swipe. We have the ability to travel and leave our worries/cares behind.*

*We live in a time when emotions dictate our lives. They even trump biology. We are seen as oppressive and restrictive when we talk about controlling emotions.*

*Simply put, it's because of our flesh. We are longing for something to give us life, joy, meaning, and purpose. Sin makes us order our desires and wants the wrong way. We seek after the urgent over the important, the temporal over the eternal.)*

2. What does self-control look like?

*(Self-control is the ability to pursue the important over the urgent, the eternal over the temporal. It's to see every desire, temptation, and thought through the lens of Scripture. We need to interpret and apply the Scriptures correctly to be found upon it. It's the ability to tie our hearts to the Word of God, so that we have God the Word in our hearts. At times, we can't battle Satan like Jesus, and all we can do is to flee from temptation like Joseph.*

*What are the important and eternal matters that should captivate our hearts? It's Christ. It's God's glory. It's obedience to Him in worship. It's a love for neighbor that makes us die to self. It's selfless service and affection that will build others for the sake of His kingdom.)*

3. How does Jesus display self-control, and how does that give us strength to display that fruit?

*(Jesus displayed self-control, resisting the temptation of Satan in the wilderness and throughout His life. He did not consider Himself but died to Himself throughout His life to love and serve others. He obeyed to the point of death, controlling Himself to pursue the important over the urgent, the eternal over the temporal. His greatest love and*

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*desire superseded all other loves and desires, and He was willing to die for it: the will of God and the love for us.*

*The only way we can be self-controlled is not to grit our way through it by our own strength. It's not to put all the other desires in their rightful place by our own strength. It's to have a bigger love capture and captivate the rest of our hearts. It's to be led and moved by a greater desire. And we are able to do this, because Jesus first made us His desire.)*

***Final Thoughts:*** *Every earthly desire and love will ultimately enslave and kill us. Jesus is the only desire and love that served us and was killed for us. It is only by the power and weight of such great love for us that will reorder our loves to live for Him. It gives us the freedom and power to be self-controlled for His glory and kingdom.*