

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.

"We are in our "Fruit of the Spirit" sermon series, and through this series, we see that our growth is not quantified by the works we accomplish but is defined by the fruit God's Spirit bears within us through His Son."

Call: Psalm 103:15-18

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

Title: "The Fruit of Self-Control"

Next Week's Call: Psalm 103:19

Next Week's Text: Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

Next Week's Title: "All is Vanity"

Future Calls: Psalm 103:20-22

Future Titles: "The Vanity of Wisdom" (1:12-18), "The Vanity of Self-Indulgence" (2:1-11), "The Vanity of Wisdom" (2:12-17), "The Vanity of Toil" (2:18-26), "A Time for Everything" (3:1-8)

Fallen Condition Focus: We fall into temptation and lack self-control.

Christ redeeming FCF: Christ was perfectly self-controlled to the point of death on the cross.

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

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.

Reflective Questions:

1. Why is the idea of self-control so difficult in our times today? Why is it hard for us to be self-controlled?
2. What does self-control look like?
3. How does Jesus display self-control, and how does that give us strength to display this fruit?

I. Introduction

A. Hook- It's not a surprise that self-control is the last fruit. It's the fruit that holds the other fruits together. All the other fruit requires self-control and self-denial.

1. Gentleness- to speak a gentle word when everything inside of you wants to scream, because this is the 5th time you told a loved one what to do.
2. Patience- to be patient in your car, even when a car just cut you off.
3. Love- dying to self to love and serve others

B. Proposition

C. Points

II. The Difficulty of Self-Control (vv. 1-2)

A. Adam was tempted in the Garden, but Jesus gets tempted in the wilderness.

1. Adam could eat any fruit in the Garden except from the TOKOGAE, but Jesus had been fasting for 40 days and nights
2. It's because wilderness describes our broken world with broken souls.
3. This is right after the baptism of Jesus where He is declared as the Son of God. The Spirit sends him into the wilderness. There are times we feel that as well. But this testing is what needs to happen before Jesus starts his ministry. Maybe times of wilderness to test our self-control now for greater ministry later?

B. We live in a society where self-control is extremely difficult. Pleasure and indulgence are at all-time high

1. Dopamine hits from tv shows/reels (algorithms)/Amazon/Costco (goal of spending a certain amount of money)/video games (for children with gaming addictions- way of life and socialization), etc.
 - a) 7 years ago: Netflix CEO- Reed Hastings- our biggest competitor is not other streaming services. Our biggest competitor is sleep.
2. Food shows/reels showing restaurants; snacking; losing weight (easy in concept, hard in action)
3. Porn right at your fingertips

4. Sleep with anyone with just a swipe
 5. Desire to travel (expedia commercials- *"Do you think any of us will look back on our lives and regret the things we didn't buy ... or the places we didn't go?"*); leave worries and cares behind; or new experiences- what happens in vegas stays in vegas.
 6. To appeal to younger generations, credit cards have changed from being cards without annual fees to cards that have a lot of travel reward points... because we love experiences, travel, pleasures, etc.
 7. Emotions/Desires are king; emotions/desires trump biology
- C. Opposite is impulsive or uncontrolled behavior
1. We believe that freedom is getting to do whatever we want but ask anyone addicted to substances, alcohol, sex, gambling, you name it... it's not freedom. It's slavery.
 2. Tim Keller talks about how true freedom and joy is found in excellence and giftings cultivated through self-control and self-discipline... musicians... public speakers... athletes... attained through self-control.
 - a) All your accomplishments and achievements- proud moments in life; most likely that comes from discipline and self-control.

III. The Distortion of Self-Control (vv. 3, 6, 8-9)

- A. The Greeks and stoics like Aristotle and Plato believed that if we control ourselves, then nothing else will control us. And if we don't control ourselves, then something else is controlling us. So they thought emotions and desires were inferior... being less than human.
1. But we don't see that in Scripture at all. Read the Psalms... Look at Jesus... emotions and desires are what it means to be human... but emotions and desires are not meant to be our rulers.
- B. All temptations are good things that are used in a distorted way: beauty, pleasure, sex, food, gifts
1. Augustine in the Confessions talks about how sin is not wrong desires... but good desires in the wrong order... and that following Jesus is a re-ordering of those desires to be in their proper place.
- C. For Jesus, food, preservation, and honor that He gets tempted with are all good things, but Satan is tempting Jesus to obtain good things for selfish and sinful purposes.
1. There are parallels between Jesus' temptation and Adam's temptation.
 - a) Temptation of **Food**: Adam (3:1)- *"Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"*; Jesus (v. 3)- *"If you are*

the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”

- b) Temptation of **Life**: Adam- **4** *But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.;* Jesus (v. 6)- *“If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ““He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ““On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.””*
- c) Temptation of **Glory**- Adam- **5** *For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”;* Jesus (v. 8-9)- **8** *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”*

2. For Adam as well, these are good things as well.

- a) Food, Life, Glory are all good things. God welcomed them to eat any food in the Garden. God promised life upon obedience. God will glorify His people on the Last Day. Good things... but the temptation is found in those good things not being used in the right way or at the right time.

D. Counterfeit self-control is discipline and control out of pride.

- 1. We may be like the stoics and separate ourselves from our emotions and desires. We may not be fully human, made in the image of the God of emotions. We may do it for our own glory. Self-denial and self-control may be a form of self-satisfaction and self-salvation... not for God or others but for our self-righteousness.
- 2. We may feel like we are displaying this fruit well, but if it's rooted in pride, we'll judge and condemn others. It will be hard for us to be patient, gentle, and kind. All the fruit are linked together.

IV. The Duties of Self-Control (vv. 4, 7, 10)

A. Parallel with Adam in the Garden as well as parallel with Israel in the wilderness (40 years, 40 days)

- 1. Passages that Jesus quotes are from Deuteronomy- Moses' recounting of God's law after their time in the wilderness
- 2. Man shall not live by bread alone (v. 4)- Israel grumbled against the Lord for food
- 3. You shall not put the Lord your God to the test (v. 7)- Israel grumbled against the Lord for water
- 4. Worship the Lord your God and serve him only (v. 10)- Right after Commandments chapter in Deuteronomy, Law of God

- B. Jesus succeeded where Israel failed. The Word of God was His foundation for resisting temptation.
 - 1. It's the ability to tie our hearts to the Word of God, so that we have God the Word in our hearts.
 - 2. In v. 6, we see Satan taking verses of the Bible out of context for his evil purposes. Bible study plug.
 - C. Sometimes, because we are not strong enough to confront temptation and Satan like Jesus, we just have to flee temptation, like Joseph.
 - D. Jesus was declared as the Son of God, and He is sent into the wilderness to be the greater Adam... the true Israel... and to show what it means to be the Son of God.
 - 1. It's not to perform miracles to sustain Himself. He's going to feed thousands of people later. He can do this, but He doesn't do it here, because it's not for Him and His mission.
 - 2. It's not to show off His power or to show that God is with Him. His mission is to not test the Lord His God.
 - 3. It's not to receive the kingdoms and glory of the world without the cross.
 - E. For Jesus, as the Son of God, there was a love, desire, goal that was greater than His temporal needs and earthly desires. God's glory, His mission, His love for God and others are what allowed Him to die to all the other desires and temptations.
 - 1. The way we are 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.
- V. The Deliverance for Self-Control (v. 11)
- A. We see in Matthew that the devil left Jesus, but in Luke's account (4:13), we see that the devil departed from Jesus until an opportune time. When was that opportune time?
 - 1. Seminary Professor- Greek sentence structure located in one other place in the gospel of Luke- 23:37- "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!"
 - 2. Just like the last temptation to receive the kingdoms of earth without the cross, this is Satan's last effort for Jesus to save himself instead of save the world.
 - 3. And we see Jesus did not fall into temptation even in His greatest hour of need, and instead, He was self-controlled to the end... to His dying breath... receiving the judgment of God.

4. Jesus was also led and captivated by a greater desire... a greater love... a greater joy.
 5. What was it? He had everything: glory, riches, fame, security, comfort. What was He missing that He needed self-control for? What was the greater love that ruled the other loves. God's glory and us.
- B. All the other desires and loves will enslave us and kill us. Jesus is the only desire and love that served and got killed for us first.
- C. CS Lewis- *"If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world."*
1. And the being outside of this world came into this world to bring us to Himself.