

SELF-CONTROL

2 Peter 1:5-7

WHAT IS SELF-CONTROL?

Self-control is the war between impulsivity and doing what's right or beneficial. It's the ability to control emotions, impulses or behaviors to achieve a greater goal.

2 PETER 1:5-7 (ESV)

⁵ For this very reason, **make every effort** to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with **SELF-CONTROL**, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

To our faith we are to add knowledge of Jesus and to knowledge self-control. If self-control is the ability to control emotions, impulses or behaviors to achieve a greater goal, we see the logic of Peter's instructions. The greater goal is to become like Jesus and self-control is crucial to achieving our goal.

Exercising self-control isn't always easy. In some cases, we feel justified venting our anger because someone cut us off on the road or because our kids make us so mad. We are really vulnerable to give into our urges when we're hurt, angry, lonely or tired. That's when we're really vulnerable to seek instant gratification. There's a real battle within (Romans 7:18-25).

What might help us grow in self-control?

GET ENOUGH SLEEP

A lack of sleep has been linked to self-control issues. A number of studies show that a lack of sleep leads to lower self-control. One study in particular showed that those suffering from sleep deprivation exhibited high levels of unethical behavior. Studies also show many adults do not get enough sleep and this is correlated to a decrease in self-control. Getting adequate rest contributes to self-control.

GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO THINK.

Taking time to pray or meditate during the day is a good way of refocusing your mind and giving yourself a chance to calm down if something is irritating you. Instead of getting worked up about a problem, bring the issue to God in prayer, as Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

This time to think is when you can take stock and assess how you're doing and identify areas in which you might need to establish some new habits. Remember, if you are seeking to exercise self-control and establish a new habit, start small, successfully accomplish that step and then

move on to the next step. For example, for people who recognize their daily lives are out of control, Psychiatrist Jordan Peterson recommends making their bed daily as their first step in regaining control. That little step of bringing order into the chaos can literally turn a person's life around.

Give yourself time to pray and seek the Holy Spirit's aid in exercising self-control in those areas of your life that need to be aligned with Jesus.

MAKE A PLAN AND WORK IT

Identify the goal. Assess your present status. Identify obstacles to achieving the goal. Determine the first step you need to take. Make sure that step is doable and be successful at it. Also, remember the example of Dr. Peterson. Remember success builds on itself and if you will do these things, you'll be encouraged to see the positive changes they will make in your life.

I haven't gone deeply into the various kinds of things requiring self-control such as food, sex, alcohol, anger, our tongues, spending, etc.

But there is one issue that is a potential problem for us from young to old and that is social media. I know for myself, a few years back I had to cancel my Facebook account because I found myself spending too much time scrolling through my feed. I don't regret that decision at all. Now, I need to rethink how much time I spend on YouTube....

I'm not going to quote statistics and examples of all the ways social media is affecting us negatively. You know.

Please give thought to your use of social media. If you have children, consider if their usage is healthy or needs to be adjusted.

"Solitude well practiced will break the power of busyness, haste, isolation, and loneliness. You will see that the world is not on your shoulders after all. You will find yourself, and God will find you in new ways."

~ Dallas Willard ~

Grace News & Needs

October VOM – *Combs and hair picks of all sizes.*

Women's Ministry – *Recipe Social, Saturday, October 26th.*

Men's Ministry – *Pickleball, Sunday, November 3rd, 4PM*

John Thompson Memorial Service – *Saturday, November 9th, 11AM.*