

Week Two: *Self-Control: delaying self-gratification*
Romans 12:14, 19-20

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. What do you think of when you hear “self-control”? Does it throw you back to childhood and temper tantrums? Does it make you think of weight loss programs or exercise regimes? Write about your perception of self-control here.
2. What does God say about self-control? Read Galatians 5:13-26.
3. Where does self-control come from?
4. How does your perception mirror God’s Word? Where is it different? Ask God to shift your idea of self-control to be more in line with his.
5. To have fruit of the Spirit, we must have a relationship with God the Holy Spirit who lives in us. What will you do to develop a relationship with the Holy Spirit?
6. As you finish your FIFTEEN, ask God the Holy Spirit to become more real to you and for you to be able to see his fruit—the fruit of the Spirit—growing in you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

7. Elisha was a prophet of God who ministered to God’s people following the prophet Elijah. Elisha had followed Elijah for many years, yet he had one request when it was time for Elijah to be taken to heaven. Read 2 Kings 2:9-14. What did Elisha ask for from Elijah? Did he receive it? How do you know?
8. Not everyone has the Holy Spirit living in them. Read 2 Kings 5:1-16. How does Naaman’s lack of the Holy Spirit affect his understanding of Elisha’s instructions?
9. How does Elisha exhibit self-control when offered gifts by Naaman?
10. You received the Holy Spirit in your baptism (Matthew 28:18-20) or when you first received Christ as your Savior (Galatians 3:14). How does it feel to know that the same Spirit who resided in Elijah and Elisha resides in you as well?
11. Thank God for his Holy Spirit who lives in you. Ask him to help you recognize his voice more clearly and know him more deeply.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

12. Where do you feel that you exert self-control well?
13. Where do you feel like you lack self-control?
14. God is faithful to help us strengthen our self-control in areas where we ask for help: attitude, mind, and mouths...and many more. God is not limited. These are just a few that many struggle with. Read James 3:1-12. What does God's Word say about our tongue?
15. What word pictures does James use to describe the power of the tongue?
16. It is easy to think of the many ways that we have failed to control our speech. How has God used your tongue to bring about good? (Proverbs 15:4, 18:20-21, 21:23) How would you like the Holy Spirit to help you bless others with your speech?
17. Finish your FIFTEEN by asking God to use the Holy Spirit to guard your tongue and to guide your speech.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

18. Where have you seen the Holy Spirit at work strengthening or reminding you of self-control at this point in the week?
19. The Holy Spirit can help control our attitudes towards one another. Read Romans 12:14, 19-20. Consider the relationships in your life that are easy to maintain. What makes them easy? Thank God for providing those relationships.
20. Think on the relationships that are more challenging. What makes them more difficult? Read this article about healthy relationship boundaries. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/healthy-relationships-req_b_10884752
21. What can you do to reframe (control your mindset about) these relationships? How can using a boundary be a blessing for you and/or for others?
22. Reread Romans 12:14, 19-20 with an eye towards how you can control yourself in relationships. How can you be a blessing to someone else?
23. Thank God the Father for his relationship with you through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Ask God to provide opportunities to practice loving others and to trust him with justice.

24. Read this article on extra-grace-required people in our lives. Remember: sometimes we ALL can be the EGR people. <https://www.christianpost.com/trends/how-christians-should-deal-with-people-with-egr-extra-grace-required.html> End your FIFTEEN by asking God to help you have self-control with EGR people, especially yourself.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

25. Sometimes the battle for self-control isn't just in our interactions with others but a battle for our minds. Where or when do you find yourself battling for your mind? What is the battle over?
26. What do you do when you find your mind dwelling where it doesn't belong?
27. Read Isaiah 26:3 and 2 Corinthians 10:5. What tools does God give us to keep our minds steadfast and take our thoughts captive?
28. Choose a verse from the week that the Holy Spirit is bringing to mind. Commit it to memory or put it on a card to keep in a visible place.
29. As you finish your FIFTEEN, pray through the verse. Ask God to bring it to mind as he strengthens your self-control.