

Self-Control

Defining:

- Restraint of one's emotions, impulses, or desires, self-control (BDAG)
- To exercise complete control over one's desires and actions—to control oneself, to exercise self-control, self-control. (Louw-Nida)

Acts 24:25, 2 Peter 1:6, and Galatians 5:22-23 are the same Greek term. I mention this because our central passage has been Galatians 2:23 this month. We've been praying about self-control. However, there are other forms of this term in the NT. Such as . . .

- Adjective - Titus 1:8
- Verb - 1 Cor. 7:9; 9:25
- Below are all the passages with self-control in the ESV.

Self-Control Passages:

- **Proverbs 25:28** A man without **self-control** is like a city broken into and left without walls.
 - It's your defense. Without it, you're defeated. You're broken.
- **Acts 24:25** And as he reasoned about righteousness and **self-control** and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you."
 - Jesus taught the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment in John 16:7-11. Paul was doing this as he taught Felix and his wife, Drusilla, who was Jewish. She was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I. Josephus informs us that Felix had caused her to divorce her first husband to marry him. She was very beautiful, and Felix had to have her as his second wife after divorcing his first wife.
- **1 Corinthians 7:5** Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of **self-control**.
 - To the married.
- **1 Corinthians 7:9** But if they cannot exercise **self-control**, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.
 - To the unmarried and widows.
- **1 Corinthians 9:25** Every athlete exercises **self-control** in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.
 - Paul goes on to say he exercises discipline to not be disqualified.
- **Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, **self-control**; against such things there is no law.
 - Of course, this has been our central passage.
- **1 Timothy 3:2** Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, **self-controlled**, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,
 - Elders need it.
- **1 Timothy 2:9, 15** likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and **self-control**, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly

attire . . . yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with **self-control**.

- Women practice it.
- **2 Timothy 1:7** for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and **self-control**.
 - Paul's instruction to Timothy. He was to fan into flame the gift of God.
- **2 Timothy 3:3** heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without **self-control**, brutal, not loving good,
 - Paul warns Timothy of the kind of people in the last days.
- **Titus 1:8** but hospitable, a lover of good, **self-controlled**, upright, holy, and disciplined.
 - Again, elders.
- **Titus 2:2** Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, **self-controlled**, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.
 - Older men, in general.
- **Titus 2:5-6** to be **self-controlled**, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. Likewise, urge the younger men to be **self-controlled**.
 - Younger men and women. Implies the older women should be as well if they are to teach the younger women to do so. They were to be reverent in behavior.
- **Titus 2:12** training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live **self-controlled**, upright, and godly lives in the present age,
 - What the grace of God has taught us.
- **1 Peter 4:7** The end of all things is at hand; therefore be **self-controlled** and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.
 - Many have not taken advantage of prayer because of their state of mind. We need prayer.
- **2 Peter 1:6** and knowledge with **self-control**, and **self-control** with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,
 - We're partakers of His divine nature. We've escaped the corruption in the world due to sinful desire. So we are to . . .

Applying Self-Control:

- All sorts of applications.
 - This isn't unique to men or women, young or old. From work to parenting, anger to lust, from eating to entertainment.
- Something that actually challenges you.
 - Some people like to eat healthy food. Some people love to work. Many people love to work out. Some people have a naturally calm demeanor. Etc. This calls for us to acknowledge the areas we struggle with. Not the ones we naturally and easily do. These things don't require self-control. So, you may not be lazy, but you love to work above all else. Your area of control is to cut back on work and prioritize your life. You may love to be around family, but don't put in an appropriate amount of work. You may love to serve but also love to be seen by others. So, serve in a way where it's not published to the world.
- It's not all God or all me.

- There are two extremes to this discussion. One approach won't acknowledge our personal responsibilities. "God did it all - it wasn't me at all." That sounds sweet, but it's not true. On the other hand, God has provided everything we need to escape temptation and exercise self-control. He's revealed Himself. He's taught us right from wrong. He's given practical advice. He's given us the perfect motivation. But brethren, after the coach has equipped you, you've got to get on the field and play ball. After parents have trained their children, they have to let go and let them make their own decisions.
- What does Satan offer you? Consider Jesus' temptations in the wilderness.
 - We need to cling to God and His word. Luke 4:4,8,12
 - Satan will flee. And he'll return. Luke 4:13
 - We're told to resist Satan, and he will flee. But he also returns. James 4:7
 - God has given us everything we need to fight. It's time to fight. 1 Corinthians 10:13