

LEARNING HOW TO CONTROL YOURSELF

GALATIANS 5:22,23

INTRODUCTION:

1. When worldly desires conflict with spiritual desires, we might struggle with self-control. (Rom. 7.18-20)
2. David exercised self-control in the cave of En Gedi by sparing the life the one who had threatened his. (1 Sam. 24.1-15)
3. The reason that David spared Saul's life is the same reason we can exercise self-control over our own desires.

I. DAVID EXERCISED SELF-CONTROL

- A. David encounters Saul in the cave.
 1. **1 SAMUEL 24.1,2:** David was a fugitive. (1 Sam. 18.8,9)
 2. **1 SAMUEL 24.3,4:** Providence brought Saul to David.
 3. **1 SAMUEL 24.5-7:** David restrained himself.
- B. What kept David from killing Saul?
 1. **1 SAMUEL 24.6,10:** *"The Lord forbid that I should do this thing...seeing he is the Lord's anointed."*
 2. David resisted killing Saul because of his love and respect for God. (1 Sam. 9.16,17; 24.8)
 3. If I love God and have a deep respect for His word, than I will be compelled to control my desires. (John 14.15)

II. HOW CAN WE LEARN SELF-CONTROL?

- A. Self-control is when we resist our desires and do what God wants instead of what we want. (1 Cor. 10.13; James 1.14)
- B. Two passages that will help us with self-control.
 1. **2 PETER 1.5-7:** *"But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith...self-control."*
 2. **GALATIANS 5.22,23:** *"But the fruit of the Spirit is...self-control."* Self-control happens when guided by the word.

CONCLUSION: At one time, everyone has given into their desires. But Jesus provides an escape.

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"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"
-Mark 16.15

August 16, 2026

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:00 PM

Traditions that Divide

Holding to tradition is dangerous when we try to elevate it to the level of doctrine and bind it on others. Doing so inevitably will lead to division. This danger is not something new in our time. The problem existed even in the first century.

In Acts 15, individuals stepped into other congregations and insisted that *"Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved"* (Acts 15.1). They made circumcision a salvation issue. Circumcision was indeed a requirement under the Law of Moses (Gen. 17.14). However, by the time you come to Acts 2, the Law of Moses was replaced by the new covenant (Heb. 10.8,9). From this point forward, the circumcision, keeping the Sabbath day, and other Old Testament laws became matters of personal preference (Rom. 14.1).

How did the apostles handle this divisive dispute about circumcision? They applied hermeneutical principles by asking two questions. First, they asked, "What did God do?" In Acts 15.6-14, individuals stepped up and testified about what God did through them. These acts indicated that God accepted the Gentiles outside of circumcision. Today, we call this "approved example." Second, they asked, "What did God say?" In Acts 15.15-17, they turned to their Bible and read passages about God predicting salvation being extended to the Gentiles under a new law.

Doctrinal disputes and divisions can be avoided in the Lord's church when both sides willingly turn to the Bible and allow the word of God to decide the matter (1 Pet. 4.11; 2 Cor. 4.6).

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JESUS TRANSFORMS LIVES

Acts 14:1

INTRODUCTION:

1. By learning how much Jesus meant to those who preached Him, we can see how much He should mean to us.
2. Acts 13 sees a shift as our attention is directed away from Peter and toward the missionary journeys of Paul.
3. Paul was transformed more than anyone else in the Bible.

I. THE LIFE OF PAUL

- A. He was a Pharisee.
 1. **Galatians 1.11-13:** “*my former conduct in Judaism.*”
 2. Paul was a Pharisee, raised by a Pharisee, and educated by a Pharisee. (Phil. 3.5; cf. Acts 22.3; 23.6; 26.5)
- B. He was a Persecutor.
 1. **Galatians 1.13:** “*how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure*” Hyperbole - Lit., “to throw over”
 2. His persecution documented. (Acts 8.3; 9.1,26)
- C. He had Potential.
 1. **Galatians 1.14:** “*And I advanced in Judaism*”
 2. Advanced (prokopto): to cut beforehand. Trailblazer.
- D. He was part of God’s Plan.
 1. **Galatians 1.15:** God had a plan even before Paul was born. (Ps. 136.16; Jer. 1.5; Acts 9.15)
 2. **Galatians 1.16,17:** He submitted to God’s plan.
- E. He was a Penman. (Gal. 1.1,2; Eph. 3.3-5)

II. THE MESSAGE OF PAUL

- A. He was educated.
 1. **Acts 14.1:** He preached in the synagogue.
 2. Paul knew his Bible. (Acts 17.2,3)
 3. Do you see Jesus in Scripture? (Eph. 4.15)
- B. He was persecuted.
 1. **Acts 14.2:** Many tried to abuse Paul. (Acts 14.5,19)
 2. Paul refused to be silenced. (Acts 14.7,21)
- C. He was humbled.
 1. **Acts 14.11,15:** He refused to be worshipped.
 2. Do you struggle with ego? (Phil. 1.21)

CONCLUSION: Galatians 2.20: “*Christ lives in me*”

Leaving Your First Love

Is it possible to do all the right things for the Lord and still fall short in His sight? We often assume that as long as our doctrine is sound and our moral convictions are strong, our spiritual condition is completely secure. Yet, in Revelation 2, Jesus addresses a congregation that appeared to have everything together on the outside. In His letter to the church at Ephesus, Jesus reveals three truths about what matters to Him.

First, Jesus commends dedicated service and doctrinal purity. The Lord begins by acknowledging their tireless effort, noting, “*I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil*” (Rev. 2.2). The word translated as “patience” is *hypomone*. *Hypo* is the word for “under.” *Meno* is the word for “remain.” It literally carries the idea of remaining under a heavy burden without giving up. These Christians stood firm against false teachers, exposed fraudulent apostles, and hated the compromises of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2.2,6; cf. Acts 20.28-30). They worked hard and did not grow weary (Rev. 2.3). Standing for truth and protecting the church is essential.

Second, activity cannot replace genuine devotion. Despite their impressive resume, Jesus delivered a sobering rebuke: “*Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love*” (Rev. 2.4). The word translated as “left” is *aphiemi*, which means “to let go, dismiss, or abandon.” They had not abandoned sound doctrine, but they had let go of the deep, fervent love that originally motivated their obedience (cf. Eph. 1.15; 1 Cor. 13.1-3). It is entirely possible to defend the truth while losing the heart behind it. Have you ever caught yourself simply going through the motions? Serving out of routine rather than affection? When worship becomes mechanical, our worship becomes hollow.

Third, the Lord provides a clear path of restoration. Jesus does not merely identify their shortcomings. He gives a three-fold remedy: “*Remember therefore from where you have fallen, repent and do the first works*” (Rev. 2.5). The word translated as “repent” is *metanoeo*. It refers to a change of mind that produces a complete change of direction. We must remember where we once stood, change our attitude, and return to the active faith that flows from genuine love (cf. Gal. 5.6; 1 John 4.19). If they refused, the Lord warned that He would remove their lampstand from its place (Rev. 2.5). True repentance demands action.

Sound doctrine and tireless work can never exist without a heart genuinely devoted to Jesus Christ. When our labor is separated from our love, we place our spiritual fellowship at risk. Let us examine our hearts today, return to our first works, and never be guilty of leaving our first love.

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