

## Lesson 6: Self-Control (2 Peter 1:6)

## What is Self-Control?

As we strive to be the virtuous Christians described in 2 Peter 1, we strive for the excellence of Christ as we live in faith with God (verse 5). This leads us to new knowledge, which must be accompanied by a control of our minds and bodies (verse 6). The Greek term (*egkratos*), which is translated as “self-control” or “temperance,” literally means “to be in possession of power over oneself,” and has at its root the word for “power” (*kratos*). The quality of self-control was central to Paul’s proclamation of the Christian life (Acts 24:25), and appears prominently in the “virtue lists” of the New Testament (Galatians 5:23; 2 Peter 1:6). As a virtuous striving for the excellence of God, self-control is the disposition and habit of controlling the thought or action not willed by God “in all circumstances” (2 Tim 4:5)

## Exercise #1:

Part of what defines self-control is the self that we control. According to the following verses, what are aspects of ourselves that we should have power over in all circumstances?

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| 1. 1 Corinthians 9:27 | 3. Lk 15:13. |
| 2. James 1:26         | 4. Ac 19:36  |

## Why Self-Control?

## Exercise #2

There are multiple ways in which self-control enables a Christian to fulfill his/her purpose in this life. According to the following passage, what does self-control allow a Christian to do and to be?

1. 2 Timothy 1:7; 3:1-3; Titus 2:11-12
2. 2 Cor 7:1;
3. 1 Timothy 3:2, 11; Titus 1:8; 2:2
4. Titus 2:-6
5. 1 Corinthians 9:25

## How Self-Control?

As the previous exercises show, central challenges to self-control are the passions and pleasures of this life. The Bible makes clear that these are hurdles that we overcome by living in and for Jesus Christ, e.g., Romans 13:14; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 10:4-5. Jesus himself exhibited self-control in a number of ways (e.g., 1 Peter 2:23). In exercising self-control, we first want to prevent sin from occurring. This point will involve understanding ourselves and learning how to deal with temptations. Second, once a person sins or has a particular sin problem he/she must learn how to deal with it biblically and stop it, or as Paul frequently says “put it off.” Third, we must learn how to replace sin with a godly counterpart.

## Exercise #3:

There are a number of specific thoughts and actions that the Scriptures prescribe for gaining and maintaining power over oneself to avoid thought and actions prohibited by God. What do the following verses identify as activities of self-control?

1. 1 Peter 2:11
2. Col. 3:1-3, 5
3. 1 Thes 5:7-8; Eph 5:18; 1 Peter 5:8.
4. Peter 4:7; Matt 6:13; Jude 1:24
5. 1 Corinthians 7:5, 9
6. Romans 12:3
7. 1 Cor 9:27