



*From Here to There*

**Self-control**

Galatians 5:16-26, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

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**The character of self-control**

**The challenge to self-control**

**The foundation of self-control**

**The practice of self-control**



## From Here to There

### Self-control

Galatians 5:16-26, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Message-based Group Lesson

### Overview

As we bring the series to a close we are looking at self-control. This last fruit of the Spirit points us to the path for living in the Spirit. This fruit is unique in that it is the only one that does not appear in Scripture in relation to God. It also is a fruit that is not directly related to our relationships with others. In fact this word only appears in any form four times in the New Testament, all the in the writings of Paul. It simply means that in the power of the Spirit we will order our lives in such a way as to choose to engage in the behaviors that move us toward Christ-likeness and to refrain from those that move us away from him and his will.

In summary, this series has shown us that when we place our trust in Christ and his work for us on the cross, we enter into a new life. We come into this new life through the Spirit and are empowered by the Spirit to live the life in the Spirit that is characterized by the display of the fruit of the Spirit.

### Engaging with each other

1. What is the craziest diet you have heard of or been on yourself?

### Engaging with the Bible

1. Read the list of the deeds of the flesh found in Galatians 5:19-21. Which of these do you think self-control stands against?
2. Paul talks about self-control in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. How does the picture of an athlete help you understand this concept? What are some of the disciplines that we might employ to strengthen our walk with Christ?
3. Galatians 5:24 gives us the foundation upon which we can live the life of the Spirit. What is this foundation and how do you think it sets us free to live life in the Spirit?

4. In Galatians 5:25 we are encouraged to keep in step with the Spirit. How would you describe what that means?
5. Read Philippians 2:12-13. When it comes to our spiritual growth, who is doing the work?
6. In this series some of the challenges to life in the Spirit that we have considered are: guilt, shame, fear, alienation, self-centeredness, sense of entitlement. How does walking in the Spirit help us confront and overcome these things?

### Engaging with our lives

In his book *Renovation of the Heart* Dallas Willard describes the general pattern a person must follow if they want to transform some area (not just a spiritual area) of their lives. He writes they must possess three things: Vision, Intention and Means (which he shortens to the acronym VIM). First, if a person does not have an appropriate **vision** of why a change will be necessary or beneficial to their future they are unlikely to pursue it. Second, if a person does not really **intend** to change but merely wishes or hopes that they might someday change (if everything else in their life fell perfectly into place) they will be unlikely to do so. Finally, if a person does not know the relevant **means** (Willard also uses the word method) to change it will be more difficult for them to achieve.

1. As you consider life in the Spirit, apply VIM as the method for getting *From Here to There*.

Vision

Intention

Means