

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Douglas' mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Kelly Hall, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Lamar Mathis, Ms. Matchett, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mr. Sowder, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. Winns, Mrs. LeeAnn Wiser.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:
www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com.
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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The Fruit of the Spirit - Self-Control

By Derek Long

The final quality listed in the fruit of the Spirit contained in Galatians 5:22-23 is self-control. Galatians 5:22-23 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." Truly spiritual people will be those who have these qualities in their life. Are we people who have "self-control"? To determine whether we have self-control it is helpful to consider the question: Who or what controls us?

- Do we possess self-control or are we controlled by the fear of others? The fear of what other people may think or do can be a controlling force in the lives of many. John 12:42-43 reminds us of some who were controlled by the fear of others. It says, "Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Do we make our decisions based upon how we think people will react or what they will think of us? If we allow ourselves to be controlled by others, we will not have self-control and will fail to be proper servants of God (Galatians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:4). Do we blame others for our actions or do we take responsibility for ourselves?

- Do we possess self-control or are we controlled by the direction of the crowd? It is easy to go along with the crowd and much harder to, “Come out from among them and be separate” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). Do we follow the majority? Do we seek to find out the direction most people are going and then choose our course? If we determine our actions based upon what everyone else is doing, we are lacking when it comes to self-control.
- Do we possess self-control or do our desires and passions control us? A person can live based upon the passions and desires of the flesh (Galatians 5:24) or a person can choose to crucify such passions and desires. Many people live for the moment with no thought for the eternal consequences of their actions. Many people follow their desires and passions to do some sinful thing instead of denying themselves. Have we lost control of ourselves because we have surrendered our control to our passions and desires instead?
- Do we control ourselves or does some sinful action control us? Jesus clearly spoke of the enslaving nature of sin. In John 8:34, “Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.’” God told Cain, “And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it” (Genesis 4:7). Are we allowing some sin to rule over our life or are we in control and putting to sin to death (Colossians 3:5)? Many sins take away our self-control. In fact, several behaviors are sinful because of their “addictive” nature. Alcohol can take away a person’s self-control and lead them to do things they otherwise would not do. Noah and Lot show us how alcohol can cause us to lose our self-control (Genesis 9:20-21; 19:30-38). Tobacco use is sinful because it leads one to lose

self-control as a person becomes addicted to it. Gambling can become an addictive form of covetousness and cause a person to lose their self-control. In fact, a person can become a slave to any sin and lose their self-control. Paul reminds the Romans of their past bondage to sin in Romans 6:16-18. He says, “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.” Are we servants of sin or do we possess self-control?

Christians are to live their lives under the direction of the Holy Spirit revealed in the Scriptures and thus possess the fruit of the Spirit. God does not force us to serve Him or do what is right but desires for each of us to bring ourselves into submission to Him. As a result, each of us must have self-control as we discipline ourselves lest we become disqualified (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).