

Biblical Counseling Center introduces eCounselor's Weekly guide, to encourage counselors and all believers in discipleship and daily growth.

### Self-Control—Do you Practice it?

By Dr. Ronald A. Allchin, Sr.

Many people today struggle with a lack of self-control. There is much confusion about what it is and why it's good or not. Those that practice it tend to be successful, those that do not often flounder in many areas of their lives. We need to understand it Biblically because the end times are going to be characterized by persons lacking self-control. "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. For men will be lovers of themselves ...without self-control." (2Tim 3:1-3)



Self Control by its literal meaning seems to describe an activity where a person controls himself in a certain area of life. After all, self-control must be developed, present and active in order for a person to be disciplined, consistent and growing in any area of his Christian life. But does this control in our lives develop by our own self-determination and grunt work, as a command to follow, or is it developed as a fruit of the Spirit, and how?

#### 1. It is a fruit of the Spirit:

Gal 5:22-23 lists self control as a fruit of the Spirit. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. However, some have a mistakenly wrong attitude that if it is a fruit of the Spirit, then they wait until the Holy Spirit brings it to them. "If I am to have the fruit of self control in my life then, Holy Spirit, bring it on. I am waiting for you to develop it in me."

#### 2. It is a command to obey:

2Pet 1:5-6 " mentions self control also as a command to follow. It is something a person must obediently and diligently work to develop, "... giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control...."

#### 3. It is both:

Yes, to understand self-control we define it as exercising the control of your own will in obedience to the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. The reality is we show the presence or lack of self-control in many areas of our lives daily. Consider the self-control you show when:

- You are driving behind a police car and you are in a hurry. Do you pass him?
- Your pastor visits in the midst of a family argument. Do you keep fighting?
- Nature calls while on an interstate with no close rest areas. Do you wait?
- The bed feels so good, but you'll be late if you don't get up. Do you get up?

#### 4. Paul best described self-control in athletic terms:

He wrote in 1Cor 9:25, "And everyone who competes for the prize exercises self-control in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown." Every successful athlete must practice rigid self-control if he really desires to win the prize. Likewise, every serious believer must put the same self-controlled exercise into their spiritual lives as in their athletic pursuits if they are to succeed, until Godly habits become the norm.

#### Biblical Counseling Center

[Main Office](#) - 3233 N Arlington Heights Rd, Suite 302 • Arlington Heights IL 60004

[Fox Lake Office](#), Fox Lake Com. Church • [Lynwood Office](#), Lynwood United Ref. Church

Email [info@biblicalcounselingcenter.org](mailto:info@biblicalcounselingcenter.org) • Telephone (847) 398-7193

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