

# Self-Control 5

*You are what your clearest mental picture of yourself is not just to do with the power of positive thinking – but to do with imagination and God-given images*

## Session Topics:

1. **Starts with the Way we Think** . . . . . 172  
Tools of the Holy Spirit. Renewing of the Mind.
2. **Controlling the Tongue** . . . . . 172  
A natural process. The abundance of the heart. Controlled by the Spirit.
3. **Areas that need Discipline** . . . . . 176  
Spiritual authority. The discipline of the Father.
4. **Dealing with Unforgiving** . . . . . 176  
A life of forgiveness. Put on love – Put on the image of Christ.

## Outcomes:

**After completing this session you should be able to -**

Explain the Christian lifestyle of self-control in speech, discipline and forgiveness.

## Objectives:

- **Describe God's ways of self-control**  
Mentioning the roles of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God and the Body of Christ.
- **Reproduce these in your own life**  
Controlling the whole of your being. Evaluating your progress in each area. Focusing on areas that need discipline. Dealing with the problem of unforgiving.
- **Major on being led by the Spirit**  
Minimising the works of the flesh. Growing in Grace.

**Galatians 5:22, 23** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, **self-control**. Against such there is no law.*

# 1. Starts with the Way we Think

Self-control is the **work of the Holy Spirit** within the believer; it is the outworking of the activity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the One Who produces a **lifestyle** of self-control.

## 1.1 The Tools of the Holy Spirit

There is nothing mysterious and spooky about the way in which the Holy Spirit operates. He has tools and means by which He works.

### ■ The Word of God

The major tool which the Holy Spirit uses is the Holy Scriptures. If we never hear the Word of God or if we don't continually look into the Word of God and make ourselves available and exposed to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit has no means with which to produce **self-control**.

### ■ The Body of Christ

The Holy Spirit also uses our fellow brothers and sisters in the church to produce **self-control**. The **ministry gifts** are given for this very purpose – to equip the saints. **Everybody** has been gifted in some way to help **everybody** else.

**We are to -**

- ♦ exhort one another ;
- ♦ encourage one another;
- ♦ provoke one another to love;
- ♦ provoke one another to good works; and
- ♦ admonish one another.

## 1.2 Renewing of The Mind

We have already discussed that...

Self-control **starts in the way we think** – in whatever we set our minds on. The mind set on the flesh leads to sin and death; the mind set on the Spirit (i.e. the Word of God and the Holy Spirit) leads to **life** and **peace**.

If we change the way we think, we will change the way we act

# 2. Controlling the Tongue

**James 3:2** *If anyone does not stumble in Word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.*

The next step to self-control after **renewing the mind** is to control the tongue.

## 2.1 A Natural Process

If you learn to **control your thinking** by renewing the mind with the Word of God, you will have **no problem with controlling your tongue**.

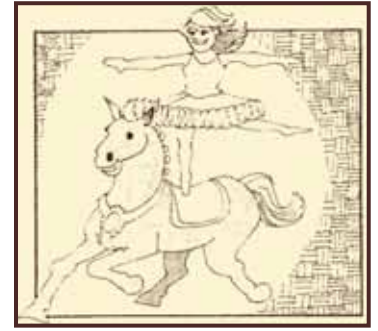
**James 3:7, 8** *For every kind of beast and birds, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the TONGUE.*

Spiritually – not naturally

Natural man can tame any kind of animal, and they do, as is demonstrated in the Circus and the Zoo, but natural man cannot **tame the tongue**! This is based on Scripture.

**Romans 8:6, 7** *For to be carnally minded is death ... because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.*

Only the **spiritual man** whose mind is set on **spiritual things** – the Word of God and listening to the Holy Spirit, and who is **not moved** by his **senses** – **can tame the tongue**.



## 2.2 The Abundance of the Heart

**Matthew 12:34, 35** *For out of the **abundance of the heart the mouth speaks**. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things.*

### ■ The Good Treasure of the Heart

**Matthew 12:34, 35** *The **GOOD MAN BRINGS GOOD THINGS** out of the **GOOD STORED UP IN HIM**.*

The heart of man, via the renewed mind, is called a **treasury** – a place where you keep **your treasure**, i.e. the things that you **value** and **set your heart on**. If you make the **promises** of God your treasure, you will set your **mind on them**, think about them, delight in them and value them. The overflow of these meditations will be **evident** in the things that **you say**.

### ■ The Full Storehouse

Whatever you are full of controls your tongue. Just as water poured into a bottle will eventually overflow, so will the things poured into your heart. If you are full of romance, your tongue will be controlled by romance; if you are full of God's promises, your tongue will be controlled by God's promises.

## 2.3 Controlled by the Spirit

### ■ Staying Full of the Spirit

**Ephesians 5:18-20** *Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

A singing, joyful, spirit and a thankful heart is **always full of the Spirit**.

#### ◆ The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

Even when you do not feel like it – when everything looks black and disastrous – offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise.

### ■ Praying in the Spirit

**1 Corinthians 14:14-18**

*For if I pray in a tongue, **my spirit prays**, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? **I will pray with my spirit**, but I will also pray with my mind; **I will sing with my spirit**, but I will also sing with my mind.*

*If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say 'Amen' to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not **edified**.*

***I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.***

**1 Corinthians 6:19**

*Do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit**, who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?*

WHY should we speak in **tongues**? Whoever gains control of your tongue gains control of your body.

Refusing to allow the Holy Spirit to **take control of your tongue** is refusing to allow Him to take up residence in your body.

Your body is  
the temple of  
the Holy Spirit

◆ **Understand the Immeasurable Value of Speaking in Other Tongues**

Allow the Holy Spirit to control your tongue and you will ultimately bring your whole being under the control of the Holy Spirit.

**Psalm 19:14** *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my Strength and my Redeemer.*

Words are SPIRITUAL

The more we speak in tongues, the more our physical bodies are brought into subjection to the Holy Spirit

## 2.4 Controlling your Body

**Step 1:** Control your **thinking**

**Step 2:** Control your **tongue**

**Step 3:** Control your **body**

This is a **progressive process** – you cannot do the one without the other.

**James 3:2-5** *If anyone **does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.** Indeed we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a **small rudder** wherever the **pilot desires**. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!*

The **spirit man**, the **real you**, is the pilot, the navigator, the rider – the one who directs the course of your life with the rudder, and the bit in your mouth.



We are going in the direction our tongue steers us into. If our lives are **uncontrolled** and **messed up**, it is because **our tongues have** steered us into it through **negative words**.

**Proverbs 18:21** *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

Controlling the body begins with controlling the tongue, which in turn begins with controlling the thinking.

The tongue is a physical organ of the body which is an instrument of the Spirit

You cannot control your body without controlling your tongue, and you cannot control your tongue without controlling your thinking

## 2.5 The Works of the Flesh

**Galatians 5:16-21** *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things you wish. **But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law.** Now the works of the flesh are evident which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like: of which I tell you beforehand, just as I told you in time past, that those who practise such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

As we have read in the Scripture, the reason we do these things is because **we set our hearts and minds on these things**.

### ■ The Law Applies to These

Those people who do these things **are under the law**. The law is applicable to these people – and this is the reason for the law: **to show up the works of the flesh**.

**1 John 5:21** *Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*

♦ **Whatever Captivates Your Imagination**

The things that have captured your worship are **your idols**. Let God and His Word capture your imagination.

## 2.6 Led by the Spirit

**1 Corinthians 14:1** *Pursue love ...*

**1 Timothy 6:11** *But you, O man of God, flee those things and **pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.***

**1 Peter 3:13** *Become followers of what is **good.***

**Galatians 5:18, 22, 25** *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law ... the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

Pursuing love, joy, peace, godliness, etc. is being led by the Spirit. The Spirit is love, joy, peace, kindness, gentleness and righteousness.

### ■ How do I Become Self-controlled?

Set your heart on it, and you will become self-controlled.

## 2.7 The Word of God

**Romans 13:14** *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts.*

Spend time with the Lord Jesus Christ in **the Word and prayer**.

**Luke 21:34-36** *But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.*

### ■ The Will of God

**1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4**

*For this is the will of God: your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour.*

♦ **Disciplined Physically**

**1 Cor 9:27** *But **I discipline my body** and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

♦ **Debtors to the Spirit**

**Romans 8:12, 13** *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors – not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

**2 Thessalonians 3:6** *We command you, brethren, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly ...*

Watch who  
you walk with

### ■ Watch How you Walk

**Rom 14:21** *It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do ANYTHING by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.*

**Luke 17:1, 2** *Then He said to His disciples: It is impossible that no offences should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.*

We are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. This is the benefit of the **new birth**. We were born of the **incorruptible seed of the Word of God** which we must allow to fill us and mature us until we **look like the Word** Who became flesh and dwelt among us. Feed on the Word, imagine the Word and set your mind on the Word.



### 3. Areas that Need Discipline

See **Personal Development** lecture.

Let us recap. We need to be disciplined in our ...

- ◆ time;
- ◆ prayer;
- ◆ Word meditation;
- ◆ mind;
- ◆ tongue; and
- ◆ body.

Proverbs says that a **child left to his own way will bring shame and disgrace to his parents**. In Christ, Christians who are not disciplined bring shame to the Body of Christ which brought them forth by the Spirit in the Gospel.



#### 3.1 Spiritual Authority

God has set leadership in the church in order to **equip, train and disciple** his household, the Church.

**Galatians 6:1** *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.*

**Hebrews 13:17** *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief for that would be unprofitable to you.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:11-14** *Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing. And we urge you, brethren, to recognise those who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.*

#### 3.2 The Discipline of the Father

**Hebrews 12:5-11** *... My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD. Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him: For whom the LORD loves He chastens. And scourges every son whom He receives. ... endure chastening ... Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

### 4. Dealing with Unforgiving

**James 3:7 and James 4:3**

*Strife is the result of **uncontrolled actions** which have their origin in **uncontrolled words** and **thinking**. Following after the Spirit always leads to **peace** and **harmony**.*

#### 4.1 A Life of Forgiveness

**Matthew 18:21, 22** *Then Peter came to him and said; Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times? Jesus said to him: I do not say to you, up to seven times but up to **seventy times seven**.*

An uncontrolled life will affect our relationships with others

If we live to serve and meet the needs of those around us – **realising that people are abusive, harsh and cruel**, are walking in darkness and therefore **do not know what they are doing** – we can walk a life of forgiveness. Who of us is perfect and never makes a mistake? If you want to be forgiven for your mistakes and sins, **forgive others**.

**Matthew 6:14, 15** *For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

We can see clearly that our Heavenly Father expects us to be like Him. He loved us while we were yet sinners and sent His Son to pay for our sin on the cross. How can we be anything different? **God is a forgiver; His children** should be **forgivers** too!

### ■ Meekness

This is the revelation that **God is your protection**, that **God is your helper**, that **He is for you, with you and in you**. Therefore there is nothing that man can do to harm you, and you need not fear what man can do to you.

This  
revelation  
sets you free  
to forgive

Their needs being met is greater and more important than your being hurt by them.

## 4.2 Put on Love – Put on the Image of Christ

### ■ The Character of the New Man

**Colossians 3:12-14** *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering: bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another: even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things, put on love which is the bond of perfection.*



## NOTES