

# SPIRITUAL GROWTH REVIEW

*The Fruit of the Spirit Is...*

## THE SECRETS OF BEING FRUITFUL

**Memory Verse for this week:** *"Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined."* Titus 1:7-8

1. How was your week? Was there anything that happened that we would want to celebrate or pray for with you? *Take 10-15 minutes to share life together. Take notes for prayer requests, and plan to follow up comments made in the weeks to come.*
2. How does self-control as a Fruit of the Spirit enable us to obey Christ? *Self-control is the precursor to obedience. What we say we believe and how we act aren't always aligned, and self-control is how we move from a place of obeying our own will and obeying God's. Without self-control, we are unable to deny ourselves.*
3. Read **Proverbs 25:28**. What does this Proverb tell us about self-control? *Self-control is a powerful defense against sin. Without walls a city is totally vulnerable to any attackers, and neglecting self-control means that whatever desires might arise we will wind up being destroyed by our own doing.*
4. Consider **2 Timothy 3:1-5** and what it says about the behavior of those who are outside of the Church and how lacking self-control enables sin. Is self-control something that the world tends to be concerned with? *Self-control, as it is ultimately aimed at obeying God and not our own desires, is often mocked. Denying our temptations, whatever they may be, is viewed not only as backwards but even repressive. Being self-controlled speaks loudly that we are not our own, but that we belong to God and must obey him.*
5. Self-control can often feel like an uphill battle when we are gritting our teeth and attempting to obey God through bending our own will. Why is it so hard to change our own desire and obey God on our own? *Our individual wills, even as Christians, are still going to desire sin. As long as we live we will be practicing self-control as we rid ourselves of everything that is not Christlike. This is the key to self-control: that it ultimately has very little to do with our own will and everything to do with God and His will. How we abide in God will ultimately inform who's will we obey.*
6. Clearly self-control is required for us to adequately defend against temptation when it arises, but what about self-control enables us to be effective in our Christian witness? Read **2 Peter 1:5-8** and then ask: how can our self-control make us more or less effective in our faith, depending on how much we exercise it? *An ineffective faith is one that is powerless to glorify God. How can we glorify God effectively if we are powerless to repel the enemy, or are unable to bring our temper under control? On the contrary, an effective faith is one that empowers us to glorify God in ways that we could never on our own: in other words, and effective faith is one that is allowing God to work through us to achieve His goals and to bring our hearts into alignment with Him.*

7. What other Fruits of the Spirit does self-control require? What other fruits could self-control help us to show?