

The Fruit of the Spirit – Self Control

An Introduction

Self-control seems rather self-explanatory, and not at all like something reserved for Christianity. Yet, why are people self controlled? (You may think Americans aren't – they do whatever they like whenever they want.) What causes self-control? This passage looks at Jesus practicing self-control.

Read Matthew 4:1-11

Notes

References: v4 – Deuteronomy 8:3, v6 – Psalm 91:11-12, v7 – Deuteronomy 6:16, v10 – Deuteronomy 6:13

Exploring the Passage

- 1) Jesus has just gone 40 days without food “so that the devil could test him” – and the devil does! How hungry do you think Jesus felt? Why would the devil's first temptation be so tempting?
- 2) The devil's first two temptations begin with “If you are the Son of God...” What is the temptation in that? How does Jesus respond?

Charting the Course

- 1) Each time Jesus responds to temptation, he says a line of scripture. What might that say about exercising self-control?
- 2) In this passage, Jesus uses self-control to combat temptation. Do you think self-control is just a response to a negative action, or can it be something positive for others?
- 3) What do you think makes self-control something that comes from the Spirit of God?

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

"'He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.