

egkrates Bible Study: Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)Key Word: self - control

The word means:

- 1) strong
- 2) having power over
- 3) controlling, restraining, mastering one's self, temperate.

By the numbers:

Average credit card debt.	<u>\$ 8,000</u>
Average debt to gambling.	<u>\$ 17,000</u>
Average weekly amount spent on a latte and muffin.	<u>\$ 35</u>
Average person watching TV daily.	<u>4</u> hours <u>35</u> minutes

Lesson from Scripture: *The Life of Joseph*

Key Verse: Genesis 41:38

So Pharaoh asked them, "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?"

Read Genesis 39:6-12

Facing temptation is never easy. A loyal man, Joseph had been prosperous in Potiphar's house, and he was trusted by Potiphar. When Potiphar's wife offered to share her bed with him, he refused to have an affair with her, and he chose to run away (v 12). He refused to have sex with her over and over again.

Life Lessons from Joseph:

- 1) Copy Joseph's words from verse 9: "How then could I _____
_____?"

- 2) What's most important are not the events of life, but your response to them.
- 3) With God's help, any situation can be turned around for something good.

Joseph never wavered from his devotion to the Lord. We can all learn lessons from Joseph's self-control. It is so easy today to give into the temptations that Christians face. Sometimes it is actually more difficult to walk away from temptation than to obey the temptation.

God rewards your self-control. Observe lesson from Joseph. While he spent a number of years in prison and as a slave, eventually he rose to the highest appointed position in Egypt and even found his family once again. God will reward your self-control, too!



1. Consider what happens when we don't have self-control.

- a) Read Proverbs 13:3. What happens to the person who does not control his tongue?

- b) Read Proverbs 21:17. What happens to a person who does not control his desires for pleasure?

- c) Read Proverbs 25:28. What is a person without self-control like?



2. The Scripture gives us some specific areas of life in Which we are to have self-control.

a) Read Psalm 101:5. What are some things we need to control so that the Lord is pleased with us?

b) Read Romans 13:8. What debt should we have?



3. The right motivation for self-control is very important.

a) Read Philippians 3:8. What is the right motivation for having self-control in our lives?

b) Read 1 Peter 4:2. What should be our aim in life?



4. It is important to understand how we are to achieve self-control.

a) Read Matthew 16:24. What two things we need to do to control ourselves and follow Jesus? What does it mean?

- _____
- _____

b) Read Ephesians 4:22-24. What are three steps we need to take in order to have self-controlled lives?

- _____
- _____
- _____

c) Read Titus 2:11-12. What are two things the grace of God teaches us?

- teaches us to say _____
- to live _____ - _____



5. Finally, we need to see the benefits of self-control.

a) Read 1 Peter 4:7. What will we be able to do better when we are self-controlled?

b) Read 1 Peter 5:8-9. Why is it so important for us to be self-controlled?

c) Read 2 Peter 1:8. What will self-control keep us from? What does this mean?

- _____ and _____

Christian face temptation every day, and not everyone is prepared to overcome those temptations. At some point most people are faced with the desire to embrace sin, whether it is greed, sex, gossip, cheating, and more. Sometimes temptations are small, so they are pretty easy to overcome, but other times the desire seems too large.

Discussion Question: What's the danger of embracing a temptation?

Here are some things you can do to help you avoid and overcome temptations:



Step 1 - Identify Temptations

Everyone is a little different, so it is important to identify which temptations are more difficult for you to overcome. For example, some people may find that gossip is more alluring than cheating. When you know what tempts you the most, you can support your goal for escape.

- Make a list of what tempts you.



Step 2 - Pray About the Temptation

Most Christians know the temptations that are difficult to overcome. For instance, if you find gossip a great temptation then pray every night for the strength to overcome the gossip. Ask God to provide you with the strength to walk away from the gossip.



Step 3 - Avoid the Temptation

When we know what temptations are being the most difficult, we can prepare ourselves for those situations. In some cases we can even avoid the temptation itself.

For instance, if gambling is a temptation, then you need to avoid situations where you might find yourself following your desire. If you have a tendency to gossip, then you may want to avoid another person that also gossips.



Step 4 - Use Your Bible for Inspiration

The Bible is available to offer Christians advice and guidance, so why not use it? 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "You are tempted in the same way that everyone else is tempted. But God can be trusted not to let you be tempted too much, and he will show you how to escape from your temptation", this verse can inspire you in moments of temptation.

Study and memorize Bible verses that will help you with your specific weakness (use the list you made in Step 1).



Step 5 - Use the Buddy System

Do you have a friend or leader that you can trust? Sometimes it helps to have someone you can talk to about your struggles. You may even ask to meet regularly with your friend to keep you responsible and honest.

Prayer Focus

This week focus your prayers on self-control. Make a list of areas in your life that you feel a self-control and strength are necessary and then ask the Lord to help you overcome the temptations you face.

Use Steps 1 – 5 as your guide.