

SELF CONTROL

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. Against such things there is no law” (Gal. 5:22, 23).

- Thought # 1. There are too many lukewarm and passive worshipers in church. Wouldn't it be wonderful if people would leap and dance before the Lord like David did? David didn't care what anybody thought but God. He was leaping and dancing before the Lord with all his might. When his wife Michal made fun of him, it didn't matter. David was only concerned about pleasing God (2 Sam. 6:12 - 23). Why can't we have the same type of enthusiasm in church? We can get enthused at a soccer game, why not church?
- Thought # 2. Enthusiasm out of “control” is not good. Soccer fans, for example, sometimes get violent. Consider, for example, the riots that broke out at the Moses Mabhida Stadium in South Africa following the 2-0 defeat of the Kaizer Chiefs. Out of “control” fans set fires in the stands, ripped up parts of the stadium, and attacked security guards.
- Thought # 3. Unfortunately, the church in Corinth also allowed their enthusiasm to get out of “control”. The brethren there got so excited about worship that it created chaos. When everyone dances and leaps to his own music the church is not edified. Neither did the mayhem created by people out of “control” please God. God is not the Author of confusion but of peace (1 Cor. 14:33). We must follow after that which brings edification and peace.
- Thought # 4. The spirits of the prophets are subject to the “control” of the prophets (1 Cor. 14:32). The fact that David danced before the Lord with all his might does not imply that he was not in control of what he did. True worship is not in chaos and confusion but in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). The depth of their depravity at Corinth is illustrated by the fact that some even got drunk while taking the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:21). True worshipers must be in “control” of themselves or what they do is not true worship.
- Thought # 5. The first use of the word “worship” in the Bible is in Gen. 22:5. This word describes the unreserved obedience and pure devotion that Abraham manifested to God by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac. It is hard to imagine a soccer fan more devoted to a team than Abraham was to God. Abraham like David, however, was in complete “control” of himself during this entire process.
- Thought # 6. There are ditches on both sides of the road. Enthusiasm out of control is just as bad as no enthusiasm at all. The Holy Spirit helps us to solve this problem by producing fruit in the lives of believers. One manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit involves “self control”. People who cannot “control” themselves need the Holy Spirit!
- Thought # 7. Our text does not say the “fruits of the Spirit are” but the “fruit of the Spirit is”. In other words, “self control” is only one facet of the Spirit's ministry. All nine manifestations of the Spirit mentioned in this text are “one”. Like a beam of light shining through a prism becomes all the colors of the rainbow, so also the Holy Spirit shining through the prism of a child of God becomes nine manifestations of godliness.
- Thought # 8. Here are a few ways the Bible teaches us to receive the Holy Spirit. # 1 - God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask for Him (Luke 11:13). # 2 - God gives the Holy Spirit to those who repent and are baptized (Acts 2:38). # 3 - God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him (Act 5:32). One important manifestation of the Holy Spirit is “self control”.
- Those in “control” of themselves find that true worship is not worked up, but prayed down!