

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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### **Self-Control**

"If you lose self-control everything will fall." – John Wooden

"Self-control is a key factor in achieving success. We can't control everything in life, but we can definitely control ourselves." – Jan Hilado

"By constant self-discipline and self-control you can develop greatness of character." – Grenville Kleiser

"Industry, thrift and self-control are not sought because they created wealth, but because they create character." – Calvin Coolidge

"You can't control other people. You can only control your reactions to them." – Anonymous

Self-control is essentially the ability to control yourself. It may sound easy, but in reality you may find it one of the hardest things to do.

Travis Bradberry wrote an article on The Six Secrets of Self-Control, in which he mentioned a survey taken of some two million people who were asked to rank the order of their strengths in 24 different skills. And amazingly, self-control wound up on the bottom of the list. (Forbes)

Scripture has a lot to say about self-control. On one occasion, the apostle Paul appeared before Felix and his wife to speak of his faith. The sacred text says, "Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, 'Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you'" (Acts 24:25).

As Paul listed the fruit of the Holy Spirit in his writing, he mentioned "self-control" (Gal. 5:22-23). We also know he warned Timothy about those who would be "without self-control" (2 Tim. 3:3).

In perhaps one of the most noted passages in Scripture, in what are sometimes referred to as, "The Christian Graces," we note: "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love" (2 Pet. 1:5-7).

The importance and need for self-control is obvious. How can we hope to follow Christ if we can't get a handle on our own feelings and emotions? Even in the matter of discipleship, Jesus charged, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24).

How can one deny himself if he cannot exercise self-control? Again, saying no to self, and sacrificing what we consider precious is not as easy as it sounds. God must always come first in everything. If He does not, then it is quite apparent that you have not yet learned the meaning of self-control.