



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Week 4: Self-Control

QUESTION 1

Take a moment to read the scripture provided as a group out loud. Please have each member of the group share what stands out to you. Feel free to share more than one thing. Yes, I know that you did the same exact thing last week, just trust me - this is good to do. **2 Peter 1:3-15 His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. ¹² So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. ¹³ I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, ¹⁴ because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. ¹⁵ And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.**

QUESTION 2

Our focus today is on the third of seven virtues that Peter instructed us to add to our faith.

2 Peter 1:5-6 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control... Let's start by understanding what self-control is and the benefits it offers. Self-control is the ability to regulate emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in the face of temptations and impulses to achieve long-term goals. A key component is willpower, which allows individuals to override immediate desires for better long-term outcomes. It is often described as a teachable skill, sometimes called self-discipline or self-regulation. Scientific research highlights self-control as a cornerstone of success and well-being, predicting better health, higher income, improved relationships, and greater happiness. It functions like a muscle, where regular exercise of willpower strengthens the ability to resist temptations and achieve long-term goals, reducing stress and enhancing life satisfaction.

When you think about self-control or willpower, what immediately comes to mind? Do you agree that self-control is a cornerstone of success, leading to better physical health and deeper relationships? If so, why? Our definition of self-control describes it as a teachable skill. Do you believe that people, especially you, can learn to have more self-control?

QUESTION 3

The Bible consistently teaches us about the value and importance of self-control. Examine these verses:

Proverbs 16:32 Better to be patient than powerful; better to have self-control than to conquer a city.

Proverbs 25:28 A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls. Take a moment to discuss these two Proverbs, what do you think they are trying to teach? How does this ancient wisdom directly affect your life, especially in your current season?

QUESTION 4

Self-control and willpower have a natural enemy: cravings and temptation. You may find it easy to stay in control until a craving, desire, or temptation hits. Let's call the moment of temptation a willpower challenge. A willpower challenge occurs when one part of you wants something and another part wants something else. One part of you wants to do or not do something that you know would go directly against your long-term goals or against biblical teaching. When you face a willpower challenge, you will either succeed or fail. Succeeding means staying in control of yourself and preserving your long-term goals, and honoring God. Failing means losing control and giving in to an immediate desire. Be honest with your group and share what some of your current willpower challenges are. Also share a few examples of when you have generally succeeded or failed. What conditions make your failure more likely?

QUESTION 5

One of my favorite verses in the Bible on temptation is **2 Corinthians 10:13**, the scripture shares three incredible truths about temptation, take a moment to identify all three. **2 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.** Discuss as a group what the three truths about temptation are from this verse. How do these truths speak directly to the willpower challenges that you encounter in your life?