



**The Fruit of the Spirit  
Self Control  
Courage Church  
Detroit, MI**

Today is our final week on the fruit of the Spirit. It has been an awesome journey, and I hope that it has been a huge blessing to you. If you missed any of them, all ten are available on our podcast and we have the full sermon videos on our online campus at [www.couragechurch.com](http://www.couragechurch.com)... go back and watch the ones you

missed because the whole big idea is that all nine of these fruits work together in your life and will all be growing, together, if you are walking with the Spirit.

The premise of the whole series has been, "What does the fruit of a person look like, in this Kingdom? Knowing that we are citizens of a different Kingdom." Because here in the earthly kingdom, you can have love, and joy, but maybe you lack peace. Or maybe you lack gentleness.

But a person who walks with the Spirit, the fruit of their lives will be love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. All of these things will be growing in them. We have said over and over for these last ten weeks, it is "The Fruit of the Spirit" - not "the fruits of the spirit." - They are not like spiritual gifts... You don't say "I am a loving person, love is a fruit of the Spirit so I must have the Spirit."

That's not the way that it works. These nine things, collectively, is the fruit of the Spirit. Another way to put it would be, the "results" of the Spirit. If the Spirit is living in you, things things will be the result of it. Well, today's fruit, the final fruit, is the fruit of "Self Control" or "Temperance." I can't tell you how many times I have had one of you come up to me and say "I can't wait until you get to self-control" along with a joke about how that is the point. You must control yourself... So, that day has finally come. Self Control. We

If you have your bibles, open them to Proverbs 25, we are going to take a look at a brief word from the wisest man who ever lived, Solomon.

Proverbs 25:28 says “A man without self control is like a city broken into and left without walls.”

I have an extremely addictive personality.

Its by the grace of God that I never tried drugs, or I never smoked, or never even drank, because I would have been the guy that was always drinking... always smoking... always doing those things. I would have been the guy who ended up in jail because of it, or worse. Everything that I ever have done, I have done to the extreme. When I got my first guitar, I played it all day, every day. It became the only thing I did, ever, and it was that way for many many years. You would think that I would be much better at it than I am. My wife is the same way. She tells me when she was a kid and she would open a bag of Doritos, she would eat the entire bag in one sitting. Now I can't even get her to eat Doritos. She thinks they are gross, so when I open a bag, I have to be the responsible one and make sure that we don't throw any of it away.

At one point, I became obsessed with DVDs, and I spent all of my money on them. All of my money. I had so many, now I hate DVDs, there are maybe 2 or 3 in our home. I tried to play a cartoon for my kids this week on a DVD, and the whole thing skipped... I tried a different DVD, again, it skipped. It froze, it didn't do anything. Fiona in her little voice was yelling “Daddy its not working!” It doesn't work. Because DVDs aren't awesome.



Before that, it was CDs. I joined those little CD clubs, where you get 8 CDs for a penny, and then they own you until you buy six more at super insanely high prices. I had multiple memberships. Actually I had multiple memberships to the one that

was 8 for the price of one... the one that was 8 for 1 penny had the weird six more at triple price contract... which by the way, 8 it was always a bit disappointing when that box comes in the mail, and it is like 4

inches tall. I expected 8 CDs to come in a bigger box, the reality of how little I was actually getting each time was rather disappointing.

The whole thing was bad.

There is an anomaly in our society today.

People, in a general way, are more dedicated than ever to their health, to their well being, to working out and taking care of themselves. They are more disciplined. We have a network marketing scam for every possible approach to your health and diet and exercise... yet at the same time, we struggle more with addictions. We are burying more young people who pushed the limits of their body just a little to far with the use of drugs or alcohol or something along those lines. We are losing more friends, I have lost more friends than I care to talk about.

We are losing kids to habits and addictions and decisions that are made in a moment, but have affects that last a lifetime.

Never has more been available to us, and never has more temperance been needed.

We think that we are the ok ones if we control ourselves when it comes to liquor, or we are able to control our sexual desires, But what about your phone? What about your iPad?

I had this thought...

What if we went back in time, and you talked to yourself 15 years ago, and you told 15 years ago you that 15 years from now you would spend hours a day starring at your phone... checking nothing. Doing nothing. That it would be *hard* for you to put it down.

I assume that "15 years ago You"'s first question would be:

So wait, you don't even *talk* on phones anymore? You just stare at it?

“15 years ago You” would take their flip phone out of their pocket, shake their head in disgust and sadness and then probably knock you out because they were probably stronger than you are now. They would tell you to go climb a mountain. They would tell you that phones are for making phone calls.

They would probably then crush the flip phone and say “I am going back to landlines forever, this is obviously a slippery slope.” - Lets Kill this before it starts.

“15 years ago you” would be furious that you wasted your addiction on something so stupid. At least you could have made an idol out of something cooler than a phone. At least you could have went to a few parties and gotten into a little trouble.

Our friends had this really bad joke growing up... We had a friend who kept going back to his old ways and we would always say he is “just working on his testimony.”

“15 years ago you” would probably think, if you had to get addicted to something, at least maybe you could have worked on that “testimony” a bit more, because my testimony is very boring! I didn’t do very many “bad” things, but I had just as many problems!... Nobody wants to hear the testimony in church “I was addicted to my phone. It controlled my whole life.”

But This was your poison.

But you don’t understand “15 years ago me,” this phone has a Facebook app. And an instagram app. And a PBS kids app that I can give to my kids when I need a baby sitter, and teach them to be addicted to cartoons before they are even 5.

Every time I find myself starring at my phone these days, I literally think to myself “your life is SO BORING.” Do something. Go climb a mountain. Go scale a wall. Yet I keep coming back to it. All day.

And then it gets worse... because *this addiction* we can bring into our home life, and into our living room, and the kids may try to get our attention and yet we push them away while we block them out and try and get this “moment” to ourselves, this “moment” that we will never, ever have again with these precious, precious children... and we don’t realize that our whole family is being controlled by the way we feed off of this strange and controlling addiction.

Because sin is subtle. It often takes residency in the things that are good, but are not controlled.

A good thing can become a deadly thing if it is misused. 1 Corinthians 6:12 puts it this way:

“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything.”

Paul refused to let anything other than Jesus control his life.

Self Control, or as the King James version calls it, temperance, is the Greek word *egkrateia* and it means “The Virtue of One who masters his desires and passions”

If you break the word down, it stems from the word krat, which means power, or lordship, or dominion... and this word *egkrateia* combines the word krat with the word ego, which means “self.” So the big idea behind this word is that you have lordship over yourself... Or perhaps a better way to say it is the other way around, that **your self does not have lordship over you.**

You are not controlled by the quick impulses, the fleshly desires, or even the first instincts.

You are not controlled by what you want to do... Instead you do what you are *supposed* to do. You do what the RIGHT thing is to do... And many times there is a large divide between the two.

And the first place most people go when they think of Self-Control is they think about willpower. But biblical self control is NOT willpower. Will power can have a role in Self Control, but it also can contradict it. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:25 says that athletes exercise self control to receive a perishable reward... but “an imperishable.”

Will power is the ability to determine your actions. Your “will” is the faculty by which you initiate action. To an athlete training, self control would mean that they stick to a strict exercise and eating schedule. But that is just personal discipline.

But you can live in the flesh and still live a disciplined life. You can even be controlled by your discipline to your self. But biblical self control means you don't let yourself, and your flesh, (even your own *discipline*) possess lordship over you.

Okay. So back to the Proverb that I read to you at the beginning.

Proverbs 25:28 says “A man without self control is like a city broken into and left without walls.”

A man WITHOUT lordship over his own desires... A man who is not able to resist when temptation comes his way, is like a city left without walls.

Two bible stories come to mind for me when I think about a city without walls.

First, I think about Jericho. It was a city with a wall...

Joshua 6 starts by telling us, that wall was secure.

The city can rest assured, there is a wall, and nobody is getting in. But, of course, we know that the Israelites took that city, and they did so by marching around it once a day for six days. The ark of the Lord circled the city one time per day, and seven priests blew trumpets continually during the circle, but Joshua told the people “don't let any words come out of your mouth until the day I tell you to speak” (Joshua 6:10). So once a day, for six days, the circled.

And on the 7th day, they circled the city 7 times. And on the 7th time, Joshua finally told the people, “SHOUT! For the Lord has given you the city.” (Joshua 6:16) and the wall fell to the ground, and the Israelites took the city.

The moment that wall came down, the people of Jericho had no way to defend themselves. They didn't have a leg to stand on.

When the wall came down, it was left in disarray. It wasn't even their city anymore. It had been taken.

And so we have the wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon, saying that if you lack self control, you might as well be Jericho after the Israelites attacked it. You aren't your own land anymore. Its been taken over by something else.

The second story I think of is the story of Nehemiah. The book starts by Nehemiah discovering... the wall of Jerusalem is broken down (Nehemiah 1:3), its gates were destroyed by fire.

And then it says (Nehemiah 1:4) “as soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days...” and then he fasted, and prayed.

And one might think, why weep? It is just a wall.

Because Jerusalem was in a far more vulnerable state than it should have been in in that moment.

You see, 150 years before that, The Israelites were taken into exile in Babylon, and King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed their beautiful temple. Well, by this time, the Exile was over, and the Israelites had made their way to Jerusalem.

The book Ezra, which is one book before Nehemiah, is the account of how they rebuilt the temple that had been destroyed. So under the leadership of Ezra (who was a Priest), they rebuilt that temple, in Jerusalem...

but what good is rebuilding the temple in a place that is so vulnerable?

Nehemiah comes in and he realizes this. We have this beautiful, beautiful temple, and its totally open for anyone who wants to wage war on it. It is totally open for an enemy attack. Its completely vulnerable.

Now what we tend to do when we read the old testament, is either skip books like Ezra and Nehemiah entirely, or if we do read them, read them exclusively as a separate narrative rather than connecting the dots and the symbolism of everything that happened in the old testament, and how it points to Jesus and applies to our lives... Because in case you have never heard me say this or didn't know... the whole thing bible is about him.

Well let me show you something cool. (at least I think it is cool)

You see, the name Nehemiah means "comforter" - which also happens to be the name of the Holy Spirit. Jesus speaks of the Spirits coming in John 14:26: But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (KJV)

We call him, "The Great Comforter."

Ok. Hold that thought.

Ezra was the priest... and one book earlier, he oversaw the rebuilding of the temple. He made Jerusalem new again, but even after it was new, it was open. It was vulnerable. It could be broken into and pillaged again at any moment. It was still exposed.

It took "The Comforter" coming and building a wall around it so that it would have a defense.

And when we read that, we should see a picture of our lives.

A picture of the gospel. Of the triune God who not only wants to rebuild our lives but also wants to build a wall around it. 1 Corinthians 6:19 - "and do you not know that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit?"



A temple, that if you lack self control, is completely open to utter destruction.

Now get this, Hebrews 4:14 says that Jesus is our great High Priest. The Priest rebuilds the temple, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, the comforter, who then comes in, and when he is there, he begins to work in your life, and He builds that wall.

And we need that wall!

Because how many of you know, that when you get saved, it never actually gets easier does it?

So many people get saved after being sold the illusional bill of goods of a life that is made brand new, and all your problems will go away, and you will be free from pain, trials and worry, here and now. And they are surprised when the same temptations they used to have, come back even stronger.

Thank God for grace. Because we all need it. Every single day.

Even Paul says in Romans 7:19 "I don't do the good that I want to do, and I keep doing the evil that I don't want to do." Why? Because there is a real and true Devil that is wandering around our earth seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8), and he preys on peoples hearts. He always works in lies, his objective is to get your heart wrapped around a lie.

Because if he can get your heart, he can control your life. But he can't work without you. The Devil needs you to fulfill his purposes, and there is no place he pounces faster, than on someone who lacks self control.

Tim Keller said this once and its so insightful, "The Devil is a musician, but he is not a singer." And what that means is that he can't make music on his own. He needs an instrument.

I can stand on stage and strum an air guitar all day long but until you put a real guitar into my arms its not going to actually make any noise.

He needs an instrument.

He is always looking to see who is vulnerable... Who lacks self control... If you are struggling with desires, then he is going to put those desires in front of you...

that is why we need the Holy Spirit. He convicts. He Guides us. He empowers us... and he always points us to Jesus. What does Jesus say in John 14:26 (we just read it)? - He (The Holy Spirit) shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

If the Spirit is living in your life, he will bring to light the problem areas in your life. The parts that maybe you haven't given fully to Jesus yet. He will remind you what Jesus taught.

And if you read Nehemiah, it says in chapter 2, (Nehemiah 2:13-16) that what Nehemiah did was he went out in the night, and he began to inspect this broken down wall... to see how weak the city was, and he says this in verse 17 (Nehemiah 2:17):

"You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision." -

What he means by derision is:

That we would not be open to abuse anymore.

That we would not be open to taunting, and scorn, and reproach anymore.

Is the Holy Spirit saying that to you this morning? As he examines your life?

"Do you see the trouble you are in?

Are you in ruins?

Is your wall destroyed and your gates burned?

Do you have self control?

Are you always spending all your money on the first thing you want? Are you breaking into your retirement (if you are fortunate enough to have one in the first place) to have the life you want, now?

Do you respond to your sexual desires by acting on your first instincts? Is your heart easily won and thus easily broken? Are there patterns in your life that you keep following even though they result in the same baggage... the same sadness. The same unfulfilling life.

Have you tried to change your environment... changed your church... changed your friends, only to find that the same thing keeps happening over and over again because wherever you go, you are. And you work off of the same instincts and the same desires in every circumstance.

Is your life like a movie that you hate but yet you replay it over and over and over and over because you just can't bring yourself to hit the stop button on your emotions, and they keep coming to life in your actions.

“A man without self control is like a city broken into and left without walls.” A man without self control is just like Jerusalem. A man without self control lacks the Holy Spirit. It is just like we have been saying all along about the fruit. Its one fruit. You would think it was the fruits of the spirit, because it seems like there are nine of them. But there is one. And a man who lacks self control *lacks the Holy Spirit*.

if you don't have self control in your life, you are just as vulnerable as Jerusalem was when Nehemiah found it. But Nehemiah didn't just see the place that meant so much to him open for attack and then walk away from it still in a vulnerable place. No. He saw it, he diagnosed it, he said, we have to fix this right away, and he rebuilt the wall, because it was worth it. Let me try and explain why this is so important.

Next week, we are going to start our ten commandments series. We are going to take a close look at each of the commandments, just like we did in this series with each Fruit in the fruit of the Spirit. And of every fruit we have learned about, there is not a better way to close the Fruit series than Self Control because it is kind of the glue that holds all the others

together. Self Control flows out of the other fruit, and if it lacks, then there is no wall around your life. There is no Comforter. There is no Spirit.

and there is no better fruit to lead into the Ten Commandments, because what causes you to break the laws that you know in your heart are wrong?

Answer: A fleshly need to fulfill the desires of your heart, **THAT YOU KNOW GO AGAINST** what your renewed heart is telling you to do.

Are you addiction to your job? or your success? It will almost certainly lead to you not remembering the Sabbath. Even if you are addicted to serving, it can lead to not remembering the Sabbath. You need a day off. My job is the church, and I have been guilty of this.

Your stupid phone could become an idol. For most of us it has already. We would never admit that our phones come before God... and if given the choice I am sure most of use would choose God... but does the evidence of our lives point to idolatry when it comes to controlling our devices?

Anger, if not brought under control, can lead to murder.

Are you having a hard time getting control of Lust? if not brought under control, it can, and almost certainly will lead to adultery.

Envy not controlled will turn to coveting and eventually into stealing.

Remember the word picture we taught you for iniquity? - Remember, iniquity is an inward motivation, and a transgression is an outward action? The word picture for iniquity is an eye, a hook, and a fish multiplying. What it is saying is that "Whatever your eye hooks to, multiplies." If you begin to feed emotionally on first instincts and quick impulses, its only a matter of time before they will manifest themselves in your life as transgressions... as outward actions and the only way to stop that from developing is to build that wall up around your soul. And you build up that wall, by walking in the Spirit. By walking with the Holy Spirit. By growing in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

You have to stop the impulses before they get to your heart. That is self control. It is not letting your eye hook. You can't always stop what your eyes see but you CAN control what you allow it to hook to. Because once it has settled in your heart, your flesh will have Lordship over you. Proverbs 23:7 says that "As a man thinks in his heart, so he *is*."

If you lack self control you are like a city broken into and left without walls.

You are always open. You are always open for attacks.

But Proverbs 16:32, on the contrary, says "Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who **rules his spirit** than he who takes a city."

He who rules his Spirit is better the one who takes a city.

When Solomon could have asked for anything (1 Kings 3:1-15) from the Lord, it was wisdom he asked for, and it is wisdom that the Lord gave him. He was more wise than anybody else who ever lived, and his wisdom tells us that a person without self control is vulnerable. Open to attack. Open to an immediate quick and painful defeat...

The person with self control can accomplish anything!

I am going to spend the rest of the message on a story in Luke chapter 4 as we work towards wrapping up both "Self Control," and our whole "Fruit of the Spirit" series.

It is, in most of our bibles, called "The Temptation of Jesus" and it goes from Luke 4:1-14.

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "**It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'**" And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, "To you I will

give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written,

“ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God,  
and him only shall you serve.’ ”

And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written,

“ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,  
to guard you,’

and

“ ‘On their hands they will bear you up,  
lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

Notice this.

If you were reading along, you probably realized that I went on to the next section from the way your bible likely broke this up. Because the last two verses give us a framework for *when* this ordeal with the Devil took place. Jesus had not yet began his public ministry.

This is the point in which Jesus begins his ministry. Verse 15-16 says that Jesus came down off that mountain in the power of the Spirit, and he began teaching. He hadn’t even called the disciples yet. And you read all of that, and if you are like me, you probably think, “you know what, this is kind of dumb.”

The Devil is pretty dumb to offer Jesus' these things... How dumb does he have to be? Jesus already has all of these things coming to him.

Now this may seem like a rabbit trail, but we are going somewhere, and this concept really relates to all nine of the fruits we have been studying this summer:

John's gospel says (John 1:1) In the beginning was the word, and Word was with God, and the Word was God.

And then in verse 14, it says:

(John 1:14) that the word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Jesus put flesh and blood on everything that the Old Testament talked about. Everything that was prophesied, it all accumulated at Jesus. Nehemiah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezra. Genesis. Exodus. Leviticus. Numbers. Deuteronomy.

All of it. He came in the flesh as the fulfillment.

Then, John, again in his first epistle he talks about this, about how Jesus came in the flesh. It's the Greek word "sarx" - it literally means "The soft substance of the Living Body" - The soft substance. The part that can break. The part that is vulnerable.

What it is saying is Jesus became a man. He had eyes too and he had to protect what they hooked to, just like us. He had flesh. He had emotions. And he had to protect those emotions.

and John is writing this letter to the church because this group of people called the Docetists were coming into the churches and distorting the truth, saying, "Jesus was God, no doubt... but he only appeared to be a man. He wasn't really a man, he only appeared that way.

Well John tells us that anybody teaching that, is not teaching the gospel. He even goes so far as to call them anti-Christ, because Jesus was fully God who made himself fully man.

The point of saying all of that is this: Jesus on that mountain, hadn't started anything yet. He hadn't started his ministry. It wasn't until the next chapter in Luke where he begins calling the disciples with the miracle of the catch.

The Devil had something to offer Jesus.

Jesus in his flesh and blood knew what it felt like to be hungry. And he was hungry. And having not eaten for 40 days, a little bread would have made a very big difference.

Next, came the world... The world, which, by the way, was the devils to give. we read it just a moment ago in Luke 4:6, it says that the authority over earth has been delivered to him... And he offered it to Jesus. He said to Jesus, "you can have all of this, if you will bow to me."

You can have everything that you are going to have later, now. If you do it my way.

You don't have to raise disciples. You don't have to pour your life into a group of friends who are only going to let you down, deny you and betray you anyway... Don't put yourself through these unnecessary trials. Jesus, people are not going to respond well to you. They will hate you. They will hurt you. They will kill you. I can take all of that away, *now*.

You don't have to suffer.

I can give to you the same thing that you are going to have later, now. If you bow.

We can do this, without the suffering.

That's what the Devil was offering to Jesus.

The third temptation may seem ridiculous. But it was the same concept. The devil was tempting Jesus, saying "you say you are God? Prove it." Throw yourself off of the temple pinnacle.



Throw yourself off, because your angels will save you, if you are God.

Now remember, This was before any ministry ever happened.

But in that sober moment on the cross as his ministry was about to reach its bloody pinnacle, Jesus' accusers said the same thing. (Luke 23:34) - moments after Jesus said these words of amazing grace, "Father, Forgive them, for they know what they do..." The people on the ground started saying to him "If he is God, let him save himself." The soldiers mocked him, and gave him sour wine and said (Luke 23:37) "if you are the King of the Jews... save yourself."

It is just like what Satan said to Jesus. It was all playing out, all over again. All the things that he could have avoided were now before him.

He could have prevented all of that.

On the mountain, Satan said "throw yourself down from here... and here is why you should just throw yourself down from this pinnacle... because it is written..."

And then the Devil goes on to quote Psalm 91:11-12, which says "He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."

So what?

Satan knew his bible. He knew the words. He knew the law. He knew how to tempt Jesus, because he knew that the entire Bible, from start to finish, was about Jesus. He knew that Nehemiah was about Jesus. That Ezra was about Jesus, that Psalms is about Jesus... and that everything he was offering Jesus, Jesus could have at any moment. He knew Jesus was God, and that he could not derail Jesus from being God...

but if he could just derail Jesus from becoming *the man he is supposed to be*. If he could somehow stop him from having that earthly ministry... if he could derail Jesus from the ministry of compassion and of reconciliation he

was about to begin... Maybe then, Satan would have a chance at some of us... at some of God's people.

Jesus had this moment, right in front of him, where he could have spared himself of all of the pain... the sour sponge, the wine, the betrayal, the nails, the crown of thorns, the spite... Had he just thrown himself from the temple pinnacle in the first place he would have demonstrated that he is God. But he would not have demonstrated that he came in the flesh... that he came as a man, to die for man.

Had he just accepted the world when Satan was offering it to him, he would have had his inheritance.

But we wouldn't have had ours.

Instead, he showed self control. He made the hard decision over the quick one. He was steadfast to persevere for his prize, and He ended up with the same thing. But he did it the right way. The hard way.

But if we read through that entire passage and we focus only on the temptation then all we see is that our God is faithful to resist evil, which he was, but it's easy to miss the truth... that even Jesus knew that he wasn't strong enough to carry this along. Even Jesus knew he needed a wall.

That is why Luke started this passage by saying this:

Jesus, **full of the Holy Spirit**, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days.

A chapter before this, in Luke 3:21-22, John the baptist baptizes Jesus and the bible says that in that moment the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in a bodily form like a dove. The Spirit came upon Jesus, and built a wall around Jesus to prepare him for a Spirit filled ministry.

The reason that a flesh and blood Jesus could resist the offer of food, could resist the offer of having the whole world, could resist the offer of not having to die for all of us, was because everywhere he went, the Spirit was with him. Everywhere he went he had a wall around Him.

and sometimes, I think we don't realize that the same Holy Spirit who strengthened Jesus every time he needed strength has been given to us. Has been given, to you. Jesus said in John 14:16 that "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, and this Helper will be with you *forever...*" The Holy Spirit.

And as children of the King... as citizens in this different Kingdom, its all ours. Everything is ours.

Maybe we won't have the life that we want, or the life that we think we need, right now, but just like we talked about last week, we are the ones whose name is written on the will... We are the ones who will receive the inheritance.

But it takes self control to not take it out early. It takes self control to put your life in the hands of your maker. It takes self control to walk in the Fruit of the Spirit... in all of them. To practice them in your daily walk.

And there is no Self Control where there is no Holy Spirit.

But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (2 Corinthians 3:17). There is life. There is love. There is growth. There is hope.

The Holy Spirit's job is to point to Jesus. Its always been about Jesus.

The purpose of the fruit of the Spirit is to demonstrate that our lives are being made daily more and more like Jesus. Every fruit is a characteristic of Jesus, and he lived all of these far greater than any of us ever will be able to. He demonstrated every one of them clearly and beautifully and when we are walking in them we will shine so bright for Jesus.

So by the grace of God, and with a wall of Self Control around your heart put there by the the Holy Spirit, may the fruit of your life be: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control.