

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

§ A lack of self-control leaves us vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy and negatively impacts our experience of God.

A bowl of soup - Genesis 25:21-34

§ What is more valuable, 2/3 of Isaac and Rebecca's possessions or a bowl of soup?

§ Have you ever eaten the soup?

§ Don't let a fleeting desire derail your destiny. (Mark 8:31-38)

§ Jesus teaches in Matthew 5:29-30 that it is better to pluck out your eye or cut off your hand than to eat the bowl of soup. Do you approach self-control with that kind of seriousness?

§ Here's what we do: say no to our fleshly desires so we can say yes to God's purpose and desires for us.

Power in the prize - 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

§ Athletes live disciplined lives and endure all kinds of self-denial because they want the pleasure of the prize.

§ The lack of self-control does not equal lack of willpower.

§ Our willpower always obeys our true wants. It's not a lack of willpower; it's a lack of reward power.

§ Paul shamelessly states that the pursuit of a reward should fuel our self-discipline. (Philippians 3:8)

§ Read Matthew 5:2-12 and notice how Jesus uses the power of reward as He instructs us how to live as Christians.

Moses' strategy – Hebrews 11:24-26

§ Moses regarded, he considered, he thought this thing through; he weighed out the pleasures that sin offered versus the rewards of following Jesus.

§ Moses realized that whatever pleasure sin offered it was fleeting, temporary, here one moment and gone the next.

§ But the treasure of Jesus never fades, never ends. (1 Peter 1:3-4, Psalm 16:11)

§ In Matthew 19:16-22 Jesus is asked what someone must do to have eternal life. Observe how self-control (self-denial) and power of reward are part of Jesus' answer.

Pray

§ Read and pray through Galatians 5:13-26.

§ In Galatians 5 we read that self-control is fruit of the Holy Spirit.

§ Let's ask to be filled daily with the Holy Spirit so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we can live self-controlled lives. Lives that are willing and able to say no to the desires of the flesh so that we can keep in step with the Spirit and pursue and possess the greater reward.