

Day 3

Self Control

Silence (2 minutes) Take some time to be quiet, to calm down, and to listen. What has God been teaching you? What are the next steps He wants you to take? How is your spirit doing?

Scripture *“Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city.”* Proverbs 16:32

Discussion All of us want to make wise decisions. Certainly, we don’t plan on making foolish or damaging ones. What does it mean to make decisions with patience and self-control? Most importantly, it means we make decisions with God, not independent of Him. Jesus died for us so that we could be forgiven and be in relationship with God; to eliminate our separation from Him. We are now the Father’s children, so it doesn’t make sense for us to make decisions independent of God. *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears; and He will tell you what is yet to come”* (Jn. 16:13). Having self-control is a quality which makes it more likely that we will make wise decisions. Taking time to pray, explore relevant Scripture, think over important data, talk with wise brothers and sisters in Christ, and talking with people who may be affected by the decision, all provide valuable information, especially for a major decision. Living in the uncertainty of not yet having made a decision can be very uncomfortable; for us and for others. It can be tempting to make some sort of decision in order to feel better, make someone else feel better, or to present ourselves as strong and decisive. Self-control not only enables us to be patient and consider God’s will, it allows us to confidently choose to obey God in all that we do.

Application Self-control is about more than self-denial. As Christians we use our self-control to slow down in difficult circumstances and lean on God to aid us in making tough decisions. It’s tempting to rush through stressful circumstances and rely on our own thoughts, feeling, or reasoning. Yet, God wants us to slow down and consider what His desire is for us. Are there any circumstances you are struggling with? Any hard decisions that you anticipate making that you just don’t know to handle? Have you considered God’s will in that circumstance, even if it will be hard to follow through? Take time to give these circumstances to God and ask Him to strengthen your self-control to follow after Him.

Prayer Father, thank You that I am Your child, that I belong to You. Jesus, thank You for making it possible that I can know and be close to the Father. Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to live inside me. Holy Spirit, thank You that You know the details of my life and give me guidance. Thank You for the privilege of bringing my thoughts and concerns to You. You are my Counselor. God, please continue to work in me so that I more quickly and habitually turn to You, talk to You, and am guided by You. Thank You that You love me. I love You. Amen.

Silence (2 minutes) Talk to God about what you are learning. What are your fears? Where are your hangups? Pray for direction.

Scripture memory for the week: *“Since an overseer manages God’s household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.”*

Titus 1:7-8

