

Day 7

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 *“Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked Him, ‘Are You the king of the Jews?’ ‘Yes, it is as you say,’ Jesus replied. When He was accused by the chief priests and the elders, He gave no answer. Then Pilate asked Him, ‘Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?’ But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.”* Matthew 27:11-14

Discussion It is fascinating to read Jesus’ conversations with people. He often ignores comments or questions and changes the subject to address the topic He knows needs to be addressed. Surely, many people were confused when He talked. But, Jesus was focused on His agenda, His mission. So, here is Jesus before Pilate. In the last 24 hours Jesus has taught His disciples as much as they can tolerate. He has revealed that one disciple will betray Him and Peter will deny Him; both of which happened. Three times He prayed with great anguish that if possible He not have to go through with His crucifixion, and He submitted Himself to the Father each time. He has been arrested, abandoned by His disciples, lied about in court, spit on, mocked as a false prophet, slapped, and punched. It’s cold, He hasn’t slept, and it’s now morning. Jesus chose to acknowledge His identity to Pilate, that He is the King of the Jews, but did not answer the charges from the chief priests and elders. He exercised self-control over when and what to speak and when to be silent. His goal was not to save Himself from suffering or death. His goal was not to please, placate, or impress others. His goal was to do the will of His Father, as He had been praying hours before. We need to be praying daily about what we see coming in our daily lives, pouring out our heart and desires to God with an attitude and words of submission to Him. We need to be self-disciplined, self-controlled, and to be talking to God daily. Both blessings and trials can catch us off guard and upset our routine. At those times we may more easily take our eyes off what God wants us to do. Whatever blessings and trials come our way, we need the self-control to remain focused on following Jesus. How does He want us to speak? How does He want us to behave? We are not to lose our self-control by only focusing on our situation, ourselves, or others. Jesus is our example and we are to follow Him.

Application As Christians, we are to pattern our behavior after our Savior. Think about the self-control it took for Jesus, the most innocent man to ever live, to not defend himself against these false charges. Often times we can become indignant when we are wronged, but we must be careful and self-controlled in how we react. While we are not called to simply accept false accusations without defense as Christ did, we *are* called to be self-controlled and slow to anger. This week, when you feel tempted to defend yourself in your own strength, take a moment to pray and ask God for the strength to respond with Christlike self-control.

Prayer Jesus, I praise You for Your amazing focus and self-control. Thank You for Your example of regularly praying to the Father. I praise You for Your self-control before the religious leaders and Pilate. I praise You for Your endurance, consistently obeying and pleasing the Father. Thank You for reminding me to, *“Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart”* (Heb. 12:3). Jesus, I commit myself to not ignore or run away from prayer to the Father, but to



be self-controlled in entering that time together. Please help me mature in following You more consistently during times of blessing and trial. As You have given me Your example, I submit myself to 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

