

Luke 9:23 tells us that we are to deny ourselves and surrender to Christ daily.

When we stay connected to Him, he nourishes our branches so that fruit can be produced.

[www.wikihow.com](http://www.wikihow.com) says this about self-control, “In order to build self-control, you must practice self-denial. (*Practice* tells me that it isn’t perfectly attainable with a first attempt.)

Psychological Science is one of the top 10 general psychological journals. In an article written in October of 2007, it reads, “Drug abuse, crime, and obesity are but a few of the problems our nation faces, but they all have one thing in common – people’s failure to control their behavior in the face of temptation.

John MacArthur has said that “Self discipline is important in any endeavor of life. It’s best defined as the ability to regulate one’s conduct by principle and sound judgment, rather than by impulse, desire, or social custom. Biblically, self-discipline may be summarized in one word: *obedience*. To exercise self-discipline is to avoid evil by staying within the bounds of God’s law.”

Controlling “self” would be keeping in check with how selfish we are to make sure we aren’t.  
Read that again.

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Self-control is a conscience awareness of needs verses wants. Wants would be our fleshly desires. Needs would be those things that should take priority in our spiritual life or in the life of others.

Self-control is restraint *exercised* over one’s own impulses, emotions and desires.

1 Timothy 3:2: An elder must *exercise* self-control.

Titus 2:2: Teach older men to *exercise* self-control.

1 Peter 1:13: Think clearly and *exercise* self-control. (To think clearly requires *focus*.)

Exercise:

- Is beneficial when you commit to it on an ongoing basis. It doesn't really help much to try it once and forget it.
- Gets easier over time. Things that were once hard become easier.
- Requires effort.
- Can be exhausting.
- Is not always fun while doing it.
- Produces an abundance of rewards when incorporated as a habit into one's life.

2 Peter 1:6 tells us to supplement our faith with self-control. It goes on to say that these things produce productive and useful people for God.

Don't we all want to be more useful for Him?

Yes, self-control is a fruit produced by the Spirit. But, Scripture makes it clear that we need to exercise it, be focused and practice it as a supplement to our faith.

One wise woman made the distinction today between self-control and will-power. Will power is done in our own strength and is something you have or don't have. Self-control is something that you practice, with a focus on the Lord and His will for your life. They are actually quite opposite of one another.

So, what are some things that you need to focus on more clearly so that self-control can be exercised in your life. – to benefit your children as they are under your care?

For me, it is getting off my computer (I better finish typing this quick! 😊) and giving God as much time as I give my spouse. After all, only with Him is any of this possible.

One final note: isn't it interesting that self-control - being the last listed in all the fruits - really isn't possible without patience? Or, kindness? Or, love? Or, and of the rest of the fruits? Having self-control without the rest would be like having the cherry without the sundae. That would be weird.