



BEULAH FIRST BAPTIST

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Focus: PROVERBS – Wisdom for the Way We Live

Week 2: Self Control - Learning to Govern Ourselves

Dr. Felix L. Cole – Senior Pastor

Primary Texts: Proverbs 16:32; Proverbs 25:28; Proverbs 29:11; Proverbs 15:1; Proverbs 14:29

Supporting Texts: Luke 9:23; Matthew 5:21–22; Galatians 5:16, 22–23

Tonight's Question: How do we learn to govern ourselves when our emotions, desires, and circumstances are pulling us in another direction?

INTRODUCTION: One of the clearest distinctions between wisdom and foolishness in Proverbs is self-control. The wise person exercises patience, controls their words, and considers the consequences of their actions. In contrast, the fool often acts impulsively, speaks without thinking, and allows temporary feelings to produce lasting consequences. **Wisdom is demonstrated not only by what we have the power to do, but by what we have the discipline to refrain from doing.**

Central Truth: Self-control isn't the absence of emotion. It's the wisdom to govern our responses rather than allowing our emotions and desires to govern us.

1. Self-Control Is a Sign of Strength – Proverbs 16:32

Proverbs challenges our understanding of strength. We often associate strength with power, authority, or the ability to get our way. Yet Scripture teaches that governing our own spirit is a greater demonstration of strength than conquering a city.

True strength includes the ability to exercise patience, accept correction, resist impulses, and choose restraint even when we have the power to act.

Truth to See: Just because I have the power to respond doesn't mean I have the wisdom to respond.

Question to Consider: Where am I confusing being in control with having to get my way?

2. Self-Control Protects What Matters – Proverbs 25:28

Proverbs compares a person without self-control to a city whose walls have been broken down. Just as walls provided protection for an ancient city, restraint helps protect important areas of our lives from unnecessary harm.

Self-control isn't only about avoiding wrongdoing. It is also about recognizing that temporary satisfaction can carry lasting consequences.

Area	What a lack of self-control can cost
Relationships	Trust, communication, and closeness
Finances	Stability, savings, and opportunities
Character	Integrity, credibility, and reputation
Personal habits	Health, time, and peace of mind

Truth to See: Self-control doesn't simply keep me from doing wrong; it helps protect what is valuable in my life.

Question to Consider: What are some things people sacrifice for a moment of satisfaction that they later regret?

Further Study: Proverbs 23:20–21; Proverbs 25:16

3. Self-Control Governs Our Responses - Proverbs 29:11; Proverbs 15:1

Proverbs contrasts the fool who gives full expression to anger with the wise person who exercises restraint. Our words, tone, and reactions can either escalate conflict or contribute to its resolution.

Jesus takes this teaching deeper by addressing the condition of the heart (*Matthew 5:21–22*). Our outward behavior often reveals attitudes and desires that need attention.

Truth to See: I cannot always control what happens to me, but I am responsible for how I respond.

Question to Consider: Why is it sometimes easier to recognize a lack of self-control in somebody else than to recognize it in ourselves?

4. Self-Control Must Be Practiced - Proverbs 14:29; Galatians 5:16, 22–23

Self-control involves intentional decisions, but it is not developed through human willpower alone. Galatians identifies self-control as part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. As we walk by the Spirit, we learn to resist destructive impulses and respond according to God's wisdom.

Jesus calls His followers to deny themselves and follow Him daily (*Luke 9:23*). Spiritual maturity involves both dependence on God and the daily practice of obedience.

Truth to See: Wisdom creates space between what I feel and what I choose to do.

Self-Control in Everyday Life:

Area	What it involves	Proverbs
What I Feel	Anger, impatience, frustration, fear	14:17; 14:29; 19:11
What I Say	Words, tone, timing, restraint	10:19; 12:18; 15:1; 17:27–28
What I Do	Spending, appetites, habits, impulses	12:1; 23:20–21; 25:16

What Jesus Teaches About Self-Control

Scripture	Teaching
Luke 9:23	Following Jesus involves daily self-denial.
Matthew 5:21–22	Our anger and inner attitudes matter.
Matthew 5:27–28	Our thoughts and desires matter, not only outward behavior.
Matthew 26:41	Prayer and watchfulness help us resist temptation.

Personal Reflection: What has my lack of self-control already cost me, and what might it cost me if I don't address it?

This Week's Challenge: Identify one area where you tend to act impulsively. Practice pausing, examining your motives, and choosing a wiser response.

Wisdom for the Week

PAUSE	EXAMINE	CHOOSE
Create space before reacting.	Consider what is driving you and the consequences.	Respond in a way consistent with God's wisdom.