



**Sermon Discussion Guide for Cumberland Fellowship Church Sermon Series:  
I Choose: Week 3 (October 8, 2023)**

*This guide is a supplement to the weekly sermon. We encourage families and groups to use it. When we hear God's Word, we need to do more than listen. The bible says, "Be doers of the word, not hearers only." (James 1:22) **Step 1: GATHER** with your family or group. **Step 2: REVIEW** and **DISCUSS** the key points and scriptures from the sermon. **Step 3: PRAY** for the prayer requests shared by your family or group.*

### **DISCUSSION STARTER**

In John 15:1-8 Jesus explains that we show ourselves to be his disciples when we bear fruit. When we have received true saving faith it will be evident in how we live. We will look and act differently than the world. We will look and act differently than we did before Christ. The fruit of the Spirit is an outward demonstration of the inward work and transformation of the Holy Spirit in our own hearts. How has the gospel transformed the way you are, where you are, and/or who you are?

### **DIGGING DEEPER 1**

**Review: 1 Peter 5:8.** In 1 Peter 5:8, Peter urges us to be "*of sober mind*". The opposite of sober is drunkenness. Drunkenness is a state of being out of control. You can be drunk/out of control on lust – power – anger – greed. We have to choose Self-control. The Holy Spirit enables us with the capacity to choose self-control over the desires of the flesh and what feels good. We are not born with the nature to control ourselves. What are some areas of your life where you need to allow the Spirit to enable you to have self-control?

### **DIGGING DEEPER 2**

**Review Titus 2:11-13.** It is really easy to try to blame Satan every time we lose control. In James 1:14-15 it states that we are "*dragged away by their (our) own evil desires...*" It's not the devil. It is our own evil desires in our old flesh nature. As Christians we are often tempted to justify our lack of control by pulling the 'grace' card. But Grace "*teaches us to say "NO" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives...*". Grace is not some handy rug to sweep my sin and uncontrolled bad behavior under. Is there an area of your life that is in opposition to godliness, but you have allowed to remain and have justified instead of repenting and giving it to God to conquer and change?

### **DOING THE WORD**

In 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Paul uses the analogy of a race to illustrate how we are to conduct ourselves as Christ followers. In v25 "*strict training*" is the same Greek root word as the Greek root for "self-control". Paul says we need to practice the same discipline and self-control as an athlete. The difference is our results will have an eternal impact in the lives of others. He goes on to say in v27 that "*...I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave...*". Paul's picture is that he is fighting himself, fighting against his own flesh. This is not about self-improvement to attain salvation or gaining points or favor with God. Paul teaches that he practices self-control on behalf of others to bring others to salvation and maturity, and to be an example to those he is discipling. Paul made it clear that he could choose to let his physical desires rule his heart and body, or let the Holy Spirit rule his heart and body. Ask God to reveal to you places this week that you need to allow the fruit of self-control to be established, grown, developed, or matured so that others can see the fruit of Christ's love through you.