



I. Out of Control

II. Resisting Defilement

Daniel 1:1-9

v. 1-4

Defeat & Captivity

v. 5-7

Tempted to Conform

v. 8-9

Courage, Conviction & Restraint

III. Understanding Impulses

IV. Growing in Self-Control

Personal Reflection

Take time this week to pray & reflect on the following:

You want to feel like you are in control of your own life. Everyone does. However, even on your best day your ability to affect or determine the things that come your way is very limited. For most people, control occurs at the personal level rather than the situational level—we have much more power (and responsibility) to practice self-control than we do circumstance-control.

People tend to focus too much on circumstance control and too little on self-control. In contrast, God wants His people to exercise disciplined self-restraint while trusting Him to handle the “big picture” of our circumstances. Through the Holy Spirit, God empowers followers of Christ to gain increasing amounts of mastery over their desires. Self-control is about the proper fulfilling of our desires and living submitted to God’s perfect will.

To what degree are you controlling or being controlled by your physical, emotional and intellectual desires? Is your life moving to the rhythm of your ever-changing cravings or are you marching to the beat of God’s cadence for your life?

Prayerfully reflect on the ways in which self-control (or the lack thereof) has impacted your life thus far. Ask God to help you see the areas in your life in which a lack of self-control is causing harm. Commit to allow the Holy Spirit to do the transforming work of disciplining and strengthening your spirit each day. Express thanksgiving to God for His investment in your life.