# Study 11: The Fruit of the Spirit- Self Control

## Talk about

Share your thoughts on the following quote:

“The ability to subordinate an impulse to a value is the essence of the proactive person.”

- Stephen R. Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

## Introduction

As the good news was transforming the island of Crete, Paul was teaching how the gospel transforms our behaviour in contrast to the behaviour of false teachers who were roaming about. One quality that stands out significantly is the quality of ‘self-control’.

## Scripture: Read Titus 2:1-15

## Discussion

1. In this passage, Paul describes what the “Grace of God” has done. What does Paul mean when he writes that “the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people”?
2. The grace of God saves us, and at the same time, it trains us. Unpack the different words Paul uses to describe the way God’s grace trains us (v12)?
3. How is the theme of “self-control” repeated in Paul’s encouragement to the various groups in the Cretan Christian community (v2-10)?
4. What role do you think the anticipation of Jesus’ return plays in this “grace-training” process of growing “self-control” in us (v13)?
5. Verse 14 gives more insight into why Jesus sacrificed so much for us. What is the three-fold end result that Jesus has in mind for us when He redeems us?
6. What do the following scriptures teach us about self-control?
   * Proverbs 16:32, 25:28
   * Acts 24:25
   * 1 Corinthians 7:5
   * 1 Timothy 3:2
   * 2 Timothy 3:2-5
   * Titus 1:8
   * 2 Peter 1:5-9
7. How might you lean into this “Grace-Training” process that the Spirit is working in you?
8. What areas of self-control would you love to see God help to grow in your life? Commit these to prayer and take a step of faith.

## Reflecting on the fruit of the Spirit.

As you reflect on this journey of learning more about the fruit of the Spirit, what are some insights or common themes that you’ve noticed? What are some changes you’ve experienced in your life?

Share your thoughts with others in your group.

## Summary

The first two studies focused on the tensions we face when we attempt to live by Spirit.

Firstly, we must overcome the tendency to live by the law (“Legalism is any attempt to gain acceptance or forgiveness from God through our own works or merits”).

Secondly, we must overcome the tendency to live by the flesh (That part of our nature which leans towards satisfying our sinful desires).

It is by continuing to live by the Spirit, walk by the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit, that we are able to overcome legalism and license (The law and our flesh).

In studies 3-7, we looked at each of the expressions of the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22. These are a result of the Holy Spirit working in us as we cooperate with Him. The fruit is not a result of the Spirit’s work without our involvement, and they are not a result of our efforts without God’s help.

As we continue this journey of spiritual transformation, it is important for us to avoid two extremes:

* + Assuming that this transformation is solely God’s activity and we have no part to play;
  + Living as if it all depends on our efforts without depending on the Spirit’s help and power.

God welcomes us into a beautiful partnership of transformation that renews us, renews our relationships and by God’s grace, begins to renew the world in which we live. May this partnership become a growing dynamic reality for you and for me as we wait for His glorious return! Amen.

## Prayer:

Invite the Holy Spirit to fill the gathering of your life group/discipleship group. Pray with one another for the fruit of the Spirit to grow in your lives. Pray the fruit will grow in your homes, workplaces and in the church by the power of His Spirit.