

# Self-Control | Pastor James Kent

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Preacher: Pastor James Kent

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Aaron, see if you can pick this up. Through it all, through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus.
- I've learned to trust in God. Oh, through it all, God brought me through it all. I've learned to depend upon his word.
- Would you sing that with me? Through it all, through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus.
- I've learned to trust in God. Oh, through it all, God brought me through it all.
- And I've learned to depend upon his word. There's one of those verses that goes like this.
- [ 1 : 13 ]     I thank God for the mountains. And I thank him for the valleys. And I thank him for the storms he brought me through.
- For if I'd never had a problem, I'd never know that God could solve them. I'd never know what faith in his word could do.
- Everybody now, come on, let me hear you. Through it all, through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus.
- I've learned to trust in God. Oh, through it all, God brought me through it all.
- I've learned to depend upon his word. Can I sing one more verse of that? I've been a lot of places.
- [ 2 : 21 ]     I've seen a lot of faces. And there have been times when I didn't know right from wrong. You ever been there?
- But in every situation, God gave me blessed consolation. That my trials come to only make me strong.
- Through it all, through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus.
- I've learned to trust in God. Through it all, through it all, through it all, I've learned to depend upon his word.
- Oh, yes, give the Lord a praise. You know, learning trust is something you learn.
- [ 3 : 44 ]     It doesn't come with laying on of hands. You can't go through a prayer line. You can't go through a prayer line and get trust. You can't be rubbed with oil on your forehead and get trust.
- You've got to go through some things. You've got to be tested. You've got to learn to trust not people, not money, not government, not even friends.
- They're fallible. You must learn, as Solomon said, trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding.
- Well, that's not, I just throw that in. That don't cost you nothing. Praise God. Praise God. Brother Lamar asked me, I don't know how, it's been quite some time back, if I would share on one of the fruits of the Spirit.

And I don't know who arranged this, but they give me the hardest one. It's not hard to teach on love, joy, peace, meekness, brotherly kindness, all of those are, you know, they're easy to teach on.

[ 5 : 06 ] But he gave me the last one. And I'm going to share with you tonight what the Lord's given me.

You know, sometimes when the Lord speaks to you, you wonder, Lord, am I hearing you correctly? Only somebody who's had to minister the word understands that.

You want to make sure that you're doing and speaking what God wants. As I always say, the whole Bible's truth. I could just flop the Bible open anywhere and start preaching it, be truth.

But is it what we need tonight? Is it the truth that we need at this present? Peter said, we'd be establishing present truth, truth that we need right now.

And I think this probably is one of those things. If you will, if you'd like to read along with me, Brother Lamar, I'll get you back.

[ 6 : 11 ] I've just, just cheated you. I want to read the fruits of the Spirit and then we'll come down to the last one that I'm going to be teaching on tonight.

In Galatians, the fifth chapter, and the 22nd verse, the Apostle Paul is telling us what the fruits of the Spirit.

Now there are nine fruits of the Spirit and there are nine gifts of the Spirit. They balance one another out. Gifts without fruit will not accomplish its purpose.

We must learn to balance the nine fruits of the Spirit and the nine gifts of the Spirit. But Paul said in the 22nd chapter, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness.

And uh-oh, I'm coming to the one I've got to teach on. Can anybody follow me? What's the next one? Huh? Self-control or temperance.

[ 7 : 32 ] In the King James Version, the word temperance. In the new NIV, it's self-control. Now, if we could control ourselves without the Spirit, we wouldn't need it to be a fruit of the Spirit.

Hello? If we could have self-control on our own, you know, so I'm strong, I've got control.

If you were that strong, you wouldn't need the Holy Spirit. Self-control only comes when a person has yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit.

And that's why it's a fruit of the Spirit. Okay? Okay? Okay. I don't know if you've ever looked up the definition of the fruit of the Spirit, temperance, or self-control.

It means self-discipline. Everybody say self-discipline. Now, some of you said that, but the rest of you didn't. Everybody say it with me.

[ 8 : 42 ] Self-discipline. Self-control demands self-discipline. You have to discipline yourself. Mama can't do it.

Daddy can't do it. Wife can't do it. Husband can't do it. Preacher can't do it. Self-control is self-discipline.

And we'll get to that in a minute. More. Moderation. Everybody say moderation. Temperance is being moderate. Not overbalanced. Not excessive in some area of your life.

I see so many Christians that I don't doubt their salvation, but I do wonder about their life because they're old, they live their life not in moderation.

They're excessive in some area of their life. It could be pleasure. It could be money. It could be, well, it could just be a lot of things.

[ 9 : 46 ] They're excessive in. Hobbies. Oh, I gotta get that one in there. None of those things are sinful by themselves.

What makes them sinful is when they're in excess. When they take the place of God in your life. When they are more important to you than God or more important to you than the assembling of yourself together or more important to you than prayer, more important to you than reading the Bible, it becomes sinful.

You see, sin is not something you commit. Not only, excuse me, sin is not just something you commit. It's something you don't do. The Bible says he that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him, what?

I can't hear you. I said, I can't hear you. Oh, if I know to do good, if I know something I need to change, if I know something I need to turn, you know, get straight, if I know something to do good and I don't do it, it becomes sin to me.

It becomes excess. It becomes you're undisciplined. It becomes a lot of things. Boy, it's getting quiet in here now. Look at somebody and say, help him teach.

[ 11 : 22 ] Now, I told you this is the hardest one to teach on, so if you, you know, if it gets a little hard, you'll understand. But, self-control is self-restraint.

Everybody say self-restraint. It is the ability to call, to take the flesh and restrain it. Because a person gets saved, it doesn't mean that you lose the passion and appetites of the flesh.

Becoming a child of God and getting the spirit of God in your life gives you the power to restrain yourself. Oh, hallelujah.

Everybody say, restrain yourself. Hold yourself back. That's the important thing as a child of God. You'll never walk in victory until you learn to have self-control.

Temperance. the definition that I wrote down here is habitual moderation in the indulgence of a natural appetite or passion.

[ 12 : 45 ] Want me to read that again? Okay, thank you. This little sister does. Habitual moderation in the indulgence of a natural appetite or passion.

Let me give you an example. In the fourth chapter of Matthew, Jesus, he had just left John the Baptist and baptized him. The spirit of God come down like a dove and set on him. And the Bible said the spirit of God drove him into the wilderness so he could shout and be blessed.

Anybody ever read it? Why did the spirit, not the devil, sometimes God will allow you to go into situations to reveal what you need to do in your life.

See, we don't know, we don't really see sometimes our sin. You look in the mirror and your hair looks good in front. But I tell Leon, I said, check the back of my hair.

See, I can't see the back of it. And sometimes we think we're all right because what we see on the surface looks good.

[ 14 : 05 ] But deep inside, there's something that we do not have self-discipline and self-control over. Okay? Okay? spiritual temperance or self-control is wrought by the spirit in a believer's life that manifests itself in the godly abstinence.

Everybody say, godly abstinence of sinful passions and moderation of even good desires.

Now, the fourth chapter, I've got back and let's go back to Jesus when he went into the wilderness of temptation. The Bible said he fasted 40 days.

You fast 40 days, you'll be hungry. And the Bible said that afterward he hungered. Jesus was human.

His body needed to eat just like yours did. He was not only God but he was also man. And the man part of Jesus needed some food.

[ 15 : 24 ] He was hungry. I can't imagine fasting 40 days. I go from breakfast to supper and I ask Leona, I say, when's, supper gonna be ready? 40 days without eating a bite.

And he was hungry. Now notice this. Immediately, the enemy attacked him when he was weak. He attacked him in the area that he was weak.

He was weak from hunger so the enemy said, I think I can get him to obey me here. The enemy don't wait till you're strong. He don't wait till you get in church and running the aisles and dancing and shouting.

No, he waits till you get out on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday and face the devil and he thinks you find. He's found a place that he can come into and weaken you.

And so, Jesus, afterward, hungered. Now, what's nothing wrong with Jesus being hungry? It's not a sin to be hungry.

[ 16 : 34 ] If it is, we all sin every day, three times a day. It wasn't that it was a sin to be hungry. What was wrong with it was he would not accept the suggestion of the devil.

The devil suggested it. You see, there are natural desires that are, how should I say it, Lord?

There are natural desires and appetites that are not sinful. But if you don't have self-control, if you're not careful, the devil will start telling you what to do.

He started telling Jesus, command these stones to be made bread. You know, you're hungry. You have to be careful who's telling you what to do.

Preach on, Brother Kent. Thank you. Thank you. Jesus, desire to eat was a normal appetite and passion.

[ 17 : 43 ] But he would not bend and bow to the suggestion of the devil. There are times in your life when you'll face the same situation.

But you must know that through the Spirit of God, you can't do it by yourself now. There's no person walking this planet that by themselves can have self-control and self-discipline and temperance.

Your flesh is not geared for that. Hello? I said, your flesh is not geared for that.

If you don't think your flesh is still dirt, just get outside in the summer and sweat and rub it a little bit. You'll see little balls of dirt come up.

It's still dirt. It just has a Spirit in it and it's going to go back to dirt. So the only way we're going to control that to keep us from disobeying God is the Holy Spirit has to take control of our life, a fruit of the Spirit.

[ 18 : 50 ] Hallelujah. Hallelujah. In Luke, the 21st chapter, Jesus warned of a generation that had no self-control and that had no temperance.

In the 21st chapter of Luke, Jesus was speaking about the end time. And you think, well, that means it has nothing to do with temperance.

I beg your pardon. Luke 21, 34. Jesus had just told the disciples what to look for right before his coming.

In the 20th verse, he said, and when you shall see Jerusalem come past with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. There shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and the stars and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity and the sea and the waves roaring.

Men's heart failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

[ 20 : 21 ] Do you believe you're living in that time? If you don't, you need to study your Bible a little more. In the 27th verse, it said, then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and great glory.

When is it coming? When you see all these things. I'm telling you, if I wasn't, didn't feel I was ready to meet the Lord, I wouldn't let the sun come up before I got right.

You don't know when he's coming. I don't know when he's coming. But I know he's coming. Because the things the Bible spoke would happen right before he's coming is happening.

And Israel is God's time clock. Now, I'm getting off. I'm chasing a rabbit on another trail. Now, now, now, listen, you say, what does that have to do with self-control and temper?

Look at what he said in verse 34. Now, Jesus is telling us. He said, and take heed to yourself. Everybody say, take heed to yourself. Don't worry about your neighbor.

[ 21 : 41 ] Don't try to pick out their faults. take heed to yourself. Lest that any time, everybody say any time, your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting.

Now, that don't mean surfing on a river behind a boat. You just need to look in the dictionary and find out what's surfeiting S-U-R-L-E-I-T-I-N-G surfeiting.

What does it mean? The word surfeiting that Jesus used here means to be in excess of something. It means to be intemperate.

Everybody say intemperate. Immoderate. In other words, you're not moderate. Indulgence in something to overdo.

Everybody say to overdo. Excess. Come on. Excess. Overabundance. Overmuch. Oversupply.

[ 23 : 00 ] And surplus. That's what surfeiting means. It means when you live in a time when your life is so crowded and so stuffed with stuff.

Oh, how I love Jesus. I think I was getting more response when I sang it.

Praise God. Somebody praise you. It means that your life is out of balance. Jesus said better be careful.

During that time right before I come, people are going to be so engrossed in surfeiting, excessiveness. They just can't get enough of stuff. They get something they want something else.

If you can't say amen, say oh me or I'll just nod your head. And Jesus said, what's going to happen?

[ 24 : 02 ] What's going to happen when that happens? He said that your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness. He's not talking about alcohol. Drunkenness is when a person is not balanced.

You let a man that's intoxicated and membranous start to walk down this aisle and he can't keep his balance. Jesus said you better be careful that you don't let your life become unbalanced.

Drunkenness. Well, praise God. And cares of this life, everybody say cares of this life.

That means the worries. The word care means worries. You know, you can get so worried about everything. Oh my goodness. I'm so glad the election's over.

Oh, thank you, Jesus. People get so worried about everything. What we're going to do? What we're going to eat? What am I going to wear? Jesus said those are the things you worry about.

[ 25 : 08 ] And he said don't worry about them things. Take no thought what you shall eat or what you shall wear. Or what you shall, didn't he say it? So he said quit worrying about those things.

That's not the thing to worry about. The main thing is to make sure he's first. Because he said your heavenly father knoweth you have need of these things.

That's why you don't have to worry about it. He knows what you need. He knows you got to have something to eat. He knows your children have to have clothes and eat and go to school. He knows all of that.

You're not informing him of that when you pray. The Bible said he knows your need before you you mean you're not asking God for something to inform him of something he's forgot.

He's forgot. What you're really doing is reminding yourself. Hello. Operator hooked me back up with some of these folks.

[ 26 : 14 ] I'm going to have to change that. We don't have phones like that now. We got them. We must focus and refuse to let our life become out of control.

And it's happening to Christians all over this nation and the world. If people really realize what they if they realize how close we was to the coming of the Lord these cheers would be full.

Every church in Greenville County that's having prayer meeting tonight they'd be full. But it's because they don't know. They say they do but they don't really believe it.

You see you don't know what a person believes by what they say. You know what they believe by what they do. Now that deserves a hand clap right there. Let me give you I'm going to back up a little bit.

Let me give you some examples of somebody some people some men who lost who who lost their self-control and it cost them dearly.

[ 27 : 37 ] Number one let me talk to you about Samson. Anybody ever heard of Samson? Huh? Hello? I think right here.

Somebody's talking back to me and that ain't the Lord. Praise God. I just took it out. Can you hear me? I said let's talk about Samson. Here's a man that was a Nazirite.

He was bound by a Nazirite covenant. A Nazirite covenant a person who was bound under that covenant would not cut their hair. They would not drink anything with alcohol or anything like that.

They had certain things they had to live by. And Samson was a Nazirite. He was bound by that covenant. But he went in the land of the Philistines.

He saw a woman. He went back to his father and said father I want that woman for my wife. Now you wasn't even supposed to marry a Philistine. God prohibited that because you'd be mixing heathenism or idolatry with God.

[ 28 : 59 ] So he said but he said daddy I want that woman. Better be careful what you want. I preach a message sometime on God will let you have what you want but you may not want what you get.

Y'all won't want me to come back and teach no more with you. And I'm not going to go into all the details but you know the story. Samson was so strong when the spirit of the Lord come upon him he would take the jawbone of a donkey and he killed a thousand Philistines.

He'd walk away with the gates of the city and just put his arm around the gate and walk on. Strong. But he lacked self control in one thing.

You see you can have a lot of strength in a lot of areas but if there's one thing that you don't have control over it can cause you to all the other things to not be effective.

Anyway, let me hurry you. I don't know what time it is. Oh Lord. 649. I'm going by time for we changed it. Praise God. Anyway, the story goes, Delilah, he laid his head in the lap of Delilah.

[ 30 : 25 ] She cut his hair off. Seven locks of hair. She cut it off. She bound him with ropes and he lost his strength. Sad, isn't it?

For a man that strong and yet one thing caused him to lose it. The Philistines took him and put him down there in the grists mill where they grind the corn and the wheat and they have oxen that they put under yokes and they would just circle and it would grind the wheat and they put Samson on them to grind wheat with the oxen.

They plucked his eyes out. Oh, what it cost him. Because he lost self control.

One day he was grinding corn in the Philistines grists mill. And he told one of the servants, says, excuse me, me.

The Philistines wanted to make fun of him so they sent a servant down there and told him, bring Samson up here. We want to laugh at him. We want to make fun of him. You know the devil will make fun of you if he can trip you up. Well, you want me to start running across the front of the church and jumping?

[ 31 : 54 ] Or you want me to teach you the word? Teach you the word. Lord. That servant brought Samson up before where the Philistine leaders were and they stood him there and the people just laughed at him, mocked him, blinded.

He told that servant, says, son, would you take me and just put me where the pillars of the house is? Oh, yes.

The house had these probably marble pillars and Samson told the servant, said, just take me where those pillars are. Let me rest on. So the servant thought that was all right.

And he took Samson up to where the pillars were and Samson put one arm around one pillar and one arm around the other pillar and he said, God, just this one last time, let your strength, let your spirit come upon me.

And all of a sudden, that strength that he had felt when he was victorious, it come on him and you know what he did? He just jerked them pillars all the way out from under that temple and every bit of it failed and thousands of the Philistines were killed.

[ 33 : 20 ] You see, a great man, great strength, but he lacks self-control.

Let me tell you about another man. Is this all right? Let's talk about David. David was something else. He could take a lion and rip him apart.

He could take a bear. and rip it apart. He could kill a giant. But he couldn't overcome one woman.

I'm talking about passions, desires. David was up on his house top, I guess relaxing like, you know, we have decks where we get out in the evening and enjoy.

David, I'm sure that David was up on his house top and he looked a couple of houses over. And the Bible says he saw a woman bathing.

[ 34 : 32 ] Now, I don't know if it was normal for a woman to bathe on the house top where everybody could see her. I don't know that. Smile, you're on God's camera.

I sometimes wonder if she didn't know David, sat out there and enjoyed the evening sun and she said, I'm going to see if I can tempt him.

Preach on by the kid. Now, you see, here's self control. David should have got up off of what he was sitting on, went back in the house and said, I'm not going to sit here and lust after that.

That's self control. That's refusing to let the devil take your victory, take your power. But what did he do? He kept looking.

He kept looking. And you know the rest of the story, I don't want to go in all the gory details, but when it was all over, God told David, he said, David, I forgive you.

[ 35 : 47 ] Aren't you glad God forgives? Aren't you glad God knows our human instincts and passions? He said, David, I forgive you.

I'm not going to take your kingdom away from you. I'm not going to take your kingship away from you. You're going to still be my king. But he said, the sword shall never depart from your house because of this.

David, as long as your descendants live, somebody's going to try to kill them. The sword shall not depart from your house because of this.

You see, there are consequences when we don't have self-control. I'm still teaching on temperance. This is what temperance is. You could read that word temperance and go on and you don't even know what it means.

I'm giving you an example of what it means. It's such tragedy when we lose self-control all of our passions and our desires.

[ 36 : 55 ] Well, I know nobody in South Carolina are that way, but up in Tennessee, boy, they are really that way. I'm about to close.

I just don't know how long it's going to take me to close. I really am going to close when I share this.

Can I share this one other scripture with you? How many will let me share one more scripture with you? The rest of you are in here. You'll just have to listen. 1 Corinthians the 9th chapter and the 24th verse.

The Apostle Paul was writing to the church at Corinth and he was giving them instructions on how to win.

How many like to win? You know, it's not really any fun to lose. If you watch a ball game, you see a team that lost, they want to get off the field as quick as they can.

[ 38 : 13 ] it's no fun. Every one of us want to win in this race. We're in a race. Let me show you what I mean. The 9th chapter of Corinthians and the 24th verse.

Verse 24. Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all. All of them are running. have you ever watched the Olympics? How they'll line up from all nations, they'll line up and all of them are going to run to see who's fastest.

They all are trying to win. But one receiveth the prize. You mean there might be 25 people running but only one's going to get the prize.

You see, we're running for a prize. I'm running for something.

Oh, hallelujah. And it's not a gold bandalions that I'm running for. I'm running for a crown of life.

[ 39 : 24 ] I'm running for a crown of joy. A crown of eternal life. Oh, glory to God. I'm running for something. Praise God. But one receiveth the prize, so run.

Paul said, run. If you're going to run for something, run. Don't just hype do it. If you're going to serve God, serve him all the way.

If you're going to call yourself a Christian, go all the way. Come on, somebody say amen. He said that they may obtain. What are they trying to obtain?

They're trying to obtain a crown. And every man that strived for the mastery, the word mastery, means to contend for a prize, to have great skill at something or total dominance over something.

If you want to be great at something, you must master your flesh. mastery. It means you have control.



- [ 40 : 39 ] If I didn't want to finish, I'd just run all over this place. Pray he's got somebody to say amen. Now they do it, verse 25, to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.
- You thought the Olympics started in Atlanta or Los Angeles or Tokyo. No, the Olympics started in Greece several thousand years ago. And they would run, and you know what the crown they would get?
- They didn't get these gold, what do you call them about now? Gold, gold medal? No, they didn't get that. They had a crown made out of leaves of flowers, green leaves and some flowers, and they made a little crown out of it.
- And whoever won got that crown. But the problem was that's going to wilt and go away in a few days.
- See, a lot of stuff people are running for, it's going to wilt and it's not going to be there when you need it. Come on, somebody say it's not going to be there when you need it. verse 26.
- [ 41 : 57 ] I therefore so run. Paul said, I'm running. Now let me tell you something about this race. It's not a sprint. When I was in school, we had track and stuff like that. You'd have a 40 yard dash.
- I don't know, you may not be old enough to remember that. I know all of you look pretty young. So I'm just saying, when I was in school, we'd have 40 yard dash. That meant you lined up and you'd run for 40 yards to see who could get there and be the fastest.
- It's a dash. And then sometimes it was a 100 yard dash. And then they had relay races.
- You know what a relay race is? That's when you run a wall and then somebody comes up beside you, you give them the baton and say, now you run. That's a good thing that we need to understand.
- We don't have to run along. God's going to run with us. I said God's running the race with us. I therefore so run not as uncertainty.
- [ 43 : 08 ] Certainty. Paul said, I'm not running not knowing what I'm doing. Do you know what you're running for? Do you know what you're serving God for? Is it just to keep from doing something terrible?
- Well, that helps. You certainly don't want to go and do what you used to do, right? But Paul said, I'm fighting for something.
- I'm running for something. I'm running for a prize. So fight. Paul said, so fight. Everybody say, so fight. Not as one that beateth the air.
- Everybody say, not as one that beateth the air. You know, have you ever watched the boxing match? Them boxers will get out, that's before the round starts, they'll get out there and they'll just, I can't do it now.
- They'll dance around and fight. They're not fighting. They're not fighting.
- [ 44 : 20 ] They're beating the air. They're trying to get limber. There's a lot of people fighting, but they're not, they're beating the air. They're fighting the wrong thing.
- They're fighting people. They're fighting things like that. You need, oh, hallelujah, you need to learn what you're fighting. Paul said, I fought a good fight. I have kept the faith. Now, listen, this is the whole key to what I've been sharing with you tonight.
- You say, well, why didn't you say this start with and we went out to sit here this long? Verse 27, but I keep my body.
- Everybody say, I keep my body. Come on, say it. I keep my body. I keep it. It's not my neighbor's job to keep me.
- It's not even my wife's job to keep me. It's not your husband's wife to keep you. Paul said, I keep my body and bring it into subjection.

[ 45 : 32 ] Paul said, I bring my body and bring it into subjection. Everybody say, bring it into subjection. You got to make that body. That body don't want to do what God wants it to do.

I hate to tell you this, but it doesn't. That's why you got to have the spirit to do this. You got to have the fruit of the spirit to accomplish this. You can't do it by yourself. But Paul said, I bring my body into subjection.

Come here, body. You're not going to do that. You know, you see these people in the Olympics that compete for all of these different sports.

Some of them have been working for five, six, seven, eight years. Training every day, seven days a week, trying to get better, trying to, and they had to bring their body.

I know there's times when they wake up, their body says, I don't want to go to the gym. I don't want to go to work out. I don't want to do this today. Oh, yes, you are.

[ 46 : 44 ] One of these days, we're going to compete in the Olympics, and the whole world will be watching us. And I sure don't want to flop when the whole world's watching me. I bring my body under subjection.

Now, listen to this statement. And I will close. When I bring it under subjection, less by any means, everybody say less by any means.

When I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast away. You know what Paul is saying?

He said, if I, Paul, the great apostle, raised the dead, healed the sick from his body were taken out of him, he said, I have to keep my body under subjection, lest, even as I have preached to others and told them what to do, I could become a castaway if I didn't bring my body into subjection.

Thank you. too. Thank you!