

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

WHAT COMES OUT WHEN YOU GET SQUEEZED?



Scripture References

Daniel 1:1-21
1 Corinthians 9:24-10:14
1 Corinthians 10:23-24
1 Peter 4:1-11
2 Peter 1:3-11

Lesson Goals

Understand that self-control is saying “no” even when you can say “yes”
Understand that a tree is known by its fruit.

Memory Verse

Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control.
Proverbs 25:28 (NIV)

OR

A person without self-control is like a house with its doors and windows knocked out.
Proverbs 25:28 (MSG)

(Begin by singing the *Fruit of the Spirit* song. Make up new motions to go with fruits you haven't yet sung about!)

“What happens when we live God’s way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard.” (Galatians 5:22 MSG) And what are those gifts? They are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We have learned a lot this summer, and it all comes back to letting the Holy Spirit, God’s gift to believers, have control of your life. We don’t do a very good job when we call the shots. Let’s see what we can learn about the last of the fruit, self-control.

Self-control is exactly what it sounds like. It is having control of oneself (NIV); it is self-restraint (AMP). Self-control is taking responsibility for your own choices. Practicing self-control is being in charge of your wants and desires, not letting your wants and desires control you. The opposite of self-control is excess (too much of something), self-indulgence (giving yourself whatever you want), and pleasure.

Self-control is telling yourself “no” even if everyone else says “go ahead.” It is not easy to say *no* when you really want something. Just because something seems okay to do and isn’t against the law, doesn’t mean it’s good for you. You may be free to do anything you please, maybe you have even said, “I can do whatever I want to,” but that doesn’t mean it is wholesome or good or helpful. (1 Corinthians 10:23-24)

A young boy named Daniel faced a situation like this. We can read about him in the Bible. (Daniel 1) Daniel, his friends, and many others were taken captive by a powerful king who knew nothing about God. They were carried away from the place where they had grown up to the royal city of Babylon. They were removed from their families and were brought to the royal officials for a time of training that would last three years. Then they would be brought before the king to serve him.

The royal officials changed their names. Daniel and his friends had been given Hebrew names that were about the one true God. Their new names were a tribute to the Babylonian gods of wisdom and the moon.

Daniel and the others were chosen for their nobility, intelligence, and good looks. They were chosen for something special in this new land of captivity. They would be taught the language and literature of this new land. They would be able to eat the best food and drink the king’s wine.

That sounds like a fun new adventure, doesn’t it? And it sounds like a way to be away from their parents’ rules and regulations about what they could eat and

Application

We have talked a lot about fruit this summer. The Bible says that, "every good tree bears good fruit.

But a bad tree bears bad fruit." (Matthew 7:17 NIV)

As we talk about the fruit that comes from God's Holy Spirit, that means that if your life is producing love, joy, peace, etc. then it is evident who you serve. It also means that if your life is characterized by wild living, drunkenness, hatred, fighting, jealousy, etc. then the Holy Spirit is not at work in your life and you are not headed to heaven. (Galatians 5:19-21) Which tree are you? If there is bad fruit, God can change that! Will you let Him? Don't put it off any longer.

Live by the Holy Spirit's power. Then you will not do what your sinful nature wants you to do. (Galatians 5:16 NIV)

when they should study. But these young men loved God and followed Him. And even when Daniel and his friends were offered the king's own food and wine, "Daniel made up his mind to eat and drink only what God had approved for his people to eat. And he asked the king's chief official for permission not to eat the food and wine served in the royal palace." (Daniel 1:8 NLT)

God honored Daniel's obedience and self-control. "God . . . made the official friendly and kind to Daniel." (Daniel 1:9 CEV) Daniel could have said, "I can do whatever I want. My parents aren't here. Anyway, everyone else is doing it." Instead, Daniel exercised self-control. He said "no" even when he could have said "yes," and because Daniel was obedient and self-controlled, he and his friends pleased God. God's blessings come to those who obey Him. (Deuteronomy 30)

After a time of testing with the vegetables and water Daniel asked to be served, "The king interviewed them and discovered that none of the others were as outstanding as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they were given positions in the royal court. From then on, whenever the king asked for advice, he found their wisdom was ten times better than that of any of his other advisors and magicians." (Daniel 1:19-20 CEV)

Do you obey God? Do you exercise self-control? It is not always easy. Maybe you don't have trouble saying "no" when everyone is around, but what do you do when you are all alone and think no one is watching? Do you know that God sees everything. He even knows what you're going to say before it comes out of your mouth. (Psalm 139) Paul tells us in First Corinthians, "so, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (10:12 NIV) "You are tempted in the same way all other human beings are. God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted any more than you can take. But when you are tempted, God will give you a way out so that you can stand up under it." (1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV) Practice self control; look for the way out that God gives.

Paul compared self-control to athletic competition. It is strict training that pays off in the end. If you plan to run a marathon, you don't run aimlessly, hoping you will be able to make it 26 plus miles. Not practicing self-control can lead to being disqualified not only from athletic competition but in life. We have the opportunity to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others. We do it not only with words, but by the way we live. Not practicing self-control ends in us being seen as "unfit . . . unapproved and rejected as a counterfeit." (1 Corinthians 9:27b AMP)

You don't want others, or God, to see you that way, do you? Will you agree with Paul and say, "I train my body and bring it under control. Then after I have preached to others, I myself will not break the rules and fail to win the prize." What's stopping you? It's time to start training!

Activities

- **Memory Verse Activity:** Make pictures of a city without walls or a house with the windows and doors cut out. Print the memory verse on your pictures. Talk about the danger of a city without walls or a house without windows and doors. Talk about the danger of living a life without self-control.
- **Sing:** “No Excuse,” “America the Beautiful (vs 2),” “Jesus, Draw Me Close,” “Trust and Obey,” and “I Will.”
- Provide coloring pages of athletic competitions.
- Place a tray of cookies or bowl of candy in your Bible Study area. Don’t say anything about it, but allow your students to do what comes naturally to them. Some may take only one; others will eat until you stop them or there are no more. Don’t call them out, but refer to it at the end of the lesson, allowing the Holy Spirit to convict, where conviction is necessary.
- Talk about the movie Pinocchio. Discuss the trip to Pleasure Island and its consequences.
- Talk about name meanings. In the story of Daniel and his friends, their names were changed. Daniel’s name (God is my Judge) was changed to Beltshazzar (the king’s attendant). Hananiah’s name (Yahweh is gracious) was changed to Shadrach (command of Aku-the Babylonian god of the moon). Mishael’s name (Who is like God) was changed to Meshach (Who is what Aku is?), and Azariah’s name (Yahweh has helped) was changed to Abednego (servant of Nebo-the Babylonian god of wisdom).* If you have access to a baby-names book that includes name meanings, bring it with you.
- Work on your “Fruit of the Spirit Mobile.” Add a picture of a house without a door or windows to your mobile. Talk about the memory verse. Send the mobile home with your students this week.
- **For Further Study:** (If you meet several days a week, use these lessons to reinforce what your students have already learned about Self-Control. Be sure to review the main lesson everyday, too.)
 - 1) Joseph - Genesis 39:1-12 (for older students)
Focus on the self-control Joseph exercised day after day. (Also look at 2 Timothy 2:14-22.)
 - 2) Parable of the Soils - Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
Focus on the fruit produced.

* www.behindthename.com

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SELF-CONTROL

Proverbs 25:28 (NIV)

A person without

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Word Search



D M Q A T H E H S T S I S T T
L F R A M D E D N U A W G P S
G O A I Y I S D N S Y U N P E
V S E C F E D I F N I I I V R
N I I E M D O R F N N A N L D
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J S S E N O U A H T N G A T I
N S E L F C O N T R O L R S F
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P T O T I S N F U T I A R R U
D O G Y E B O N H E A R T F O
S N Y T L I B I S N O P S E R

SELF CONTROL

RESPONSIBILITY

RESTRAINT

NOT EXCESS

SAYING NO

DANIEL

OBEY GOD

STRICT TRAINING

STAND FIRM

Word Search



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STAND FIRM

Word Search



N O V C F A R E H C E D
K I L Q U G E N T L E N
O P D A N I E L R Y I D
D E G O A L I S T E N D
S K T H I C O N T R O L
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J E F R I E N D S X P A
J B E C O M E F O U N D
S H O L Y S P I R I T A
W A T E R H E A L E D S

DANIEL

FRIENDS

VEGETABLES

WATER

CONTROL

NO

Word Search



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DANIEL

FRIENDS

VEGETABLES

WATER

CONTROL

NO