



## A Guide to Wise Living

**About the Series:** Life's a maze with many challenges, distractions, and obstacles, and sometimes we take a wrong turn or make foolish choices. The Book of Proverbs gives us practical ways to live wisely so as not to have so many regrets in life and helps us live in such a way that we fully enjoy our lives as God intended.

### Part 8

## Self-Control: A Battle Within

Proverbs 12:16, 15:1, 16:32, 23:20-21, 25:28, 29:11 | Dr. Stephen G. Tan

### DISCUSS

One of the problems of this generation, young and old, is that we have a propensity to blame others for our actions, issues, problems, and circumstances. We have shunned personal responsibility and do not own up to our own actions. Many Christians have forgotten that self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. What is self-control and what does Proverbs 25:28 tell us about the need for self-control?

Discuss these five areas in our lives where we should practice self-control:

#### Control our EMOTION (v. 29:11)

Foolish people act on all their feelings and emotions without exhibiting self-restraint. Though there is nothing wrong with showing wrong emotions, those wrong emotions should not be acted in unhealthy destructive ways.

- What does Proverbs 14:29 tell you about controlling your emotions?
- What are you always angry about?

- What are the consequences of acting out violently on your emotions such as anger? How should you properly deal with your anger?

#### Control our WORDS (v. 15:1)

The bible from the Old Testament and the New testament always reminds us to use our words wisely. What comes out of our mouths is a testament to our being Spirit-filled.

- What are the benefits for controlling your words?
- What might be the effect on your testimony as followers of Jesus when you blurt out hurtful words to others?

#### Control our INTAKE (v. 23:20-21, 29-35)

This principle extends beyond food and drinks but it includes activities, interests, and hobbies.

- When we do not control our intake, what negative consequences could it lead to?
- How are those who lack self-control described in Proverbs 23:29-35?
- Share your struggles about this issue. How do you practice self-control or limit yourself in your intake?

#### Control our RESPONSES (v. 12:16)

A wiseman does not react hastily to insults, but a foolish man reacts angrily and it results in foolish regrettable actions. The book of Proverbs reminds us that we need to control our responses. A self-controlled mind will keep you from foolish hasty behavior.

- What habits do you do that help control your responses?
- How can you make sure that your responses towards negative circumstances remain God-honoring?

#### Control our SINFUL DESIRES (v. 16:32)

How we respond to our desires is in our own hands. However difficult it is, we must be able to control our own lives. Each person is responsible for his own actions and decisions in response to their desires.

- What are the consequences of giving into your sinful desires?
- In 1 Corinthians 9:27 and Titus 1:8, what can you learn from the example of the Apostle Paul in the aspect of self-control?
- What Spiritual mindsets will help guard you from your sinful desires?

## REFLECT

Do a self-assessment of your ability to practice self-control:

- Am I able to control my emotions? What emotion do I struggle to deal with?
- Am I able to control the words that come out of my mouth? Do people around me find me more encouraging or hurtful in my use of words?
- Do I struggle with my intakes or consumption (of food, entertainment, substances, vices, work, activities, etc.)? Are there habits I need to change to help me deal with this?
- Am I able to control my responses, especially to negative circumstances? Do I have a God-honoring response to situations?
- Is there a sinful desire I find difficult to control? What safeguards do I have to help me prevent giving in to those desires?

## PRAY

My gracious and loving Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word. Help me cultivate a life of self-control, that I may be able to discipline my heart, mind, and body so that I can glorify you in everything that I do. Keep me aware of Your principles written in Your Word so that I can safeguard myself from my propensity to act according to my own sinful nature. Remind me of the eternal reward You have prepared for all of us who practice self-control in this life. Guide me, be with me, and help me live for You in everything that I do. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.