

## God Demands Self-Denial

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control man becomes the master and not the slave of his passions.

### Passages That Require Self-Control

**1. Passages that specifically mention self-denial or self-control.** Jesus said that those desiring to be his disciples must deny self (Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). Paul preached to Felix about righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come (Acts 24:25). Peter lists “*temperance*” as one of the ‘Christian graces’ which we are to add to our faith (2 Pet. 1:6). The fruit of the Spirit includes self-control (Gal. 5:23). Those who run the race and compete for the crown must be temperate in all things (1 Cor. 9:5). The comparison in this text is that we are to be self-controlled and self-disciplined just as athletes are. Elders are to have self-control (Titus 1:8) and aged men should be temperate (Titus 2:8).

**2. Passages which deal with self-denial and self-control in principle.** Paul urged the Romans not to continue in sin (cf. Rom. 6:1) by telling them not to let sin reign in their bodies (Rom. 6:12ff). That requires self-control. The same writer said that it was no longer himself, but Christ who lives in him (Gal. 2:20). He had said “No!” to himself. Those who are God’s people willingly submit to Christ in everything (Eph. 5:24). That implies self-denial.

**3. Any passage that forbids the following requires self-control:** lust (2 Tim. 2:22; Matt. 5:28), lying (Eph. 4:25), immorality (1 Cor. 6:18), covetousness (Col. 3:5), retaliation (Rom. 12:17-21), laziness (Rom. 12:11; 2 Thess. 3:10), self-willed (Tit. 1:7) and hatred (Gal. 5:20).

**4. Any passage that commands the following requires self-control:** meekness (Matt. 5:3), gentleness (2 Tim. 2:24), patience (2 Tim. 2:24), soberness (1 Pet. 1:13), contentment (Heb. 13:5), and chastity (Titus 2:5).

### This Is An Area In Which We Need To Grow

The Christian life is a continual growing process. We should always be growing in grace and in knowledge of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:18). Each day and each year we should be gaining more and more spiritual maturity (Heb. 5:14).

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