

## Learn

### **GALATIANS 5:22-23 (NIV)**

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

### **MATTHEW 4:1-11 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

<sup>4</sup> Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. <sup>6</sup> “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:

“He will command his angels concerning you,  
and they will lift you up in their hands,  
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. <sup>9</sup> “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

## Main Idea

In our Of The Vine series, we are learning that fruit naturally comes from being connected to the vine. Jesus called Himself the vine and taught us that if we remain in Him and His words remain in us— we will bear much fruit.

Part of that fruit is the characteristic of self-control. Jesus displays self-control in this passage by refusing to claim his legitimate victory through illegitimate means. He did not take the easy way out, but kept on depending on God.

Practicing self-control is an exercise in dependence on God. It is an active submission to the vine. It is saying, “you have what I need, this thing does not.” It is a spiritual recognition that what you want forever is more important than what you want right now.

## Think...

1. “Self-control is the vehicle of the other virtues.” How does self-control help you with the other virtues within the fruit of the Spirit?
2. Kailey mentioned that practicing self-control is an exercise in dependence on God. She said that it involves an active submission that keeps us connected to the vine. How can you know when you are actively looking to God for strength rather than “white knuckling” (relying on your own efforts)?
3. As Kailey mentioned, pursuing right things in the right way produces faith and character in us. How did self-control help Jesus to pursue right things in the right way during His temptation in the desert?

## Discuss...

1. What is the difference between having self-control that we produce in our own strength, and self-control that results from relying on God? How can we tell the difference of self-reliance versus God-reliance in our own lives?
2. Look again at how Matthew 4:1-11 describes the temptation of Jesus in the desert.
  - a. What stands out to you in how he was able to exert self-control and not succumb to the devil’s temptations?
  - b. What role did God’s word play in His ability to exercise self-control?
  - c. How does this story help you draw upon God’s strength to have self-control?
3. How does understanding God’s love for us, and understanding the larger story that we are a part of, diminish the power that our momentary desires have over us?

## Next Steps

Are there areas in your life where you feel out of control? Are there areas where you’ve come to realize you are not relying on God, but that you are relying on your own strength? If so, confess those to God and consider sharing what God has shown you with trusted members in your community.

Look for ways this week to let go of your own efforts, and to choose to be dependent on God. Prayerfully consider being a part of our recovery ministry, reGROUP, which will come alongside you and God as you address some of these out-of-control areas in your life. More information at [summitconnect.org](http://summitconnect.org)