

Instructions for the Game of Life (Part 7)

Instructions for Gaining Self-Control

(Proverbs 25:28)

Introduction: Solomon warns us, without self-control, we are like a city with a broken-down wall, exposed to the assault of the enemy. This is why it is so important for us to look to the book of Proverbs for instructions for the game of life and *for Gaining Self-Control*. Christians are to make every effort to develop self-control because it must be applied to every area of our lives.

1. **Self-control must be applied to our thoughts:** – (2 Cor.10:5 Phil. 4:6-9) Our best defense is the Word of God. The more time we spend reading, studying and learning the truth of the Scriptures, the more prepared we will be for our next mental attack.
2. **Self-control must be applied to our feelings:** – (Lev. 19:17-18; Eph.4:26; 1 Pe. 2:11) Aristotle said, "Anybody can become angry--that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way--that is not easy!"
He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city. (Prov 16:32)
3. **Self-control must be applied to our speech:** – (Ps. 39:1; James 3:7-8) Jesus said *the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.'* (Matt 15:18)
4. **Self-control must be applied to our eating and drinking – (Prov.23:2,20; Amos 6:4-6; Eph.5:18)** Two of the more dangerous but often avoided areas of temptation and addiction today are those of our eating and drinking habits:
 - Our bodies are to be temples of the Holy Spirit, and therefore we're to take care of them. (1 Cor. 3:16)
 - This is why Proverbs warns us. . . *put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony.* (Prov 23:2)
 - Our conduct in everything should be governed by the law of love. (1 Cor. 10:23-24)

5. **Self-control must be applied to our passions and behavior (1 Cor. 7:9;1 Thes.4:4-5)** *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.* (Ephesians 6:12)
 - Each battle against temptation—each choice we make for good or for evil—is part of an ongoing struggle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.
 - We are not winning for ourselves alone in one isolated incident, for one moment on this earth, but our victory is part of a much bigger and eternal victory.
6. **Self-control must be applied to our freedoms – (Rom. 14:15-16, 20-22; 1 Cor.8:9, 13; 10:23-24)**
 - When we let the Spirit produce His fruit of self control in us it will completely transform us. (Gal.5:16-18)
 - May we so yield to the Spirit of God that He may produce His fruit in us (Gal.5:22-25)

Conclusion: In the game of life, self-control is the greatest of all victories.

Will you commit to the control of the Spirit today, so you can begin applying the victory of self-control to every area of your life?