

CONSECRATION

Week 2 | January 8th - January 14th

The Gateway to Succeeding

In Galatians 5:22-23, there is a list of the fruit of the Spirit. Personally speaking, I believe that there is only one fruit, but with 9 different parts. One part that is oftentimes overlooked is the last part in v. 23. The word in the King James Version is temperance, which is defined in the Greek dictionary as self-control. The term self-control is the virtue of one who masters his desires and passion, especially his sensual appetites.



Since we have just started a new year, it always reminds me of how quickly time flies by. Because of this, a lot of us are prone to look for quick fixes for problems that require substantial discipline. In my almost 40 years of pastoral ministry, I would say that the presence, or absence, of self-control is one of the most determining factors in whether you will do well or have serious problems in your Christian life. It affects how we manage our time, our money, our ability

to overcome temptation, our development for Godly character and qualities, controlling our temper and our tongue, regulating our health through proper diet, exercise and rest, and most importantly whether or not we spend consistent time in the Word and prayer.

We are constantly bombarded by ads on tv that tell us that we can take a pill and still eat all of the chocolate we want, lounge on the couch and still lose 50 pounds! We will actually spend our money on these gimmicks. But if you promise a sure fire way to lose weight that won't cost a dime, people won't do it. Eat proper foods in the proper portions and exercise daily? We won't do it. Why? Because it requires self-control. The spiritual food of self-control, while it is guaranteed to be effective, is not a quick fix. It requires a lifetime habit of discipline for the purpose of godliness. 1 Timothy 4:7 says, "exercise yourself rather unto godliness" and then verse 8 says, "it is profitable unto all things".



You will be tempted by you own mind and even people who will tell you that if you are slain or baptized in the Spirit, that all of your temptations will evaporate. Don't believe it. I say again, don't believe it. Discipline is God's prescribed means to godliness.



Our Guide To Praying

Always pray for the souls of the lost. We believe that the Lord wants to save them.

Petition God for our church's breakthrough into the future.

Pray for sensitivity to God's Word and His movement.

Ask God to give us a burden to see our area reached for Jesus and for God's people to experience a mighty spiritual revival.

Pray for excitement about Jesus Christ, what He is doing in our lives and in the life of the church.

Pray for the restoration of broken relationships that need to be restored.

Pray for the reaching of lives and strengthening of families, through the Husband and Wife Retreat and Singles' Summit.

Another prayer objective should be to pray for the success of the FTCC Mass Choir's Created for Worship CD. I believe it is an avenue for evangelism. It can reach people that we cannot reach in the pulpit or the pew.

What is Self-Control?

It is the inward rule or regulation of every area of your life under the ultimate authority and control of the Holy Spirit while in line with His Word.

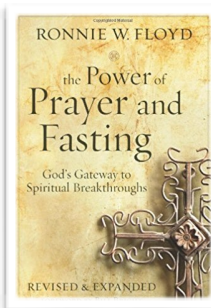
If we only control evil desires to look good in front of people or to avoid prosecution by the law, we are only putting a bandaid on cancer. The control of the Spirit extends to the heart allowing us to deal with temptation before it goes any further. As we walk by the Spirit, He produces in us the ability to control every area of our lives in line with His purpose *for* our lives. This implies responsibility on your part. This is more than letting go and let

God. Paul wrote in Colossians 1:29, "I also labor striving according to his working which worketh in me mightily." The word I am looking at is striving. This not something that we are to just focus on in January or when fasting, but it is something that God wants us to walk in every single day of our lives.



If you are going to succeed in the things that God desires for you this year and beyond, this part of the fruit needs to be developed. Self-control is not self-willed, but it is connected with your will. Clearly, both are connected with our responsibility to choose. The difference is that the self-controlled person is submitting himself to God's will as revealed in God's Word, whereas the self-willed person is acting for his own selfish desires and disregarding what God desires.

As a companion to our consecration, I am asking you to read chapters 3 and 4 of "The Power of Prayer and Fasting" by Ronnie Floyd. Please also refrain from consuming pork during the remainder of our consecration. Remember that once we release something from our diet, we do not pick it back up until after consecration ends. Some may need to be strengthened through self-discipline to keep some unhealthy foods out after consecration ends. Meet us on Mondays (at 7 PM) and Fridays (at 7:30 PM) for our corporate prayer/problem solving gatherings.



Pastor Earl & Denise Goings