

"FRIVOLOUS FELLOWSHIP" - A Worksheet

Are the two predominant concepts associated with "Christian Fellowship" supposed to be "food" and "fun"? Shouldn't we be able to expect conversation that is *less superficial*? And how about something that fills our *Spirits*, not just our *bellies*?

This group of studies was the outcome of my concern over the empty frivolity that exists in much of so-called "Christian fellowship." I wanted to see what God had to say about such activities (focusing, in this study, on the "fun" aspect).

Being a "worksheet," this is just a starting point for your own studies. Feel free to add additional words, verses, concepts, etc., as you wish. And remove any passages that are not applicable to your specific situation. (These verses are primarily from the New Testament, Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes; only occasionally from other parts of the Old Testament. In some of the word groups, verses that were deemed not relevant to the study were omitted.)

The verses that were chosen for this study were based mainly on their occurrence in the New International Version of the Bible (occasionally the New American Standard Version). If you use a different translation, you may come-up with a different list of verses, depending on how the translators chose to say it.

(Often the original Hebrew or Greek word can be translated by several English words or phrases. The translator will choose which word or phrase to use. In a *few* places, differences may occur because there may be some question as to the exact interpretation of the passage - though it would be nothing major that would seriously impact any of the Bible's teachings. It also depends on whether the translator is attempting to translate "word for word" or "meaning for meaning.")

In [*brackets with italics*] are some of the words used by various other translations, or if translations vary greatly, a general description of what the word means.

PLEASURE

A. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT PLEASURE

1. Tested and proved to be without any lasting meaning [in this life]. Ecclesiastes. 2:1,2,10
2. Wrong motive for choosing prayer requests. James 4:3
3. Temporary vs. eternal
 - Bad: Pleasures of sin = This pleasure is only temporary. [Sorrow is better; it is better to be mistreated and hurt.] Hebrews 11:25
 - Good: Pleasures associated with God's presence = This pleasure is eternal. Psalm 16:11 [*delight*]

B. CONCERNING A STRONG FOCUS OR EMPHASIS (THAT MANY PEOPLE HAVE) ON PLEASURE

1. Old Testament
 - Characteristic of the heart of fools (the "house of pleasure"). Ecclesiastes 7:4 [*mirth, having a good time*]
 - Results in poverty (the "love of pleasure"). Proverbs 21:17
2. New Testament
 - It once enslaved us... *before* we were saved. Titus 3:3
 - Those "choked" by it *do not* mature in salvation. Luke 8:14
 - Characteristic of apostates (those who claim to be saved, but who have abandoned God's ways.)
 - "love of pleasure" 2 Timothy 3:4
 - "reveling in pleasures" 2 Peter 2:13 [*revel, carouse, indulge, etc.*]
 - Contrasted with "love of God." 2 Timothy 3:4
 - Might as well be dead right now (the "widow living for pleasure") 1 Timothy 5:6

LAUGHTER

A. "LAUGHTER" OF ANIMALS - Job 39:7,18,22; 41:29

B. "GENERAL INFORMATION" [PRIMARY FOCUS = ON "GOOD" TYPES OF LAUGHTER]

1. There is a time to laugh/a time to NOT laugh. Ecclesiastes 3:4
2. It can be from God/it can be shared with others. Genesis 21:6; Job 8:21
3. Associated with...
 - Feasting [and feasting can be either good or bad] Ecclesiastes 10:19
 - Confidence in the future / confidence in God's protection. Job 5:22; Proverbs 31:25 [*smile, rejoice*]
 - Blessings/restored blessings. Genesis 21:6; Job 8:21; Psalm 126:2

C. WARNINGS ABOUT LAUGHTER: It is not as good as many people want to believe.

1. It is NOT "neutral" / it is NOT always good.
 - It is inferior to sorrow. Ecclesiastes 7:3
 - It can be a superficial "mask" - a surface expression that can conceal the true thoughts/emotions of the heart. Proverbs 14:13
 - As a way of life, it is FOOLISH/MADNESS and has no lasting significance/meaning. Ecclesiastes 2:2
2. It is NOT the predominant attitude of those who are "the blessed ones."
 - Major contrast in emphasis between the "blessed ones" and the "cursed ones." Luke 6:21,25
 - NOT an element of repentance/humility. James 4:9
 - Laughter as a fruit of repentance... will come at a LATER time. Job 8:21 (This verse contains a true principle, but it was wrongly applied to Job. See also Luke 6:21.)

3. SOME TYPES OF LAUGHTER CAN BE COMPLETELY EVIL - NOT GOOD AT ALL.
- Something that fools do (in contrast with what the wise do). Ecclesiastes 7:6
 - Associated with drunkenness/impending judgment. Jeremiah 51:39 [*filled with joy/merriment*]
 - Often an expression of unbelief. Genesis 17:17; 18:12,13,15; Matthew 9:24 [*ridiculed*]; Mark 5:40 [*ridiculed*]; Luke 8:53 [*ridiculed*]

D. EXAMPLES OF LAUGHTER (BOTH GOOD AND BAD EXAMPLES)

1. The LORD - laughing at the wicked. Psalm 2:4; 37:13; 59:8
2. LAUGHING AT OTHERS: (People) laughing at the (at times deserved) judgment received by others.
 - Enemies laughing at those who have been judged. Lamentations 1:7 [*mocking*]
 - The righteous laughing at the self-confident. Psalm 52:6
 - A coming conqueror laughing at self-confident cities. Habakkuk 1:10
 - Wisdom laughing at those who reject her. Proverbs 1:26
3. BEING LAUGHED AT: Those who are an object of laughter/ridicule (a "laughingstock"):
 - Because of one's evil deeds. Genesis 38:23; Exodus 32:25 [*objects of derision*]
 - Because of wickedness/(judgment?). Ezekiel 22:4 [*mockery*]
 - Because of judgment or apparent judgment. Job 12:4; Lamentations 3:14 [*(treated as) a joke*]

["FRIVOLOUS FELLOWSHIP" - A Worksheet]

HAPPY & CHEERFUL

[These two studies were grouped-together for this reason: Though the NIV translation uses the word "happy" for the first group of verses, and the word "cheerful" for the second group, many translations will use similar words for BOTH sets of verses.]

PART 1 - HAPPY, etc.

These verses focus on genuine (God-given) happiness, not on the distorted and perverse types of "happiness" that are associated with evil thinking and godless values.

The NIV uses the word "happy" in these passages. Many other translations use words such as: *joy, rejoice, enjoy, joyful, etc.* Only additional word variations (not related to the word "joy") will be mentioned in *[italicized brackets]*.

A. HAPPINESS AS A GIFT FROM GOD... ASSOCIATED WITH...

1. Wisdom and knowledge (given to those who please God) Ecclesiastes 2:26
2. Doing good (together, they form the "best choice" of how to live) Ecclesiastes 3:12
3. Accepting one's lot in life (& happy in one's work... if/when God enables one to not only *have* possessions/wealth, but also to *enjoy* them...) Ecclesiastes 5:19

B. EFFECTS OF HAPPINESS ON ATTITUDE/APPEARANCE

1. Happiness in the heart... effects the face. Proverbs 15:13 [*glad*]
2. If happy... singing is an appropriate reaction. James 5:13 [*cheerful, in good spirits*]

C. CIRCUMSTANCES (FOR HAPPINESS)

1. When enabled by God. Ecclesiastes 5:19, etc. (See first section, above.)
 2. At the appropriate time of life - when young (but fully aware of your future judgment). [When old, it will be more difficult to be happy.] Ecclesiastes 11:9 [Note: One's awareness of future judgment, if coupled with a desire to be ready for it, will enable a person to have a God-honoring type of happiness. This passage encourages happiness, within a God-fearing context.]
 3. In good times. [In bad times, we should contemplate that they also come from God. (We should also remember Romans 8:28, which tells us that God can use even *bad* times to accomplish good for us!) Ecclesiastes 7:14
 4. When dead! Ecclesiastes 4:2 [*better off, fortunate, (should be) congratulated*] [This passage is NOT looking at the issue from the perspective of one's *eternal* destiny, but from the perspective of being released from the oppression and evil that occurs "under the sun" - that is, in this present life.]
 5. WARNING: Do not be controlled by happiness, since the time is short. [see context] 1 Corinthians 7:30 [Happiness is NOT our #1 focus.]
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PART 2 – CHEERFUL

[The word "cheerful" occurs only 5 times in the NIV. The other instance (besides the four mentioned below) involves a "cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Other translations may use words such as: *happy, glad, joyful, merry*, which would put these specific passages in some other location in this group of worksheets. The basic message found in these verses, however, would remain the same.]

A. THE FOUR VERSES

Proverbs 15:13 Happy [*glad, joyful*] heart ...results: a cheerful [*happy*] face;
CONTRAST: aching [*sad, sorrowful*] heart ...results: a crushed [*broken*] spirit.

Proverbs 15:15 Cheerful [*happy*] heart ...results: (life is like) a continual feast;
CONTRAST: oppressed people [*afflicted, poor*] ...results: their days are wretched [*difficult, evil, full of trouble, etc.*].

Proverbs 15:30 Cheerful look [*light in the eyes, twinkling eyes, etc.*] ...results: joy [*rejoicing*] in heart;
PARALLEL CONCEPT: good news ...results: healthy [*refreshed, strengthened, etc.*] bones.

Proverbs 17:22 Cheerful [*joyful*] heart ...results: (same effect as) good medicine;
CONTRAST: crushed [*broken, depressed*] spirit ...results: dried bones [*drained strength*].

B. A LOOK AT CAUSE/EFFECT; CONTRASTS/PARALLELS (the above 4 verses combined)

“POSITIVE”

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE HEART	WHAT HAPPENS ON THE FACE	THE FINAL EFFECT / RESULTS	VERSE REFERENCE
Happy heart	Cheerful face		Proverbs 15:13
	Cheerful look	Joyful heart (in others) [The ability to cheer-up others.]	Proverbs 15:30
	Expression of (good news)	Healthy bones (in others)	Proverbs 15:30
Cheerful heart		Medicine	Proverbs 17:22
Cheerful heart		Feasting (metaphoric description of a blessed life)	Proverbs 15:15

“NEGATIVE”

CAUSE	EFFECT / RESULT [or “SECOND” CAUSE]	FURTHER EFFECT / RESULTS	VERSE REFERENCE
Aching heart	Crushed spirit		Proverbs 15:13
	Crushed spirit	Dried bones	Proverbs 17:22
Oppression	Wretched days		Proverbs 15:15

C. NOTE - CONTRAST WITH LAUGHTER.

Laughter is merely "on the surface" and has no necessary relationship with what is in the heart. Proverbs 14:13

TO BE MERRY/CHEERFUL

This study contains mostly examples, rather than commands and principles. It is best used not by itself, but in connection with the other studies found in this series about "frivolity."

The New Testament Greek words examined in this study can be translated by several English words. After each occurrence, the concept will be expressed using the word "merry," or the equivalent [in brackets]. For those interested, the N.T. Greek words are listed at the end of the study.

SUMMARY:

- PART 1 - MERRIMENT, HAPPINESS, REJOICING, AS A GENERAL CONCEPT:

There are times when we should be filled with rejoicing & merriment; but when it becomes a lifestyle - the focus of our life - it becomes evil.

- PART 2 - MERRIMENT, HAPPINESS THAT IS ASSOCIATED WITH ENCOURAGEMENT:

This type of merriment / happiness can exist even under adverse circumstances.

- PART 3 - The New Testament Greek words [OPTIONAL]
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PART 1 - To Be Merry, to Be Filled with Rejoicing and Celebration

(a cheerfulness associated with enjoyable circumstances)

A. It can easily become sinful - especially if it characterizes one's lifestyle, preoccupation, or focus of life. The end result is eternal loss. Some examples:

1. A self-preoccupation with festivity and happiness is incompatible with love for one's "neighbor"
 - Such a lifestyle is spoken-against by Jesus (2 examples)
 - Luke 12:19-20a - About the rich man who had an abundant surplus, who built bigger storehouses for his abundance (rather than being generous toward God). He said to himself: "You have enough goods stored up to last many years. So take life easy! Eat! Drink! Enjoy life [be merry]!" God said to him, "You senseless fool! This very night your life will be taken

- from you! Then who will get all those things you have stored up for yourself?"
- Luke 16:19 - About the rich man, contrasted with the poor beggar who sat by his doorstep. He lived in luxury [had a merry life]... until he died and woke up in a place of torment... (Read the rest of the passage.)
 - Many verses in Scripture associate *self-sacrifice* (rather than self-preoccupation) with love for neighbor. (Compare to Philippians 2:1-5 and 1 John 3:16-18.) "Love for neighbor" is incompatible with self-preoccupation.
2. Such an attitude can be associated with opposition to truth from (or about) God: The truth may be suppressed or ignored, or it may be exchanged for a lie. These things are incompatible with love for God, the source of truth. (2 examples)
- An example from history, in which it was associated with idolatry
 - Acts 7:41 - The Israelites made a calf-idol, brought sacrifices to it and held a celebration [were filled with merriment] in honor of what they had made with their hands. (A reference to an event mentioned in the O.T.)
 - A future example, in which it will be associated with people who hate the truth and who will kill the truth-speakers
 - Rev 11:10 The people of the earth will gloat over the death of the two prophets and will celebrate [make merry] by sending each other gifts. (They will do this because these two prophets had tormented them with their message about judgment.)
3. The two greatest obligations we have as humans are: Love for God and what he says (= truth), and love for our neighbor (which includes love for our enemies). The above examples show that this lifestyle is easily associated with the violation of BOTH obligations.

B. There are appropriate times for being merry / rejoicing (though NOT as the focus of one's life). Some examples of these times include:

1. During times of special blessings (examples)
- The restoration of broken relationships
 - Luke 15:23-24, 29, 32 - (After the prodigal son had returned) - Father: "Bring the fattened calf and kill it, so we can have a feast and celebrate [be merry]! For this my son was dead but now he is alive again. He was lost but now he is found." So they began to celebrate [be merry]. / Older son: "All these years I've been slaving-away for you. I've never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat, so that my friends and I could celebrate [make merry]." / Father: "We had to celebrate [be merry] and rejoice, because this your brother was dead but now he is alive again. He was lost but now he is found."
 - The birth of a child, when all hope for bearing children has been lost
 - Gal 4:27 - Quote from the O.T. (Isaiah 54:1): "Rejoice [make merry], O childless, barren woman; shout (for joy), you who have not (previously) experienced the pains of childbirth! Because the children of the desolate woman are now more numerous than the one who has a husband."

- In Galatians, this passage is used in part of an allegory that illustrates the joy of salvation under the "new covenant" of grace.
- 2. When considering the blessings and future hope that are a part of salvation
 - The resurrection & (because of it) able to be in God's presence
 - Acts 2:26, 28 - My heart is glad; my tongue rejoices [expresses merriment]. My body will live in hope. / You have shown me the way of life; you will fill me with joy [merriment] in your presence. (In this specific context, the application is to Jesus, the first to experience the joy of raising from the dead. Ultimately all those who belong to Jesus will be able to express this joy.)
 - The fact that salvation is now available to *all* (not only to the Jews)
 - Romans 15:10 - Quoting Deut. 32:43: "Rejoice [be merry], O you nations, with his people (Israel)."
- 3. When considering the coming day of justice & judgment - the time when injustice will be forever eliminated. (These specific examples will occur in the future.)
 - Rev 12:12 - "Rejoice [be merry], you heavens and everyone who lives there! But how horrible for you, earth and the sea - because the devil has come down to you! He is filled with rage, because he knows that his time is coming to an end."
 - Rev 18:20 - "Rejoice [make merry] over her (= the destroyed city of Babylon), O heaven, you saints, apostles and prophets! God has judged the city for the way she treated you!"
- 4. When experiencing the temporal blessings of God. (Even people who do not love God can experience some of the blessings and kindness that come from him!)
 - Acts 14:17 - God has not left himself without testimony (among those who do not know him). He has shown kindness to you: He gives you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons. He provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy [merriment]."
- 5. These examples show that there *are* proper times for being cheerful/happy. We do not need to be "extreme" and avoid it, just because it can be bad/sinful when taken to excess.

C. Our attitude/conduct can affect the joy/gladness others have (or don't have) - AN ILLUSTRATION:

- 2 Cor 2:2 - For if I cause you to be grieved, who is left to make me glad [merry]? Only you, whom I have grieved! [If they refused to deal with the sin that was present among them, he would be forced to do it - and that would leave them grieved, rather than filled with joy. In this case, - if he had to bring grief to them - it would influence their ability to bring joy to him.]
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PART 2 - To be cheerful, encouraged

(a cheerfulness associated with encouragement)

1. When the joy of encouragement is present, the appropriate response is to be filled with praise to God, who makes it possible.
 - James 5:13 Are any of you having troubles? Pray! Is anyone happy [cheerful/encouraged]? Sing songs of praise!
 - Note: This verse also shows us that this attitude is only ONE of the possible circumstances that may exist in life. As Eccles. 3:4 says, there is...

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance (etc.).

2. The joy of encouragement can exist during times of hardship and difficult circumstances. Two examples:
 - Acts 27:22, 25, 36 Paul to the people on the ship: "I urge you to keep up your courage [be encouraged/cheerful], because none of you will die. Only the ship will be destroyed." / "Keep up your courage [encouragement/cheer], men, for I trust God: it will happen just as he told me!" / They were all encouraged and ate some food.
 - Acts 24:10 Paul, defending himself before the governor: "I know that you have been a judge over this nation for many years. So I will gladly [with cheer/courage] defend myself before you."

PART 3 - The N.T. Greek words used in this study:

From PART 1:

euphraino

- To gladden, make joyful; Passive: to be glad, to be merry, to rejoice - Luke 12:19; 15:23-24, 29, 32; 16:19; Acts 2:26; 7:41; Romans 15:10; 2 Cor. 2:2; Galatians 4:27; Rev. 11:10; 12:12; 18:20

euphrosune

- Good cheer, joy, gladness - Acts 2:28; 14:17

From PART 2

euthumeo

- To be joyful, be of good cheer, of good courage - Acts 27:22, 25, 36; James 5:13

euthumos

- Of good cheer, of good courage - Acts 24:10

Source: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament [public domain]

WORDS

(Selected Passages from Proverbs / Ecclesiastes / New Testament only)

[General principle: There are both good and bad uses for words.]

A. BY THEM WE WILL BE JUDGED

1. We will be condemned or acquitted [*justified, proved innocent*] by God.
Matthew 12:37

B. QUANTITY vs. QUALITY

1. FEW WORDS (small quantities) = GOOD
 - In the presence of God, good words are FEW words. (First LISTEN!)
Ecclesiastes 5:2
 - Restraint in the use of words = what a man of knowledge does. Proverbs 17:27
2. MANY WORDS (large quantities) (Overflowing abundance of words - which characterizes the fool.) = BAD
 - Sin will NOT be absent when many words [*much talk*] is present.
Proverbs 10:19
 - It results in the speech of a fool. Ecclesiastes 5:3
 - It characterizes a fool: he multiplies words [*keeps on talking*]. Ecclesiastes 10:14
 - Like much dreaming, many [*empty*] words are meaningless. Ecclesiastes 5:7
 - The more the words, the less the meaning... until nobody benefits from them. Ecclesiastes 6:11

C. BAD USE OF WORDS

1. Reckless [*careless, rash*] words (they pierce like a sword). Proverbs 12:18
2. Careless [*idle*] words (we will give account for them). Matthew 12:36
3. The fool's words - begin with folly... end with wicked madness. Ecclesiastes 10:13-14

D. ADDITIONAL "WORD" studies that could be examined.

Various verses exist, which mention phrases such as the following:

- Pleasant words
- Words of knowledge
- Reliable words
- Wise words
- Quiet words
- Etc.

(THE EMPHASIS in these verses is not so much on *whether or not it is good to use words*, but on *what their effect will be*. Most, if not all, would probably be *good* uses of words.)

MISC. OTHER WORDS RELATED TO TALKING

A. SPEECH

1. Examples of good speech
 - Truthful speech [*word of truth*] = Paul's example. 2 Corinthians 6:7
 - Being an example of (proper) speech [*word*] = required of Timothy [all leaders, by implication] 1 Timothy 4:12
2. Example of bad speech - the speech [*voice*] of a fool originates in "many words." Ecclesiastes 5:3

B. TALK

1. Foolish [*silly*] talk is to be avoided. Ephesians 5:4

C. JOKING

1. Connected to deception. Proverbs 26:19
2. "Coarse [*vulgar, obscene*] joking [*jesting*]" - out of place among believers. Ephesians 5:4
3. An example - a message that was considered false was viewed as "joking." (In reality, the message was true.) Genesis 19:14

D. MOCKING

1. Mocking the poor - an expression of contempt [*insult*] toward God. Proverbs 17:5

E. [The use of one's TONGUE = another possible word to study - not done here.]

FOOLS/FOOLISH

PART 1 - HIS MOUTH

A. The foolish person is predominantly associated with speaking/talking/use of his mouth.

1. Chattering [*babbling, prating*] fool. Proverbs 10:8,10
 - [Note on v. 10, differences between var. translations - The Hebrew manuscripts say the same as v. 8b: "foolish talk / babbling fool... (etc.)"; but the ancient Greek translations (which some translators prefer) say: "Bold rebuke leads to peace."]
2. The mouth of the fool.
 - Proverbs 15:2 - gushes [*spouts, pours out*] folly [*foolishness*]
 - Proverbs 15:14 - feeds on folly [*foolishness*]
 - Proverbs 18:7 - brings his destruction/ruin
 - Proverbs 26:7 - [about the uselessness of a proverb when he quotes it]
 - Proverbs 26:9 - [about the uselessness of a proverb when he quotes it]
3. The speech of a fool. Ecclesiastes 5:3 - associated with lots of talking/"many words"
4. Multiplies words / keeps on talking. Ecclesiastes 10:14
5. Consumed by his own lips. Ecclesiastes 10:12
6. Making rash promises/vows; God not pleased with such people. Ecclesiastes 5:4

B. If he would only keep quiet... he would be thought wise! Proverbs 17:28

PART 2 - HIS HEART

A. The heart/mind of fools...

1. A source of folly [*foolishness*]. Proverbs 12:23
2. In the house of pleasure [*mirth, a good time*]. Ecclesiastes 7:4

B. Pleasure-oriented/light-hearted (connected with the "house of pleasure" in the previous section). [Also associated with the presence of *words*.]

1. The song [*praise*] of fools. Ecclesiastes 7:5
2. Laughter of fools. Ecclesiastes 7:6
 - Note also Ecclesiastes 2:2, which describes laughter (if it is the focus of one's life) as foolish [*madness*].

CONTROL (See also "Self-Control")

[Note: the general concept of "control" is found in many contexts, and can be translated in many different ways. Sometimes it might not even be found in the original languages, but needs added for smooth reading in the English language. (The *idea* might be present, though the word isn't.) In these passages, the NIV happened to use the word "control," though other words may be equally acceptable.]

A. CONTROL OF NATURE/CREATION/THINGS IN IT

1. All things - under Jesus' control. Philippians 3:21 [*subdue, subject all things, bring under (his) authority*]
2. Clouds - under God's control Job 37:15 [*command*]
3. Plagues - under God's control Revelation 16:9 [*power/authority*]
4. Animals - put under Nebuchadnezzar's control (by God) Jeremiah 28:14 [*(animals) "given" (to him, to serve him)*]

B. CONTROL OF WORLD/WEALTH/POSSESSIONS

1. The whole world system - controlled by the evil one. 1 John 5:19 [*under the power of...*]
2. Treasures of Egypt (etc.) - controlled by "self-exalting king." Daniel 11:43 [*have power over*]
3. The works of one's hands - controlled (after he dies) by the one who inherits it - regardless of whether the inheritor is wise or foolish. Ecclesiastes 2:19 [*be master over*] [RESULTS: There is no "lasting meaning" in the works of one's hands.]

C. CONTROLLING OTHERS: nations/peoples/individuals being controlled by others

1. In general - nations, etc., controlled by various leaders or by other nations, etc. Joshua 18:1 [*subdued*]; 2 Samuel 8:1 & 1 Chronicles 18:1 [*(take) from the hand/grip (of)*]; 2 Samuel 8:3 & 1 Chronicles 18:3 [*rule, dominion, power*]; 1 Kings 11:24 [*reigned, became king*]; 2 Chronicles 17:5 [*in his hand (made secure)*]; 25:3 [*in his hand, well established*]
2. Specific individuals controlled by others
 - Weak-willed women - controlled by apostates (people who claim to be "Christian" but who have departed from the truth of God). 2 Timothy 3:6 [*captivate, get influence over, mislead*]
 - A husband "controlling" one's wife in a proper, legitimate, and holy manner. [*** Depends on the interpretation of the word "vessel" - whether it is referring to the man, or to his wife. (The other interpretation is mentioned in a section, below.)*] 1 Thessalonians 4:4 [*possess, live with, acquire*]

D. CONTROLLING SELF: control (or lack of it) over one's emotions/actions/words/self

1. A general example of being "out of control" (Israelites, when sacrificing to the golden cow). Exodus 32:25 [*out of hand, wild*]
2. Controlling of one's emotions/temper
 - Better than conquering a city. Proverbs 16:32 [*slow to anger, patient*]
 - A characteristic of the wise man (not the fool). Proverbs 29:11 [*(he) holds back (anger)*]
 - A specific instance in which *lack of control* was not wrong: Unable to keep control of one's emotions (in an emotional situation) - Joseph. Genesis 45:1
3. Control of one's Body (focus = on sexual self-control)
 - The need to control one's body in a proper, holy manner. [*** Depends on the interpretation of the word "vessel" - whether it is referring to the man, or to his wife. (The other interpretation is mentioned in a section, above.)*] 1 Thessalonians 4:4 [*possess, live with, acquire*]
 - Sexual self-control & marriage:
 - If you have sexual self-control: a good reason to NOT marry. 1 Corinthians 7:37 [*power (over his will/desires)*]
 - If you *don't* have sexual self-control: a good reason to marry. 1 Corinthians 7:9 [*self-control*]
4. Controlling one's "prophetic spirit"
 - It is under the prophet's control. 1 Corinthians 14:32 [*subject (to their) control; subject (to them)*]

E. CONTROL OF THE SPIRIT/RIGHTEOUSNESS VS. CONTROL OF THE FLESH [*Which of them controls us?*]

1. Control by the Spirit
 - It is true of *all* who have the Spirit of God/Christ. Romans 8:9 [*to be "in" (or) living by (the flesh - vs. the Spirit)*]
 - The mind controlled by the Spirit contrasted with the mind of sinful man: the first results in life/peace; the second in death. Romans 8:6 [*(a mind) set on (or) concerned with... (the flesh or Spirit)*]

2. The "control of righteousness" - does not effect those who are slaves to sin. Romans 6:20 [*(free) "from" (or) "in regard to" (its control); felt no obligation to do it (that is, to do what is right)*]

3. Control by the flesh
 - This *once* applied to us (and it resulted in fruit that led to death). Romans 7:5 [*(living) "in" (the flesh / corrupt natural inclinations)*]
 - It is *no longer* true of us (who have the Spirit of God/Christ). Romans 8:9 [*to be "in" (or) living by (the flesh)*]
 - Those controlled by the flesh CANNOT please God. Romans 8:8 [*to be "in" (or) living by (the flesh)*]

SELF-CONTROL (See also "Control")

A. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SELF-CONTROL AND SALVATION / SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1. An element of "faith in Jesus Christ." Acts 24:25 (compare to v. 24)
2. Taught to us by the grace [*saving kindness*] of God. Titus 2:12
3. Fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:23
4. Must be added to *faith* (and the other listed Christian virtues), in increasing measure. 2 Peter 1:6 (v. 5-7)

B. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SELF-CONTROL AND OTHER THINGS

1. NOW: Things that are, or that should [i.e., must] be done.
 - Belonging to the "day." 1 Thessalonians 5:8 [*sober*]
 - Minds prepared for action. (Also: confident hope.) 1 Peter 1:13
 - Prayer. 1 Peter 4:7
 - Putting on faith/love/hope. 1 Thessalonians 5:8 [*sober*]
2. FUTURE: Things to come
 - Anticipation of "the end." 1 Peter 4:7
 - Waiting for Jesus Christ Titus 2:12 (& v. 13)
 - Minds focused on the grace/kindness you confidently hope for [look forward to] - (to be given/received when Jesus returns). 1 Peter 1:13
3. Opposition to evil
 - Saying "NO" to ungodliness and worldly passions. Titus 2:12
 - Resisting the Devil 1 Peter 5:8 (& v.9)

C. ADDITIONAL ATTITUDES & CHARACTER TRAITS THAT ARE REQUIRED (IN ADDITION TO SELF-CONTROL)

1. Proper use of the mind; attentiveness
 - "Alert and self-controlled." 1 Thessalonians 5:6 [*sober*], 1 Peter 5:8 [*sober*]
 - "Clear-minded and self-controlled." 1 Peter 4:7 [*both words translated various ways*]

2. Other Characteristics/qualities required in believer's lives.
 - List of qualifications for being an overseer. 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8 [*both verses: sober-minded, good judgment, sensible, etc.*]
 - List of virtues / character traits, that must be ever-increasing in the believer's life. 2 Peter 1:5-6
 - List of several things an older woman must teach younger women, regarding how to live their lives. Titus 2:5 [*self controlled, sensible, wise, discreet, etc.*]
 - One of the several characteristics required of older men Titus 2:2 [*sensible, wise, good judgment*]
 - How the grace of God teaches all of us to live: self-controlled, upright, and godly. Titus 2:12 [*sensibly, temperately, self-restrained*]

D. REQUIRED BY...

1. Overseers 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8 [*both verses: sober-minded, good judgment, sensible, etc.*]
2. Older men Titus 2:2 [*sensible, wise, good judgment, etc.*]
3. Younger men Titus 2:6 [*sensible, wise, good judgment, etc.*]
4. Older women are to teach it to younger women. [Implies that both must have it.] Titus 2:5 [*self controlled, sensible, wise, discreet, etc.*]
5. DIRECT COMMANDS APPLIED TO ALL - 1 Thessalonians 5:6,8; 1 Peter 1:13,5:8; 2 Peter 1:6; etc.

E. LACK OF SELF-CONTROL

1. General comments about it
 - Those without it are likened to a city with broken-down walls (= defenseless). Proverbs 25:28
 - A characteristic of people in the "Last Days." 2 Timothy 3:3 [*profligate*]
 - Lack of self-control in sexual matters is one of the reasons that a husband and wife should *not* avoid sexual relations for extended periods of time. 1 Corinthians 7:5
2. People who don't have self-control: what they are like
 - Nearsighted, blind, forgetful about being cleansed from past sins. 2 Peter 1:6+
 - Sleeping in darkness. 1 Thessalonians 5:6