

Thank you for downloading one of the eight, five-session small group studies from *Impact*.

Impact is a 40-week, video-driven small group study for men. Each session features a video from best-selling author, Rick Burgess, and a small group leader guide. You can purchase all 40 weeks at once, or purchase the 5-week studies independantly. .

If we can help answer any questions about *Impact* or any other of the Iron Hill Men resources, please don't hesitate to email (customer@ironhillpress.com) or call (800) 307-9366

The background of the cover is a photograph of a majestic mountain range. The mountains are rugged and rocky, with patches of snow or light-colored rock. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds. In the foreground, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees. A large, solid green rectangular banner is positioned horizontally across the middle of the image, containing the title text.

SELF-CONTROL

A 5-Week, Video-Driven Discipleship
Curriculum for Men

RICK BURGESS

IMPACT: SELF-CONTROL A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM FOR MEN

Leader Guides

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Videos

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A 5-WEEK, VIDEO-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP
CURRICULUM FOR MEN



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DISCIPLESHIP IMPACT

DISCIPLE MEN, CHANGE EVERYTHING.

There is a discipleship problem affecting Christian men today. Too often, men are absent from both the church pews and from the vital work the church is doing in the world. These men are not engaged spiritually in their homes and aren't making a Kingdom impact in their workplace. And it all points back to one major issue:

Many men aren't being disciplined.

But when men ARE being disciplined, powerful things happen as a result. They impact the church, their family, and culture. We have seen the influence godly men can have. The purpose of *The Pursuit* curriculum is to equip and empower men to become the man God has called them to be.

WHAT IS IMPACT ?

Impact is a 40-week, video-driven curriculum designed to help men discover what it means to have a fruitful life and faith. *Impact* takes the eight traits from 2 Peter 1:5-8 and unpacks them through video and small group Bible Study.

Rick Burgess, best-selling author and co-host of the nationally syndicated radio show *The Rick & Bubba Show*, starts off each session with a 10-15 minute video introducing the session's focus. Then, for each small group session, there is a leader guide to help facilitate a meaningful time of discussion and Bible study.

The reason men aren't living a more authentic faith is simple: they have yet to embrace the call to real discipleship. By leading a group through *Impact*, you're a part of the growing tide of leaders who are looking to awaken men to embrace their calling as Christ-followers.

STARTER GUIDE

In 2 Peter 1:5–8, Peter provides a list of attributes every Christian should pursue. Peter gave an excellent explanation for why striving to obtain these attributes is so important. He said that if Christ-followers "own" these attributes and continue to grow in them, their lives would be effective and fruitful for the Kingdom of God. This fruitfulness should be the goal of every mature Christian.

One of the attributes Peter mentioned is "self-control." In this 5-week series, Rick Burgess will help you guide men in your group to understand precisely what "self-control" is and how pursuing it will lead men to lives of impact for the Kingdom of God.

WHAT YOU NEED TO GET STARTED

FIRST, preview your video. Every *Impact* session starts with a video. You'll need to preview your video ahead of time and be prepared to show it to your group. You can access your videos through your Iron Hill Press account.

THEN, get ready for your small group discussion and Bible study by preparing your lesson. Use this leader guide to help lead a time of discussion based on the video and Bible study based on the passage Rick covered. Pray that God would lead your preparation and your facilitation of the material.

FINALLY, lead your time of small group Bible study using this leader guide. It's that simple.

If you have any questions or feedback, don't hesitate to let us hear from you at feedback@ironhillpress.com.

EDGE ELEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



RICK BURGESS is the Co-Host of the nationally syndicated *Rick and Bubba Show*. He has co-authored multiple New York Times Bestselling Books covering topics such as politics, marriage, business, comedy, and what it looks like to be a follower of Christ in secular entertainment. Rick has appeared on the Fox News programs *Hannity's America*, *Your World with Neil Cavuto*, and *Fox and Friends*.

Rick speaks regularly at men's events and marriage conferences across the country, all while teaching youth and men's Bible studies on a weekly basis. Rick is married to the former Sherri Bodine, and they have five children: Brandi, Blake, Brooks, Brody, and Bronner. Rick's wife Sherri is the author of the book "Bronner: A Journey to Understand," a powerful story about what she and Rick learned about God through the earthly death of their youngest son, Bronner. Rick's eulogy for Bronner became the most-viewed video in the world on YouTube the week of the service.

ALSO CONTRIBUTING TO *IMPACT*: *Self-control*

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Main Passage: Galatians 5:22-24

Purpose: To understand that a life of self-control is not achieved by strength of will but through faith in Christ, who empowers us through His Spirit.

Session Snapshot: Every man knows how hard it is to have self-control. No man can have complete mastery of self. But the Bible teaches that once we have a new identity in Christ, God's Spirit works to put to death the passions of our flesh so that we can begin walking in holiness. As men of God, we must pursue self-control through the power of Christ working in us to keep sinful practises at bay and honor God with our lives!

GETTING STARTED

Kick off your time together by introducing a new theme.

FIRST, explain to your group that they will be beginning a video series that breaks down the individual characteristics of 2 Peter 1:5-8. If this is your first video series in *Impact*, read the following set-up statement:

- **In 2 Peter, Peter encourages his readers to pursue lives that honor God. In the introduction, Peter reveals his letter's heart in just a few powerful verses. Peter says that because of God's grace, we have been saved from the death our sins rightfully earned and given a new life and purpose. As a result, we are to pursue spiritual maturity. Peter says we should strive to grow in our faith, "supplementing" our faith with "virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love." Why did Peter encourage this? Because if we grow in this way, we will be men whose lives are truly fruitful, real assets to the advancement of God's Kingdom. That should be the goal of every man! In *Impact*, we'll look at these characteristics individually and learn how to see them increase in our lives.**

(If it's not your first series in *Impact*, consider summarizing the previous paragraph, reminding men that you're looking at the characteristics from Peter's second letter.)

THEN, if this is your first session as a group, consider introducing yourself, if necessary, and having the men in your group introduce themselves. You may even ask men what they hope to get out of their time in this study. If you want to pass around a contact sheet or do any other first-session "housekeeping tasks," this is the time.

FINALLY, if there are no questions or other input, transition into the *Digging In* section of your leader's guide.

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

FIRST, if this isn't your first session, transition straight into the video. If it is your first study in *Impact*, explain to the group how your time together will work. Explain that you will watch a video that is usually about 12-15 minutes long, followed by a short discussion of the video. Then, you'll spend a few minutes in Bible study, followed by a closing activity.

Consider encouraging men to take notes as they watch the video. Remember, a participant guide is available to you if you would like to distribute it to your group.

THEN, play the video. (You can access the video by logging into your Iron Hill Press account.)

When the video ends, lead men in a short discussion based on what Rick covered. Feel free to come up with your own questions, or consider asking some similar to those below:

- **What are some common issues that people struggle to have self-control over?**
- **Are there any instances where a lack of self-control can be considered harmless? Or, as Christians, should we always associate a lack of self-control with sinfulness?**
- **Rick said in the video that the Bible "demands" self-control of us. Why do you think the Bible is emphatic about this issue?**
- **Can you think of instances when Jesus displayed self-control during His time on earth?**
- **Can you think of a time when you thought you had self-control in an area, only to find out that you did not? What happened?**
- **On the other hand, can you think of a time when you knew you would be in a situation that would be hard to have self-control? How can we set ourselves up for success in situations like that?**
- **If a Christian puts guardrails in place to help with his self-control issues, should we consider this a mature and wise action, or is this person failing to rely on the Holy Spirit and lacking faith in God? Why do you think that?**
- **How does it make you feel when you lack self-control in areas related to your personal holiness and virtue? How *should* a believer feel when this happens? What is the appropriate response?**

FINALLY, transition into the *Opening the Word* portion of your time together by saying something like the following:

- **It is no coincidence that both Peter and Paul (and Proverbs) address the issue of self-control. Today we will spend a few minutes studying what Paul taught about self-control, where it comes from, and how we can develop it in our own lives.**

OPENING THE WORD

Spend time going deeper into a specific concept Rick introduced in the video.

FIRST, explain that you will look more in-depth at Galatians 5:22-24 as Rick discussed in the video. In this well-known verse about the fruit of the Spirit, Paul not only outlines different examples of this spiritual fruit but points us to why this fruit should be manifested in the life of a believer. This lesson will have a specific focus on self-control.

We must make sure your people have a good understanding of the context of the passage you'll be studying. Provide the context for the passage using the following bullet points:

- **Author:** Paul, the persecutor-of-Christians-turned-missionary, is the author of the Letter to the Galatians (see Acts 7:57-8:3 and 9:1-31). After his conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul set out on

several journeys to proclaim the salvation available through Jesus and His death and resurrection. Several churches were planted due to Paul's leadership, including the church in Galatia.

- **Time frame:** Paul wrote his letter to the Galatians between 48 and 53 AD, most likely by 49 AD.
- **Purpose:** The primary purpose of Paul's letter to the Galatians was to respond to a particular issue: a group of Jews—claiming to also be Christ-followers (many early Christians were Jewish Christians)—had begun to argue that Christians are not just saved by faith, but that they also were required to keep the Mosaic Law. This, of course, went against everything Paul knew to be true about Jesus. The main thrust of Paul's teaching was that there is no work we could accomplish to be saved (Ephesians 2:8), including keeping the Law (Galatians 2:16).

THEN, read or have a volunteer read Galatians 5:22-24. When you've finished, direct their attention back to verses 22 and 23. Lead the group in a brief discussion. Ask something like:

- **Have you ever noticed that the phrase is translated as "fruit" of the Spirit and not "fruits" of the Spirit (even though many people say this)? Can you think of why this might be significant?**
 - *Answer:* This is not a list of spiritual gifts, with some people excelling in one gift while others may be stronger in other ministry areas. Those gifts are spoken of in the plural, and those gifts vary among believers. But the "fruit" of the Spirit is a singular noun. There is one general work the Spirit does within us to sanctify and produce this fruit in us. As some have tried to describe, these are not different fruits growing separately but a cluster of fruit growing together.
- **If Paul describes these different qualities as one fruit, how should that make us view this list differently—particularly any areas in which we might struggle?**
 - *Answer:* We can't look at anything on this list and say, "Nope, that one is not for me." We must think of this list differently than spiritual gifts, which Scripture says are distributed differently. We are expected to display *all* these fruitful qualities as we mature in Christlikeness; we can't pick and choose some that feel more natural to us while we claim that others are not meant for us.

NEXT, re-read verses 22 and 23, emphasizing the phrase "of the Spirit." If we're not careful, we can get all mixed up and discouraged if we forget where this fruit comes from. But once we have a proper perspective of where this fruit originates, it can help us better grasp how this fruit can be produced in us. After reading the verses again, then ask:

- **Why is it significant that this fruit is specifically "of the Spirit"?**
 - Answers will vary. This kind of fruitfulness in our lives is only possible by a supernatural work of God—through His Holy Spirit. No matter how hard we try to muster up these qualities, we will continue to fall short if it is by our own strength.
- **If this fruit is born from the Holy Spirit, what does it mean for a man who sees none of this fruit manifesting in his life?**
 - Answers will vary. It either means that this man has not truly surrendered his life to the Lordship of Christ and thus does not have the Holy Spirit or that he has trusted in Christ but is somehow resisting the work of the Spirit by his posture toward God (in 1 Thes. 5:19, Paul refers to "quenching" the Spirit).
- **If there are certain qualities in this list that you struggle with more than others, why do you think that is?**
 - Answers will vary. Simply put, these are still areas where the works of the flesh have a foothold in your life. Paul describes this earlier in Galatians 5, right before he discusses the fruit of the Spirit.

- **If you struggle to see some of this fruit on display in your life, how can you find encouragement knowing that this fruit comes from God?**
 - *Answer:* No matter how unlikely it might seem for you personally to display some of this fruit, we can be encouraged knowing that no work is too big for God. For example, even the most impatient person can develop patience when they surrender to Christ and allow His Spirit to transform them. Sanctification is a journey that will not be complete until we are with Christ in heaven!

Before transitioning to the next question, say something like:

- **Reading a list like this can be easy and discouraging because we lack some of this fruit. But that is not Paul's goal here. He knows that our flesh opposes the work of the Spirit and that we will struggle in some of these areas, as Paul himself did. But the good news for us is that we have a Savior who died for ALL our sins, even those committed after our salvation! Instead of getting discouraged by this list, Paul wants us to understand that we are no longer a slave to our fleshly passions but that by God's power working in us, we can live differently and bear fruit that honors God.**

THEN, with this in mind, re-read the entirety of verses 22-24, and explain to your group that you will spend the last few minutes specifically focusing on the fruit of self-control. Ask:

- **Based on what we've discussed so far, where does the power for self-control ultimately come from?**
 - *Answer:* From the Holy Spirit! Even though we might be tempted to say that it comes from the "self," it is fruit that the Spirit produces within us. The Greek word for self-control roughly translates to something like "dominion within." Thus, self-control might not be fully done *by* oneself, but it does come from *within* oneself as God's Spirit enables us to control our passions.
- **When you think of the phrase "self-control," what kinds of things do you think are being controlled?**
 - Answers will vary. Very likely, Paul envisions the person with "self-control" being able to keep at bay those works of the flesh that he has previously described in Galatians 5: things like sexual immorality, impurity, idolatry, anger, and so on. In verse 24, he refers to them as "passions" and "desires" of the flesh.
- **What does Paul say has been done to the flesh there in verse 24? What does this mean (our flesh has been "crucified")?**
 - Answers will vary. The New Testament teaches that when we surrender to the Lordship of Christ and experience salvation, there is a sense in which our old self was crucified along with Christ. As Paul says in Romans 6:6, one of the results of this is that we are no longer slaves to sin. That means we used to be enslaved to sin; we could not escape it. But by God's grace and through His power, we can now throw off that sin and become slaves of righteousness as the Spirit empowers us to live in a Christlike manner.
- **How is self-control connected to this idea of crucifying the desires of the flesh? How can a man of God take practical steps to put these crucified, fleshly passions behind him?**
 - Answers will vary. We were once enslaved to these passions, but we can begin to experience freedom through Christ, who liberated us from our slavery to sin. We must daily remind ourselves that we have a new identity in Christ and fix our eyes on the greater joy of knowing Christ and walking in obedience to His commands instead of attempting to find contentment in the things of this world that will only lead to death.

FINALLY, have a volunteer read Galatians 5:24 one final time. Then, say something like:

- **Don't miss the good news of this verse—that Jesus has *already* crucified the flesh with these passions and desires. He has already liberated us from enslavement to the flesh and empowered us**

to walk in holiness. As contradictory as it sounds, the important discipline of self-control is less about ourselves and more about Christ and what He has done. If we want to grow in self-control, we must daily yield our lives to Jesus our Lord. As we draw near Him, He will empower us through His Spirit to keep these crucified passions at bay.

Ask if there are any questions and if there are none, transition into *Accepting the Challenge*.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

Focus your group's attention on one key takeaway from your time together.

FIRST, explain that you want to challenge the group to focus on the takeaways from this session. Ask volunteers to share what THEY think the main application is of the passage you've just studied. You may ask something like:

- **How do we practically apply this call to pursue self-control? What does this look like on an everyday basis?**

Allow men to share their responses and discuss them as a group. If you choose, supplement their responses with the following takeaways:

- 1) Some of us must ask the simple question, "Am I spending regular time in God's Word and prayer and reminding myself that there is more joy in obedience to Christ than in the passions of my fleshly desires?"
- 2) For others, we might need to consider if we are actively feeding our fleshly desires with certain things we watch, read, consume, or allow ourselves to dwell upon. We must ask, "Do I need to change certain rhythms or structures in my life that are setting me up to give in to my flesh?" What specific actions do you need to take?
- 3) Some of us must ask the hard question: "Do I truly *want* to have self-control over some of these areas, or do I enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin too much?" If this is you, please—don't allow your heart to continue to harden. Talk with a brother in Christ you trust and begin the challenging but rewarding work of confessing your sin, repenting, and returning to the joy of Christ!

Allow the group to consider where they find themselves on this spectrum of evaluation. If it feels appropriate, allow some discussion about the kind of evaluation they find themselves considering.

FINALLY, encourage men to process these questions in the week to come. Challenge them to listen to what God is telling them and respond accordingly. If there are no more questions or input, close your time together in prayer.