

Home Group study: week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### **Fruit of the Spirit: Self Control**

Oscar Wilde is famous for his pithy quotes, including 'I can resist everything except temptation'. What things do people find it impossible to resist? Do they have any strategies to help them exercise self control against the irresistible? Is there some way we can be positive in exercising self control over these things rather than thinking of it as self-denial?

#### **Read: Matthew 4: 1-11**

Ken reminded us on Sunday that Jesus had probably been preparing for his ministry for 18 years. Jesus is now about 30 and Luke 2 tells us about the 12-year-old Jesus learning from the teachers in the temple and asking them questions (v46). Luke tells us (v47) that 'Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers'. Yet here is Jesus, on the verge of embarking on his ministry, when the Holy Spirit leads him into the desert. What does this tell us about the relationship within the Trinity? Do you think Jesus needed to exercise self control to be obedient to the Spirit? Why do you think the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness 'to be tempted by the devil'?

#### **Understanding**

Jesus was wholly man and wholly God. Does that mean Jesus would find it easy to resist temptation? What are the three temptations Jesus was subject to? What do you think is the significance of each of these? Apart from the significant fact that Jesus would no longer be sinless if he gave in to Satan's temptation, how is each temptation designed to undermine Jesus' ministry? How might our walk with Christ be undermined if we don't exercise self control?

#### **Application**

Ken suggested that Jesus was able to exercise self control in the face of temptation because 'he knows where his passion lies'. Do you agree that we can also exercise self control if we are driven by passion?

Are we sufficiently passionate about Jesus to be able to resist temptation? If not, what actions do we need to take to rekindle our passion?