

Questions on Fee, Chapter 10: *The Fruit of the Spirit*

1. In footnote 5 (p. 125) Fee says, “One wonders whether the general lack of joy that characterizes much of contemporary North American Christianity suggests that the life of the Spirit has been generally downplayed in the interest of a more heady or performance-oriented brand of faith.”

Do you think we are joy-poor at RCRC? Or at least that this is an area where we could stand some growth? What does Fee mean here by “heady” and “performance-oriented”?

2. Of self control, Fee says two interesting things. First, he says that “Paul denounces anything that even smacks of abstinence per se as a Christian virtue..., for example, ‘don’t handle, don’t taste, don’t touch’” (123 par. 1). He quotes for support 1 Cor 10:31-33; Rom 14:1-23 (see esp. 14:1-3, 6-7, 20-23); 1 Tim 4:1-5; Col 2:21. (Please read these.) Are Paul (and Fee) suggesting mature believers avoid the following following forms of voluntary restriction?
 - a) Lenten vows
 - b) Sabbath avoidance of shopping, working for money, etc.
 - c) Fasting
 - d) Avoiding certain television programs, movies, books or art

What forms of abstinence *are* godly?

3. What in the verses above suggest that abstention should only be done for the sake of others, not for personal spiritual growth? When Fee says, “only the Spirit can set us free for self-control—life in moderation, but with abstention for the sake of someone else,” what does he mean? And if only the Spirit can teach us this—rather than abstinence itself—then what can we do to develop self control?