

Self-control is choosing to do what's best even when you don't want to.

DAY 1

Read James 1:19-20

You have one mouth and two ears. Have you ever stopped to think about why?

Read today's verse out loud. Maybe you have twice as many ears so that you'll remember that listening is more important than talking. And also because having two mouths on your face might look a little weird.

Like we talked about last week, we need to think before we speak. But that also is true for our actions. Before we fly off the handle, it might be a better idea to take some deep breaths first. That simple pause might keep us from doing something we'll regret when the anger starts to rise.

Remember, self-control isn't something that just happens. We need God's help to control our words and our actions. Let's listen more. Speak less. Take deep breaths and calm down.

Self Portrait

Draw a picture of your cute/handsome face. Then write the words of James 1:19-20 underneath to remind you to have self-control.

DAY 2

Read Proverbs 16:32

When someone makes you angry, what do you usually want to do? Yell? Scream? Throw something? Hit someone? In the heat of the moment, any of these responses just come naturally. But ALL of these responses end up hurting you and the person on the other end of your anger.

Out of Control

With a parent's permission, grab a bottle of pop (or Coke) from the fridge and take it outside. Shake it up as fast as you can and then carefully open it. What happened? (Hold on to the empty bottle of soda for an activity next week!)

When you lose your temper, it's like that exploding bottle of pop. Just like all that sticky pop got all over you and made a huge mess, your uncontrolled angry response can cause a lot of damage too. Thankfully, there IS a better way. When you find yourself getting angry this week, think about that exploding soda. Pause, take a step back, and think of a way to respond with self-control instead.

Read Proverbs 29:11

The Bible makes it very clear that when you respond in anger without self-control, you're a fool. Wouldn't you rather be someone who is wise?

What are the three colors on a stoplight? Red, yellow, and green. First, STOP. Stop before you respond. Take a deep breath. That's the *red* light. Then THINK. Think about how you could handle the situation like a wise person instead of a fool. That's *yellow*. And finally, ACT. Once you've taken a deep breath, pause to think about what you should do, then you're ready to respond. That's the *green* light.

Stop, Think, Act

Fill in the stoplight below. Color the top circle red, the middle circle yellow, and the bottom circle green. On the lines, write the words "STOP" (for red), "THINK" (for yellow) and "ACT" (for green). When you roll up to a stoplight this week, think about self-control. Before you let your anger fly like a fool, stop, think, and then act.



STOP

THINK

ACT

Read Proverbs 4:23

Have you ever seen a guard in front of something important— like a monument or museum? A guard's job is to protect something valuable. When it comes to self-control, do you know what you need to guard? Your heart. Everything you do— every word, every thought, every action— comes from your heart.

In order to guard your heart, you need to make sure that there's nothing hidden that you need to get rid of. Do a heart check:

Are you angry?

Are you bitter?

Are you jealous?

Are you frustrated?

The best way to get in the habit of guarding your heart is to begin asking yourself the following question every night before you go to bed: *God, what is in my heart today?* Remember, when you guard your heart, self-control will follow. Your actions will reflect what's in your heart.

Think before you act.

