



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

DAY 1

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

This month is all about self-control which is choosing to do what you should even when you don't want to. Sounds pretty impossible, right? **Doing what you want to do is easy. Doing what you should do, well, that's much harder.**

There is one super important thing to remember. We aren't alone when it comes to doing the right thing. That's what today's verse is all about. God is faithful. That means that He does what He says He will do, always. And when you are tempted to get angry, or say something or do something you shouldn't, God will give you the way out.

So when your self-control is tested, remember that you aren't alone. **You can be ready to do the right thing knowing God is on your side.**

~~~~~  
Fill in the missing vowels to complete the statement below.

B..... r..... dy t..... d..... th.....  
r.....ght th.....ng kn.....w.....ng G.....d  
.....s .....n y.....r s.....d.....

## DAY 2

### Read Romans 12:2

Have you ever changed your mind about something? Maybe you picked a turkey sandwich at lunch and now you're wishing you'd gone for the pizza. Maybe you wanted to play video games but then a neighbor showed up to shoot hoops instead.

We change our minds about little things like pizza and video games all the time. But when it comes to self-control and choosing to do the right thing, God wants you to think in a completely different way. Instead of listening to what other people say you should do, God wants you to listen to what he says.

God will never ever give you bad advice or steer you in the wrong direction. **God made you and loves you and that means God always wants what's best for you.**

When you're tempted to do something you know you shouldn't, stop and pray the following prayer:

"God, help me do the right thing."

If you pray, God will help you. He will change your mind and help you find some self-control.

## Read Galatians 5:22-23

Which of these “fruits” are easiest for you? Circle those. Which ones are hardest? Underline those.

Love Joy Peace

Patience Kindness Goodness

Faithfulness Gentleness Self-control

Did you circle self-control? Probably not! Self-control isn't something that comes easily. But there is some good news! When we choose to follow Jesus, He promised to send His Holy Spirit to help us show each of these things. Thankfully, self-control is on this list of “fruits” that God wants to grow in us as we follow Him.

In order to show self-control, we need to be connected to the Holy Spirit! We need to remember that we aren't on our own. As followers of Jesus, the Holy Spirit will help us when we need it most. **Let's pray today and ask God to remind us that we aren't on our own, that He has given us His Spirit so that we can be ready to do the right thing!**

## Be ready to do the right thing.

## Read Matthew 4:10

When Satan tempted Jesus, He hadn't eaten for 40 days! When we're super hungry, it seems impossible to wait forty minutes! Satan saw this as the perfect opportunity to get Jesus to let His guard down, saying:

“Hey Jesus, if you're really the Son of God, turn these stones into bread.”

“Hey Jesus, if you're really the Son of God, throw yourself off the top of the temple.”

“Hey Jesus, if you bow down and worship me, I'll give you command over EVERYTHING you see in front of you.”

But Jesus didn't give into that temptation. He was ready to do the right thing because Jesus knew God's word! Jesus refused to bow down and follow the enemy knowing only God is worthy of worship.

### Forty-day Challenge

How about a 40-day challenge?

1. Grab a card and a calendar.
2. Count out 40 days from today on the calendar and write that date at the top of the card.
3. Then write “Worship the Lord your God” in the center. Every time you sit down to eat at the table from today until the date at the top, read those words and ask God to help you follow Him and do the right thing!



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## DAY 1

### Read Titus 2:11-12

Let's say a kid at school pushes you on accident causing you to fall and drop your binder. It springs open and all your stuff goes flying. The kid, who didn't really mean to push you, starts laughing because your fall was pretty hilarious. But you don't think it's funny.

You want to push that kid back. You want to yell some insult.

We've all been tempted to hurt someone when something makes us angry. But self-control requires us to stop and think before we act. As our verse reminds us, God can help you say "NO!" to responding in a way that makes things worse. When you stop and think, you have the chance to **ask yourself, "What is the best response?"**

## DAY 2

### Read Proverbs 10:17

Imagine you're on a path in the woods. The path is marked by white slash marks on the trees. Those white marks are the only way to know whether you should turn right or left.

If you ignore them to try your own way, you'd get lost. You could get into some real trouble if you weren't careful to follow the marked path.

In a similar way, we need to listen to people around us who follow God. People who have been following God a little longer than you. They've made mistakes they want to help you avoid. When it comes to self-control, doing what you should do—listening to those who are wiser than you—can keep you safe.

#### Lava Floor

With an adult's permission, create a path on the floor with pillows. Pretend the floor is lava and see if you can make it all the way across the room from the doorway to your bed stepping only on the pillows.

As you jump, remember that listening to correction from people who are wiser than you puts you on the right path. Ignoring their instruction can get you lost or worse—covered in lava!

## Read Philippians 4:8

Wouldn't it be cool if you could capture all the things you think about in a day and put them in a jar? That jar would probably be full of some pretty random stuff.

Like . . .

"Is lunch time yet?"

"Does my breath stink?"

Okay, those thoughts are kind of silly. But what about negative thoughts?

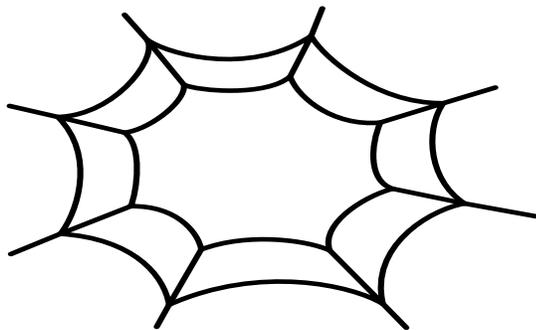
Like . . .

"I'll never understand this math homework."

"No one likes me."

Part of having self-control is controlling our thoughts. The key to stopping those negative thoughts, is to trap them. When those negative thoughts creep in, we need to remember what Jesus has done for us. That will help us focus our thoughts on what is true, noble, right and pure, lovely and worthy of respect.

Write down a negative thought you've had about yourself in the space below. Read today's verse again and ask God to help you trap those negative thoughts as you focus on Jesus.



## Read 1 Corinthians 15:33

This week, we've been learning that doing what you should do can keep you safe. One thing you might not think about when it comes to having self-control are your friendships. The people you choose to hang out with really can affect the choices you make.

If you hang out with someone who is constantly breaking the rules, it's much easier to break the rules. If you hang out with someone who is always saying negative things, it's much easier to see everything in a negative way.

Bad companions—friends who consistently make unwise choices—can make a good person bad. Good friends can help you make wise choices. Bad friends, friends who are unkind, who lie, who push to the front, who only look out for themselves, they can influence you to make unwise choices. Choices that can hurt you and others.

So what about your friends? Are they helping you make wise choices that lead to self-control? **Ask God to help you find the kind of friends who are kind and helpful.**



Doing what you should  
can keep you safe.



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## DAY 1

### Read James 1:19

**Can you do each of the following tasks in 30 seconds? Set a timer and challenge yourself:**

- ➔ Tie both shoes
- ➔ Fold five shirts, neatly
- ➔ Stack 10 cups in a pyramid
- ➔ Write your first and last name five times, legibly
- ➔ Say the alphabet backwards

How did you do?

According to today's verse, we need to do one important thing quickly! Listen. But wait, there's more! To truly practice self-control, we need to be slow to speak and slow to get angry.

To help you remember this pattern, write the letters Q S S on a wide rubber band and wear it around your wrist this week. If you don't have a rubber band, cut a strip of paper and make your own bracelet. Don't be controlled by your anger. Remember, be **Q**uick to listen, **S**low to speak and **S**low to become angry.

## DAY 2

### Read Proverbs 29:11

Think about a bottle of soda. What happens if you shake it and shake it and shake it and then open it? Soda spews everywhere! People who are easily angered are kind of like that. And sometimes, it only takes one shake, one small something, to make them explode.

Do you like to hang out with people like that?

Foolish people let their anger run wild. A fool is a person who lacks judgement or sense. But a wise person keeps their anger in check. A wise person stops and thinks, "Why am I so mad? What's a better way to handle this so I don't hurt others or myself?"

Do you want to be known as wise or foolish? If you want to be wise, don't be controlled by your anger. To do this, you will need God's help! **Stop, pray, and ask God to help you be wise this week and keep your anger in check.** Thank Him for hearing you, for helping you and for loving you, always.

## Read Proverbs 14:29

Sometimes things happen that make us angry! But that doesn't mean we can't control our anger. Try some of these suggestions below this week so you can calm down and respond in a way that helps instead of hurts.



### CALM DOWN IDEAS:

1. STOP and BREATHE DEEPLY. Try the following exercises.
  - The snake: Breath in through the nose and out through the mouth as you hiss like a snake.
  - Square breathing: Trace the four sides of a square with your finger on your leg. Breath in through your nose for 4 counts to trace the bottom, hold your breath for 4 counts as you draw the right side, breath out through the mouth for 4 counts as you draw the top, then hold your breath for 4 counts as you draw the left side.
2. Punch a pillow or a punching bag. Sometimes, you need to get physical and let all that energy out safely. But do not punch a wall or a person.
3. Draw or write. Writing about why we are angry can help us see our own part in the situation. Drawing or painting can help us express our feelings too.

## Read Proverbs 22:24-25

Have you ever been around someone who is easily angered? Maybe they yell, or stomp their feet, or pout when they're frustrated.

While we should always be kind and treat everyone fairly, we also need to be careful as we choose the friends who are closest to us. Why? Because when we hang out with friends who have bad habits, it's easy to pick them up too. If your best friend yells or gets super angry all the time, guess what? You are more likely to respond the same way. And then, as the Bible tells us, you'll be trapped!

The best way to find good friends, the kind of friends that are slow to get angry, is to be that kind of friend. If you've notice yourself becoming easily angered, think of one thing you could do in that moment to help you calm down and control your anger. As you work on being a good friend, ask God to help you find good friends that stop to think before they act so you don't get trapped!

**Don't be controlled  
by your anger.**



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## DAY 1

### Read Proverbs 18:21

Words have power. But maybe you've never thought about words having the power of life and death! That sounds a little harsh, right?

The truth is, words can kill relationships. Because once you say something hurtful or unkind, you can't take it back. The damage is done. Hurtful words can wreck relationships and cause damage that you might not be able to repair. And sometimes, more words mean more trouble. That's why controlling your words, thinking before you speak, is so important.

**This week, when you find yourself angry or mad or ready to yell, ask yourself the following questions:**

1. Is this kind?
2. Is this helpful?
3. If I say this thing I really want to say, will it make the situation better or worse?

If the answer to any of those questions is no, it's probably a good idea to keep your mouth closed. Let's stop and think before we speak this week so we can protect our relationships. Pray and ask God to help you control your tongue this week.

## DAY 2

### Read Proverbs 12:18

Have you ever gotten an itty bitty teeny tiny paper cut that hurt so bad you wanted to cut off your whole finger?

Words are kind of like paper cuts. Just a few thoughtless words, spoken without thinking first can cause a lot of harm. According to our verse, the words from careless people can cut like swords. But the opposite is also true. Carefully chosen words can actually heal. They can help.

#### Sword vs. Bandage

1. Grab an index card or small scrap of paper.
2. Draw a sword on one side and a band-aid on the other.
3. On the sword side, write the first part of the verse ("The words of thoughtless people cut like swords.")
4. On the band-aid side, write the second part of the verse ("But the tongue of wise people brings healing.")
5. Set this card on the kitchen table. Show your family the card and read the verse. Talk about how thinking before you speak can help you make sure your words are thoughtful and healing instead of thoughtless and hurtful.

**Read Psalm 141:3**

Have you ever seen a picture of the guards that stand outside Buckingham Palace in England? The members of the Queen's Guard wear very tall hats made of fur to make them appear taller and more intimidating. Ask an adult to look up a picture of a guard so you can see for yourself!

These guards stand very still, eyes forward, watching constantly to make sure the door they're guarding is secure. These trained military men serve two-hour shifts, standing perfectly still (no smiling allowed) the entire time. Talk about a tough job.

What if you chose to guard your lips (the words you say) as carefully as a member of the Queen's Guard protects the palace? What if you were very careful not to let any harmful or hurtful word escape from your mouth?

**Keeping Watch**

1. Write the words from today's verse on a piece of tape.
2. Tape it to the door frame above the door of your room.
3. Tap it each time you leave and ask God to help you keep watch over the door of your lips!

**Read Proverbs 15:1**

Have you ever held a brand-new baby? What is one thing you have to remember?

BE .....  
T N L G E E

Yes, be gentle! You have to protect them, support their little heads, and make sure you hold them snugly without squishing them too much!

When you are gentle or careful with your words, you can stop a fight before it starts. Instead of stirring things up and making it worse, you could actually fix it. But gentleness requires time and care.

Mothers have been singing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" as a lullaby to their sleeping babies for generations. Sing the following words as a reminder to be gentle and think before you speak.

We must think before we speak  
*(Twinkle twinkle little star)*  
Every day of every week.  
*(How I wonder what you are)*  
Keep in mind when words are said  
*(Up above the world so high)*  
They can't be taken back again  
*(Like a diamond in the sky)*  
So be careful what you say  
*(Twinkle twinkle little star)*  
*Being gentle is the way.*  
*(How I wonder what you are.)*

**Think before you speak.**



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## DAY 1

### Read Proverbs 25:16

Have you ever eaten too much of your favorite food?

Maybe you've never eaten to the point where you felt like throwing up. Maybe you don't have a problem with self-control when it comes to food. For you, maybe it's video games or watching videos on YouTube.

While none of those things can cause you to throw up, too much screen time can give you a headache or make you miss family time. That's why it's important to know when to stop.

What is something you love to do that you know you spend too much time on?

.....

What is one practical thing you could do to make sure you stop whatever that fun thing is before it's too much?

.....

**The key to enjoying the things you love the right way is to know when to stop.** Ask God to help you practice your one thing you listed above this week so that you have some self-control.

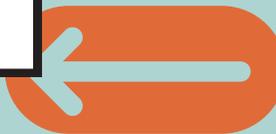
## DAY 2

### Read 1 Peter 5:6-8

God created the whole world. That same great big God, loves and cares about you. He didn't create you and then leave you on your own. He loves you so much that He sent Jesus, His one and only Son to make a way for you to have a relationship with Him forever. God is on your side and He wants you to live an abundant life, the kind of life that's better than you can imagine.

**Because God made you and because He loves you, He is ready to help you have self-control. He doesn't want other things to control you. He wants you to experience this great big beautiful world He's made. He wants you to enjoy all the things you love because He made you to love those things!**

So this week, ask God to help you know when to stop so you can enjoy those things with self-control. Ask Him to help you be watchful this week.



**Read 2 Peter 1:3a**

Sometimes, it's hard to do the right thing. It's hard not to show our anger when someone makes us mad or when we're upset. It's hard to turn off our iPad when we want to keep playing. But there is good news. God doesn't expect you to do the right thing in your own strength. God is ready and willing to help you, every single day.

Think about a remote-control car. If you take the batteries out of that remote, what happens? Yep, it doesn't work! The batteries give the remote the power it needs to work the way it should.

Without God's power, we're as useful as a remote without batteries. In order to know when to stop so we don't hurt ourselves or others, we need God's power. Thankfully, through His power, we have everything we need to do the right thing.

Spend some time thanking God for His mighty power at work in you. Ask Him to help you notice when you need to stop so you can have self-control.

**Read Proverbs 22:3**

When you were little, did you ever run into the street without looking? When that happened, what did your parents do? They probably yelled, "STOP!!" at the top of their lungs. Why? Because they knew the danger of running into the street. They knew you would be hurt, badly, if you kept going.

When it comes to self-control, knowing when to stop is a very big deal. We have to think ahead, with the end in mind, so that we don't get into trouble. When we take the time to think things through and to ask God to help, we can avoid getting hurt.

**Quick Words**

Today's verse is written below but all the spaces are missing! When it's written this way, it feels like you should read it as fast as you can without stopping for a breath! Read the verse below (without spaces) as quickly as you can!

Now draw in hash marks between each word and say the verse again. Ask God to help you stop, slow down and pay attention so you have the self-control to do the right thing.

"Wisepeopleseedangerandgotoasafeplace.  
Butchildishpeoplekeepgoing  
andsufferforit."Proverbs22:3

Know when to stop.



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