



SELF-CONTROL | WEEK 3 | OCTOBER 20, 2024

## Elementary Lesson

# You'd Better Think

**Monthly Virtue:** Self-control—Choosing to do what’s best even when you don’t want to.

**Bible Story:** You’d Better Think (David Spares Saul’s Life) • 1 Samuel 24

**Key Question:** When have you had self-control?

**Basic Truth:** I am made by God for a purpose so the Holy Spirit will help me do big things now.

**Memory Verse:** God’s power has given us everything we need to lead a godly life.

2 Peter 1:3a (NirV)

### LEADER BIBLE STUDY

*There are a lot of choices that we need to make in life. Some of those choices can help us grow and shape us positively. Others can pull us in different directions, leaving us struggling to figure out which choice is best. What do we do when we’re confronted with all of these choices? Do we rush ahead? Or do we pause and let God lead us toward the best way to act? Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. It’s one of the ways we can tell that God is transforming our lives and that we’re growing in our faith. Thankfully, we don’t have to find self-control on our own. When we follow Jesus, God’s Spirit is with us and helps us make the wise choice.*

**Key Question:** When have you had self-control?

Sometimes in life, it’s easy to get upset when things don’t go our way. Maybe you planned that perfect vacation and then it rained . . . or maybe someone just spilled their drink all over you and ruined your favorite outfit. You may have felt like getting angry and taking out your frustrations on someone. But what would happen if you chose to show restraint instead? This question prods preteens to think about the impact self-control can have—not just on themselves, but on others as well.

In week 3, we head to 1 Samuel 24, where we find David on the run from his enemy, King Saul. Saul’s jealousy got the best of him, so he set out to kill David. While on the hunt, he entered a cave to relieve himself, which also happened to be the SAME cave where David was hiding! David could have killed Saul, but he chose to trust God and show self-control instead.

#### Pre-Service Check List

- HUDDLE AS TEAM → You're in this together! Pray together and talk about the activities for the day.
- PLAY MUSIC
- PUT OUT TOYS → A welcoming environment is important! We want it to be obvious from the moment kids walk in that they belong HERE!
- PUT ASIDE DISTRACTIONS
- ENGAGE WITH KIDS

#### Morning Flow

Doors Open  
9:15/11:00

Large Group Starts  
9:35/11:20

Small Group Starts  
10:05/11:50

## LARGE GROUP

### COUNTDOWN AND WELCOME (3 Minutes)

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN, SLIDE: KIDCITY EXPECTATIONS)

LGL: “Welcome everyone! I’m so glad you are able to come hang out with us in KidCity today. My name is [INSERT NAME]. We are going to have a lot of fun today, but before we do let’s go over these announcements/KidCity Expectations.

**(SLIDE: KIDCITY COSTUME DAY)** “We’ve got a holiday coming up at the end of the month – Halloween! The Sunday before Halloween, come dressed up in your costume, but please no masks that cover your whole face or anything scary.

**(SLIDE: BAPTISM)** *(Said on the fourth weekend of the month only)* “Today are baptisms at Hope. Baptism is a way of telling the world that you love God and have made the decision to follow Him with your life. It’s a big deal! Is there anyone here who is getting baptized today? *(Pause and if someone is, go ahead and give them a high five and get the kids to clap).* Awesome!”

**(SLIDE: KIDCITY EXPECTATIONS)** “Now, let’s quickly go over our KidCity Expectations (rules) so we can make sure that we make the most of our time today: *(Don’t dwell on these too long, but make sure you review them briefly so we can set everyone up for success.)*

1. Be Kind
2. Be Safe
3. Have Fun

### LARGE GROUP GAME (5 Min)

#### MULTITASKING TAG

(Solo Cups - 4, Table/4 cones/or floor tape)

“By now, we are probably all experts in SELF-CONTROL. Let’s define it...

**(SLIDE: VIRTUE)** Self-control—Choosing to do what’s best even when you don’t want to.

“When you have a right relationship with God, your life starts producing spiritual ‘fruit’. Trees that are healthy produce fruit. In the same way, people who have a healthy and growing relationship with God produce spiritual fruit. Self-control is one of **them** fruits! Check out our monthly verse...

**(SLIDE: MEMORY VERSE)** “Let your light shine so others can see it. Then they will see the good things you do. And they will bring glory to your Father who is in heaven.” *Matthew 5:16 (NirV)*

*Take a minute to explain that ‘Matthew’ is a book in the New Testament, and that the first number means ‘chapter’ and the second one means ‘verse’. ‘NirV’ is what translation the Bible is in. The Bible wasn’t originally written in English! There are different translations.*

“More on that later, but for now, let’s play a game!”

**(SLIDE: MULTITASKING TAG)**

**(SLIDE: FUN MUSIC)**

### HOW TO PLAY

- Prep the game to play be either setting up a table, cones, or floor tape. If not using a table make a rectangle about the size of a table on the floor.
- Choose two contestants to play.
- Give each contestant two cups. Have them stack the cups on top of each other in their hands, with the first cup face down on their palm. The second cup will be standing right-side-up.
- Space contestants an equal distance away from each other around the tables. Have them all facing one direction. This will be the way they will walk during the game.
- When the game begins, contestants can start walking around the table trying to tag the player in front of them. If they tag a player, then that player is out and leaves the circle.
- If a contestant drops their own cups, they have to stop and put it back. Better be quick though!
- The last player standing wins.
- If the rounds go super fast (they probably will) then call up a few more rounds of kids to play.

“That was so fun! Now everyone stand up and let’s worship God!”

## WORSHIP (6-7 Minutes)

**(VIDEO: GOD IS ON THE MOVE, READY SET MOVE)**

## BIBLE STORY (12 Minutes)

**(No Supplies)**

“Question for you all. Have you ever felt wronged? Like, you did something that you thought was the right thing, but it was misunderstood. Or, you worked really hard to get faster to win a race, but then on the day of, you tripped right before the finish line?”

“Those times are frustrating! If we’re honest, usually we respond to feeling wronged with anger. Often, that anger leads to some sort of revenge. But what if we had a different response when faced with those kinds of situations? Great questions! Let’s see what wisdom we can learn from stories from the Bible. Check it out...”

**(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY 5 MIN)**

“It had to be hard for David to show respect to Saul. Saul was the reigning king of the nation of Israel, and in his jealousy, he was trying to kill David! But did you see David’s response? He didn’t match Saul’s wrongdoing. When given the chance to get back at Saul, he passed on it.”

“The simple question is, ‘Why?’ Would we do the same in his situation? When someone wrongs us, often the first thing we want to do is make them feel as badly as they made us feel.

“But David had a deeper understanding and an even deeper respect for God. He recognized that even though he would soon be king, Saul was *still* Israel’s king. God’s anointed. And it was not David’s place to harm him.

“The last part of this story just might be the most amazing. Saul’s response:

*Open the Bible to 1 Samuel 24:17-19 (NirV) and read.*

*“You are a better person than I am,” he said. “You have treated me well. But I’ve treated you badly. You have just now told me about the good things you did to me. The LORD handed me over to you. But you didn’t kill me. . . . May the LORD reward you with many good things. May he do it because of the way you treated me today.”*

“Instead of bloodshed, instead of further conflict, David’s actions changed the heart of the king. Saul recognized the wrong he did because of the right David did. The respect David showed for Saul opened Saul’s eyes to what he had done. In other words, David’s self-control actually revealed to Saul what he had been doing wrong.

“Like David, we can show self-control when we stop to think first—and ask God to help us do what’s best. As difficult as that may be, and as strongly as you want to get back at someone, this story shows what a wise and careful response can do to de-escalate a situation and change the entire direction.

“Maybe someone says something mean to you and your first reaction is to fire back an even more hurtful word or phrase. Maybe you’ve been unjustly accused of something you didn’t do and your first reaction is to yell and scream and get back at whoever is accusing you.

“What would it look like to stop and ask God to help you do what’s best? God can give you the power to show self-control when you ask. Self-control is a big deal. Check it out...”

**(SLIDE: BASIC TRUTH)** I am made by God for a purpose so the Holy Spirit will help me do big things now.

“God wants everyone to know Him and have a right relationship with Him - including you. God’s purpose for you includes things for your good and His glory, and part of that is telling people about God and showing His love for them. Not having self-control keeps you from living out your God-given purpose. Thankfully, with the Holy Spirit’s help we can do the big thing of having self-control!

“Ok, let’s turn to the person next to us and answer our Key Question for today.

**(SLIDE: KEY QUESTION)** ‘When have you had self-control?’



*Have kids turn and talk to their shoulder partner for 60 seconds. Your KQ slide on Playlister will keep track of time for you. While kids are talking, walk around and listen in to what they are saying and give prompts if needed. Don't try to resolve anything, kids will have a further discussion within their small group time.*

“Ok friends, come back together in 3, 2, 1....”

“I heard some great thoughts floating around. You are going to have more of a chance to talk about this in small group time, but for now let's pray.

“Dear God, thank you for sending the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom and for giving us the Bible to know you and your will better. I pray that when we are tempted to act selfishly and respond to being wronged with anger we, instead, ask you for self-control. Amen.”

## **DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS**



## SMALL GROUP

**Monthly Virtue:** Self-control—Choosing to do what’s best even when you don’t want to.

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### TALK ABOUT IT (K-5<sup>th</sup>)

*There are no right or wrong answers but try to challenge the kids to think deeper.*

control? Key Question: When have you had self-control? When have you NOT had self-

*(Answers will vary)*

### LOOK IT UP (K-5<sup>th</sup>)

*Grab Bibles, look up, and read the following passage.*

Look Up: 1 Samuel 24:17-19

Say: “The book of 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel is in the Old Testament. It tells the story of how the nation of Israel went from being ruled directly by God (who spoke through prophets) to being ruled by human kings. The book is named for the priest/prophet named Samuel who helped lead the nation through hard times.”

### PRACTICE IT (K-5<sup>th</sup>)

**(“Think Then Act” Activity Page, Balloon)**

What You Do:

- For each scenario:
- Read just the top part of the scenario.
- Ask, “how that would make you feel?”
- Tell them you are going to read two possible scenario responses and ask them to tell you which response shows self-control.
- After you have gone through all the scenarios take a balloon and inflate it then hold the end, so the air doesn’t escape.
- At your signal, tell kids to count to three.
- Then let go of the balloon.
- Ask:

- How might the balloon remind us of someone who lacks self-control?
- What can you do to avoid acting like a wild balloon next time you're tempted to lose it?
- Challenge kids to picture the balloons flying around wildly the next time they feel like losing their cool, then choose to take a moment to calm down and think before they act.

**What You Say:**

“Are we always going to handle every situation in life with perfect self-control? No! But God doesn't ask us to respond to every situation perfectly. God can give us the power to show self-control when we ask. And we can look at David's example too. He chose not to get back at King Saul, even though He could have done it.

“God knows self-control can be hard for us. Instead of being quick to respond in our anger and hurt, we can pause and invite God to help us.” *[Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate story about how God helped you respond well.)*

**GET STRONGER (K-5<sup>th</sup>)**  
**(Supplies Vary)**

**What You Do:**

- Follow the instructions of the “Books of the Bible” activity that is in your bin.

**PRAYER**

“God, Please help us know when to ask for help with self-control. Thank you for giving us your power to have it. Amen.”