

Alley SG—July 31st, 2022

Today's Bible Story: Under Control (Taming of the Tongue) • *James 3:1-6*

Today's Key Question: What can happen when you lose control?

Today's Bottom Line: God gives you the power to have self-control.

Monthly Memory Verse: *God began a good work in you. And I am sure that he will carry it on until it is completed. That will be on the day Christ Jesus returns.* Philippians 1:6 (NIV)

1. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Bible, Colorful Poppers (1 per kid)

What You Do:

- Invite kids to look up and read Philippians 1:6.
- Lead kids using discussion to understand the meaning of the verse.
- Ask:
 - What promises do you find in this verse?
 - What does this verse mean to you, in your own words?
- Remind kids that God is doing the work of changing us to be more like Jesus. God has a plan for each of us and will help us until it is completed. That's one of the reasons God gave us the Holy Spirit—to provide the power we need to be a wave of change that makes others want to follow God too.
- Use the following demonstration to illustrate God's Spirit working in us and through us to others.
- Give each kid a colorful popper toy. They may keep it after the activity.
- Demonstrate how to use the toy by bending it inside out and setting it on the table/ground in your area.
 - NOTE: The toy will return to its original shape and "pop" up into the air.
- Have a competition to see which kid's poppers can pop the fastest, highest, furthest, etc. See if the kids can say the verse in its entirety before their popper pops.
- Ask:
 - If the popper toy represents God's love popping out of us to others, what are some things in our life that would stop that from happening?
 - What damage might come from a lack of self-control in the things we say?
 - How do we let God give us the power to have self-control?

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Pipe cleaners (4 per kid)

What You Do:

- Give each of the kids four pipe cleaners.
- Ask them to shape two of the pipe cleaners to represent something that is out of control and the other two to represent self-control.
- When finished, invite kids to take turns telling the story or the meaning behind their shapes.
- Ask:
 - How would you define self-control?
 - What would you say is the worst thing to have out of control? Why?
 - What is the one part of your life where self-control is needed most?

What You Say:

"God will help us to show self-control when things seem out of control. Jesus offers us self-control freely. When it's hard, let's remember we can lean on Jesus for self-control!"

3. Discussion Questions

- What typically happens when one friend in a group loses self-control?
- How can you help keep each other accountable in having self-control? Do you think you need help from each other?
- Share about a time when you lost your temper and later regretted your words or actions in that moment? What would you say to help someone else avoid the choices you made in those situations?
- We often just say the first thing that comes into our heads without thinking first. How do we learn to control that?

4. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Index cards (1 per kid), pens

What You Do:

- Ask kids to print their name neatly on an index card.
- Collect the cards.
- Remind kids that we all struggle with self-control in similar ways.
 - Each of us loses our temper, gets frustrated, annoyed, and angry.
 - We all have said or done something that gets us into trouble, and we later regret it.
- Ask kids to think about an area of their life that they need God's help to have self-control in the things they SAY.
- Randomly distribute the index cards on which kids wrote their name.
- Invite kids to pray for themselves and, in a similar way, for the kid whose name is on the card they were given.
- Collect the cards again.
- Ask kids to think about an area of their life that they need God's help to have self-control in the way they act and the way they speak.
- Distribute the index cards once again.
- Encourage kids to pray for themselves and, in a similar way, for the kid whose name is on the card they were given.

What You Say:

"Dear God, we know that when we put our faith in Jesus, we have His Spirit to help us live for You. Give us the power we need to control our words. Help us say things that build up and encourage others, instead of tearing down and words we'll regret. We need Your help, not only with our words but also with the choices we make and the things we do. Make our words and actions start a wave of change that makes a difference for You. In Jesus' name, amen."