

City SG—July 31st, 2022

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

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 (NIRV)

1. Stand Guard

What You Need: "Self-Control Cards" Activity Page (2 sets of cards per Group), Bible, floor tape

What You Do:

- Find Philippians 1:6 and read it to the group several times.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Tape a start line and a finish line long enough for teams to lay out two sets of "Self-Control Cards."
- Give each kid a memory verse card.
- Make sure every card is given out (some kids might have two).
- Instruct both teams to line up behind the start line so everyone is facing the finish line.
- Inform the group to stand on guard and be straight-faced the entire time they are playing the game.
- Instruct the kids that no one is allowed to smile, laugh, make a sound, run, etc., while you try to distract them.
- Direct the kids to take turns marching with no emotion to the finish line with their cards to assemble the verse in the correct order.
- Once a kid places their card on the finish line, direct them to march back straight-faced to join their team at the start line.
- While the kids are marching, make silly faces, say silly statements, tell jokes, etc., to try to distract them from their mission.
- Tell kids that anyone in line, or in route to the finish line, who fails the challenge, must go to the end of their team's line.
- The team who puts their verse in the correct order and is the most stoic (you be the judge), wins!

What You Say:

"How did it feel to have to remain straight-faced/emotionless (*Invite responses.*) You did a great job of trying to exercise self-control while I tried to distract you!"

"In Philippians 1:6, Paul was reminding us that God promises to continue to do His good work in us when we follow Him by doing the things He tells us to do. One of those good works is helping us grow in our ability to exercise self-control so we can choose to do what we should do even when we don't feel like it. Let's say Philippians 1:6 one more time with as much excitement as we can. (*Join in as the kids enthusiastically recite the verse.*) This week, let's remember that **[Bottom Line] God gives you the power to have self-control.**"

2. Bible Story Review

What You Need: "Review Questions" Page and 2 Buzzers (1 Set per Group)

What You Do:

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Place a buzzer in front of the first two kids representing their teams.
- Tell kids that you will ask two kids (one from each team) a question about today's story.
- Instruct the kids to show self-control and wait until **they hear the full question before they can hit the buzzer.**

- The first kid who sounds their buzzer and answers the question correctly, scores a point for their team.
- Ask a review question to a new pair of kids (one from each team) per round.
- Keep playing until all of the “Review Questions” have been asked.

What You Say:

“Why was it difficult to exercise self-control in this game? (*Invite responses.*) Our mouths have serious power! That’s why it’s so important to show self-control and think about what we say. Like when your coach decides to let someone else play and asks you to sit on the bench. Or when your sister or brother gets on your nerves and you want to scream. Just like we learned in our story today, tongues can be hard to control. The good news is that **[Bottom Line] God gives you the power to have self-control.**”

[Make It Personal] (*Tell kids about an area of your life where you have to work hard to have self-control and how you ask God to help you with it. Make sure to keep your example age-appropriate.*) “God has given me the power to have self-control in that area, and **[Bottom Line] God gives you the power to have self-control, too.**”

3. Red Tongue, Green Tongue

What You Need: “Red Tongue, Green Tongue” Pages (One Red and One Green on Cardstock per Group), “Stop and Think” Page (1 per Group), Bible marked at Philippians 1:6

What You Do:

- Invite a volunteer to open the Bible to Philippians 1:6.
- Read the verse aloud, encouraging the kids to say it with you.
- Unpack the phrase “He will carry it on,” emphasizing the truth that when we ask, we have GOD’s power to make the wise choice and have self-control.
- Lead kids in a variation of “Red Light, Green Light.”
- Guide kids to line up shoulder to shoulder at one end of your area.
- When you hold up a “Green Tongue,” kids tip-toe slow motion forward. When you hold up a “Red Tongue,” kids freeze!
- When kids freeze, read a scenario from the “Stop and Think” Activity Page and guide kids to say how—with God’s help—they could show self-control in that situation. Ask guiding questions if kids are stuck for ideas. (*If you run out of scenarios, create your own or simply repeat some scenarios—repetition is a great teacher!*)
- When kids name a way, say something like, “Great idea!” or “Good thinking!” followed by the Bottom Line. **[Bottom Line] God gives you the power to have self-control.**
- Hold up the “Green Tongue” to start the game again.
- Keep interest high by varying how long kids move before you “freeze” them!

What You Say:

“The things you say can make a BIG difference. Your words can hurt, or they can HELP. What kind of words does God want you to say? (*kind, helpful, good, etc.*) Yes! And when it’s hard to say kind or helpful words, God can give you power to choose your words wisely. The important thing is to STOP and THINK before you speak and ask God to help you. Because **[Bottom Line] God gives you the POWER to have self-control.**”

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Say:

“Dear God, thank You for all the kind words and verses about Your love in the Bible. Help us be like You and select our words carefully. You can give us the power to stop and think before we speak or act so we can have self-control over our words and actions. We want to use our words and actions to build people up and not cause them harm. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”