

## **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS SELF CONTROL**

**BIBLE PASSAGES:** Galatians 5:22-23; Matthew 4:1-11; Proverbs 25:28

**STORY POINT:** Self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, is modeled perfectly in Christ and is made possible through Him, Christ's perfect, sinless life has made it possible for them to experience His forgiveness and redemption.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Galatians 5:22-23

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** What is the Fruit of the Spirit? The Fruit of the Spirit is what we can expect to see in our lives when we are guided by the Holy Spirit.

## **PARENT DEVOTIONAL**

We don't have to guess what the fruit of a Christian's life is to be, since Galatians 5:22-25 tells us. When God and others look at our trees—our lives—they should see nothing but "love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Model for your kids what it looks like to live by the Spirit, showing and sharing with them the fruit of your life. Much of Paul's discussion in the book of Galatians focuses on opposites. He looks at the differences between the gospel of Christ and false gospels, faith and observance of the law, promise and law, freedom and slavery. One pair of opposites that he looks at in detail is living by the flesh (following human desires) and living in the Spirit (following God's desires). The decision of which way to live makes an impact on all aspects of life. Paul is clear about the results of each way. People who choose to follow the flesh can expect their lives to hold the things that way of life produces. Ultimately, that choice means eternal separation from God.

These characteristics identify us with Christ. Paul uses an interesting image when he stresses our need to live by the Spirit. Anyone who has watched a marching band knows how obvious it is if one person is out of step with the others. In the same way, if we are not living the way that the Spirit directs us, that fact will be immediately noticed, and the results can be disastrous.

"Each tree is recognized by its own fruit" (Luke 6:44).

## KINDERGARTEN - 5TH GRADE BIBLE STORY

### The Fruit of the Spirit is SELF CONTROL

Bible Verse to Memorize: Proverbs 25:28: "A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls." (ESV)

Optional Opening: Set out a tray of marshmallows or another tasty snack. You can give the option to have one treat now or two treats later.

(Allow them to think for a few moments and then put the marshmallows out of reach, but not out of sight.)

Today we will be discovering God's truth about the very last fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5. Can you tell me what that Fruit of the Spirit is? (Point them to the verse on the board. Self-control!)

*Begin by reading together Galatians 5:22-23.*

The Bible tells us in this passage that self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. If we are saved, the Holy Spirit is living inside of us, and we can be people who are self-controlled in every area of life! This does not mean that we will have self-control all the time. But as we come to know God more and more, we change! Through Jesus and Him alone, we have the power to be self-controlled!

Before we get too far into our lesson though we need to talk about what self-control is exactly. Can anyone tell me what self-control is? (Allow time for response.) Self-control is being in charge of your feelings, actions, and thoughts. So, basically, having self-control is making yourself do something that is not easy or doing something you really do not want to do. It is showing kindness to someone who has just hurt your feelings. It is obeying your mom right away when she asks you to clean your room instead of arguing. It is waiting for something patiently even when you want it really bad because you know something greater will happen (here tie in with the marshmallows). Some of you decided to eat a marshmallow right away. The temptation of a yummy marshmallows was too great to wait until the end of the lesson! We have to realize that self-control is almost always very hard!

Who do you think would be our perfect example of self-control? (God, Jesus!) As a person who never sinned, Jesus practiced self-control perfectly! Just like with every other fruit of the Spirit, He is our model. A lot of times self-control goes beyond just making ourselves do what is right and good. It also involves fighting against a desire or temptation to sin. We can find an example of this in the Bible, our source of truth! Let's read together

Matthew 4:1-11. In this passage, Satan himself comes to Jesus and tempts Him three different times. Each time, Jesus practices self-control and does not sin.

What is Jesus tempted with in verse 2? (Food.) Matthew tells us that Jesus had been fasting (not eating) for 40 days and 40 nights and was hungry. Can you imagine how hungry Jesus would be after not eating for 40 days and nights?! I get hungry if I just skip breakfast! Satan knew this and so He tempts Jesus to use His power as God to make some food. However, even though Jesus must have been extremely hungry, through Scripture He used self-control to resist the temptation to do what was easy.

With the third temptation, Satan tells Jesus, "All you have to do is worship me and all the kingdoms of the world will be yours." Well, Jesus is the king of all the kingdoms of the world, and one day all kingdoms will worship Him. But as a human, he was not recognized as king. He came to earth to die for our sins and gain victory over Satan once and for all. So Satan was offering Him a short cut if Jesus would only worship him. But this would be extreme disobedience to our God!

What did Jesus do? (Jesus was obedient and had self-control rather than disobeying God the Father.) Jesus never sinned, and not only during this time, but during His entire life. He is our perfect example! Because He lived a perfect life, we do not have to. Through His sacrifice, His death on the cross, we are forgiven and set free from our sin. As we come to know Him more and more, we can begin to be like Him! We can begin to show self-control through His power!

**Memory Verse:** Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

## K-5th DISCUSSION

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Now spend time in prayer together. Remember the specific situations your children are going through. Invite them to share if they haven't already. Praise God for the fruit of the Holy Spirit, the self control we are able to show because He lives within us.

#### Ask the following questions and discuss:

1. What is self control and how can we show it in our lives?
2. How can we come to know God more and more so that the fruit of self-control is produced in our hearts? (Through reading His Word, worshipping Him, talking to our moms and dads, going to church, praying to Him.)
3. What are the habits that can help grow the fruit of the Spirit in your life?
4. What fruit do you most recognise in yourself? Which fruit do you have most trouble submitting to the will of the Holy Spirit? What would others say?
5. Do you think that the Fruit of the Spirit usually shows gradually? Have you seen evidence of this in your life or someone else's life?

### OBJECT LESSON

Instruct your children to build two small cities out of blocks. Each city needs a wall around it to protect them from enemies. As they start, read Proverbs 25:28: "A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls." (ESV)

What would happen if enemies came to this city and knocked the walls down? (They could get in – the people would be unprotected from another attack.)

Let's pretend an army came and attacked this city. (Have them knock down all the walls using the army men.)

They defeated them and left. Now the city has no walls. What will happen to them if they never rebuild their walls? (Their enemies can always get in. They will constantly be attacked. They will always be unprotected.)

What about this other city, whose walls are still standing? (They are protected. Their enemies cannot come in.) If enemies continue to come in and out of this city whenever they want, what will it eventually look like? Can you show me using the army men? (Have them take the army men into the city and destroy all of it.) The city will never know peace and will be destroyed completely!

The verse I read to you says that when we have no self-control, we are like this city with no walls. This means we have no protection against temptation. When it comes to us, like an enemy, it overpowers us, and we give in to all types of sin, like anger, disobedience, meanness, selfishness, unkindness, and many, many more! We are not able to say "No!" to temptation like Jesus was able to, but always say "Yes." Our lives become a mess of sin and chaos. We have no peace, just like this city that is a pile of rubble after enemies have constantly invaded and destroyed it.

### ACTIVITIES AND CRAFTS

#### Craft Ideas - Use this link to find great activities and to learn more about SELF CONTROL.

<https://thelittlesandme.com/the-fruit-of-the-spirit-is-self-control-kids-activities/>