

## Self-Control vs. Indulgence Parent Preview

1. You may not have an interest or time to read this entire newsletter. However, please take a few seconds to scan through the different topics.
2. If you just invest a few minutes a day and implement some of these ideas at home you will train your child in Christ-like Character that will establish patterns for successful behavior as adults.
3. Try it for a month, print out this newsletter, and then each day pick something to discuss and train your children.
4. It will only take a minute of your time but will make a BIG IMPACT on your child's life.

## The Power of a Partnership and Consistency

**If you desire** to help your child develop a high level of confidence, a polite and respectful attitude and good manners, and a desire to do what is right in the sight of God when faced with tough choices, **then we desire** to partner with you, and Lord willing, with the Grace of God, **make an eternal difference in your child's life.**

*Our program is designed to encourage children to apply God's Word to their lives, develop and learn Christ-like character and sports fitness.*

## Definition for Class:

**Self-control is rejecting my own desires and doing what is right.**

Other definitions:

Self-control is transforming desires to please self into desires to please God.

Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23). The Christian is to be governed by God, not by self.

## Application for Home and Life Skills Development:

Self-control helps children with impulsive behaviors that lead to sin. The five “I wills” show practical ways children can choose to act based on what is right rather than on how they feel.

1. **I will not act impulsively**
2. **I will not equate desires with rights.**
3. **I will set my own limits.**
4. **I will see anger as a sign that something is wrong.**
5. **I will walk away from things that aren't right.**

## Scripture Memory for class:

“Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty,  
and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city. (Prov 16:32 ESV)

In this **better . . . than** proverb having patience and a controlled **temper** is honored above being a soldier. In a land where safety depended on might and skill in warfare, this statement may seem surprising. Yet conquering oneself is of greater virtue than conquering a city.

Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (1:942). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

## Praising Self-Control!

To praise children for self-control, one must recognize how outward actions reveal inner attitudes. Like pouring liquid from a pitcher, what comes out depends on what's inside.

Like discretion, self-control is as much what you don't do as it is what you do. That makes praising self-control a bit more difficult. Look for a child who hesitates before making a decision. While the hesitation may result from indecision, a distraction, or just plain confusion, praising for not acting impulsively will promote better character.

## Parent Homework For A Week

Take one of these ideas and try it out...you will be pleased with the results! Pick the one for the day, then actively seek an opportunity for a 'teaching moment'. Try one a day for a week! Then repeat each week this month.

1. Praise your children for avoiding areas that might tempt them to do wrong. Encourage them to do what is right, even if they are ridiculed for their choices.
2. Praise your children for eating and drinking only what they need. Praise them for sharing what they have left over with others.
3. Praise your children for respectful attitudes. When one child disrupts a class, praise those who demonstrate self-control and ignore the rowdy one. Often this has more effect than disciplining the rowdy child and ignoring those who show self-control.
4. Praise your children for their right motives. Demonstrating character to receive a reward is not character, it is manipulation. Look for those who do right because it is right and not just for a reward.
5. Praise your children who walk away from a group because the conversation or behavior is moving in the wrong direction. A word of encouragement and praise goes a long way in helping to repair the hurt that comes from not being part of the group.
6. Praise your children for cooling off a situation rather than escalating it. Praise them for being peacemakers rather than bullies.
7. Praise your children for commitments. The key to self-control is deciding before the fact. Self-control is setting standard for words and actions before encountering opportunities to do wrong. It is often too late to say "no" when the heat of a situation and the pressure of peers is hot. The time to say "no" is before.

**REMEMBER:** Praise your children for small things. Praise your child for making right choices in the "little things". Since character is an attitude that determines right and wrong actions, the magnitude of an action is irrelevant. Self-control to keep from talking is as important as self-control to keep from stealing.

## Illustration Used in KK4C Class

Along with teaching and expanding on the above definition, the 'I wills', and scripture, initiative will be illustrated using:

- **The Character Card of the Month – Self-control in nature with the BLACK BEAR.** The black bear can arouse from its four month slumber if danger threatens its cubs. We will learn this month how the black bear prepares for winter and share an unexpected adventure with a sleeping bear.
- **Initiative in History with Abigail Adams** – Role models play a critical part in influencing children. Therefore it is important to learn about people from our past and present whose lives are worthy of imitation. Abigail Adams is one of those people.

In 1784, Abigail Adams boarded a ship called the Active and bravely set out from Boston to meet her husband, John Adams, in England. The long voyage seemed almost unbearable. However, through it all Abigail Adams exercised self-control over her words and actions. She refrained from speaking harsh words and did not make her desire for her own comfort a right that she demanded from others.

## Mealtime Manners

Mealtimes offer a chance to demonstrate self-control. It takes a person of character to exercise restraint and eat politely. Whether it is a lunchroom or a banquet table, those who know and practice mealtime manners are the ones who will set the same high standards in other areas of character, too.

1. Chew slowly
2. Take small bites
3. Chew with your mouth closed
4. Don't talk with your mouth full
5. Ask to be excused from the table
6. Pass food – don't reach
7. Use fingers for finger food only
8. Wait for all to be served before eating
9. Napkins go on your lap
10. Thank the cook
11. Sit up straight
12. Offer to clear the table
13. Don't interrupt others
14. Sip-don't slurp
15. Gentlemen seat the ladies

## More about Biblical Self-control

- The biblical word for self-control in temperance. It is the inward strength to bring all physical appetites under the control of the Holy Spirit.
- Self-control is essential for any believer who wants to excel in the Christian life and receive honor from the Lord
- **Self-control**
- A. *Origin of:*
  - o Brought about by Christ Luke 8:35
  - o Christian grace 2 Pet. 1:6
- B. *Elements involved in:*
  - o Ruling one's spirit Prov. 16:32

- Soberness Rom. 12:3
- Control of the body 1 Cor. 9:27
- C. *Hindered by:*
  - Fleshly lusts 1 Pet. 2:11
  - Tongue Ps. 39:1, 2
  - Drink Prov. 23:29–35
  - Sexual sins 1 Thess. 4:3, 4
  - Unclean spirit Mark 5:2–16
  - Self-expressionism Prov. 25:28

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Nelson's quick reference topical Bible index*. Nelson's Quick reference (555). Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

**1. Lack of self-control brings misery.**

**Prov. 25:28.** Whoever has no rule over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls.

**2. One who gives full vent to his anger acts like a fool; one who keeps himself under control is wise.**

**Prov. 29:11.** A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.

**3. Every Christian can be self-controlled; it's a fruit of the Spirit.**

**Gal. 5:22–23.** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

**4. Self-discipline is a gift of God.**

**2 Tim. 1:7.** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

**5. We are commanded to be self-controlled.**

**1 Peter 1:13.** Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

**6. One can and must develop self-control—put a lot of effort into it.**

**2 Peter 1:5–6.** But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness.

**7. Both old and young alike must learn self-control.**

**Titus 2:2–6.** That the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded.

**8. There is a time for everything. To be self-controlled is to do everything in its time.**

**Eccles. 3:1–8.**

**9. We can control our thinking.**

**2 Cor. 10:5.** Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

**10. Exercising self-control is walking in the light.**

**1 Thess. 5:4–8.** But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk

at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

**11. Be self-controlled in your talking; control your tongue.**

**Prov. 20:19.** He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.

**12. Exercise self-control and say no to all ungodliness.**

**Titus 2:11–12.** For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.

**13. Be motivated by Christ’s redeeming love.**

**Titus 2:13–14** ... Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

**14. Be neither wishy-washy, nor easily moved by others.**

**1 Cor. 15:58.** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

<sup>1</sup>Kruis, J., G. (1997, c1994). *Quick scripture reference for counseling*. Includes index. (electronic ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

## How Do You Develop Self-Control

1. Joining God’s family through faith in Jesus Christ and receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
2. Obeying the Holy Spirit.
3. Listening to God’s Spirit

## Character Card Tips

Character is useless unless it is a part of everyday life. Use the character cards and join with us in teaching your child the ‘I wills’ by saying, “Here are ways you can practice **self-control**.” Then read the “I wills” on the back of the card.

Then elaborate on each one from your own life sharing personal illustrations of when you did what was right or did something that was wrong. Be sure to emphasize that there were benefits to right choices and consequences to wrong choices.

To purchase Character Cards click [here](#).

## Personal Evaluation – How much SELF-CONTROL do YOU have?

1. Do you give more time to spiritual pursuits than to the pleasures of the world?
2. Do you bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ?
3. Do you control your eating or indulge in foods you know are unhealthy?
4. Do you acknowledge your weakness so you can experience the power of Christ?

5. Do you literally cry out to God for deliverance from addictions?
6. Do you have a wise and biblical program for fasting?
7. Have you asked your heavenly Father to fill you with His Spirit?
8. Do you ever erupt in uncontrollable anger?
9. Do you remove provisions for indulgences so you will not fulfill them?

## **SELF-CONTROL in the Home Includes:**

- Family members controlling their tempers and resolving any anger they might have.
- Being careful to speak words that would only encourage and not tear down one another.
- Parents instilling in their children the good habits of proper nutrition, vigorous exercise, rising early, and following a structured daily schedule.

## **Rewards of SELF-CONTROL**

- **FREEDOM** – Daily practicing positive habits and disciplines gives a person freedom from bad habits.
- **FORTITUDE** – Picture a fortress with walls that are broken down. The army inside no longer has strength or fortitude to fight the enemy. In this same way, when people allow their anger to burst out uncontrollably, they weaken themselves. Those who learn to control their temper build strength and fortitude.

*Character First! Education Series 2, Booklet 2, Oak Brook, IL*

*Achieving True Success*

*The Power of True Success*

<sup>1</sup>Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (1:956). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

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