



## WEEK FOUR – OCTOBER 2024 – PRETEEN

**Bible Story:** *Too Much* | Proverbs 25:16

**Key Question:** *Why is it hard to stop?*

**Memory Verse:** *“God’s power has given us everything we need to lead a godly life. – 1 Peter 1:3a (NirV)*

**Virtue:** *Self-Control – Choosing to do what’s best, even when you don’t want to*

**Basic Truth:** *I need to make the wise choice*

**Series Overview:** 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.

**Bottom Line: Why is it hard to stop?** What’s the one thing you love to do the most? How much time do you dedicate to doing that thing? What about when you’re watching your favorite show and it asks you, “Are you still watching?” Sometimes the things we have and do are SO good that we forget to take a break and be present. That can start to take a toll on our lives—either mentally or physically. Our hope is that as kids begin to think through this question, they will be able to build healthy habits that will help them stay in control.

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## 9:05 - 9:20 | 11:05 – 11:20 | EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

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### Opening Small Group Activity

*Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group*

**What You Need:** Playing cards

### What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a fist bump or high five
- Invite kids to sit in a circle.
- Scatter a deck of playing cards face down in the center of the circle.
- Explain to the kids that each card has a point value.
  - 2 through 10 = face value (a card with a 2 is worth 2 points, etc.)
  - Kings, Queens, Jacks = 10
  - Aces = 1
- Explain that the goal is to come as close to 25 as they can without going over.
  - The key is to know when to stop choosing cards so they don't exceed 25 points.
- Choose a kid to start the game by taking a card from anywhere in the circle.
- Keep moving counterclockwise as each kid takes a turn picking a card from the circle.
  - Instruct kids to hold on to their cards for the whole round.
- With each turn around the circle, give kids the choice to pick more cards until they get to 25, are really close to 25, or go over 25.
  - If they choose not to pick up any more cards, instruct kids to say, "pass" when their turn comes back around.
- When everyone is happy with their hand (or has gone over), instruct kids to display their cards and ask these questions:

- “Who made it really close to 25 and stopped?”
- “Who made it to 25?”
- “Did anyone go over 25?”
- The kid whose cards add up closest to 25 without going over wins.
- Repeat as time allows (*Challenge: choose a different target number each time!*).

**What You Say:**

“In this game, even one more card could turn into too many! We can sometimes do or have too much of even good things in our lives if we aren’t careful. *[Transition]* Today we’ll hear a warning about too much of something. Let’s get ready to discover more!”

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**9:20 - 9:50 | 11:20 – 11:50 | LARGE GROUP**

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**Large Group Overview:** We end the month in Proverbs 25:16 with another one of Solomon’s wise sayings—this time about food: “If you find honey, eat just enough. If you eat too much of it, you will throw up.” Of course, Solomon’s words are true about more than just food. Too much of anything isn’t good for us. But when we trust God to help us, we can choose to stay in control.

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**9:50 – 10:10 | 11:50 – 12:10 | SMALL GROUP**

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**Take a Snapshot**

**[Live For God | Application Activity]**

*Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing*

**What You Need:** Sticky notes, pens or pencils, large craft sticks, marshmallows (or pennies, buttons, or other small items), permanent markers

**What You Do:**

- Give each kid a sticky note and pen or pencil.
- Ask kids to think of times when they may feel like overindulging (when they need self-control to know when to stop).
  - If needed, prompt with examples like chips, candy, screen time, sleeping, sports without rest, spending money, etc.
- Prompt kids to write one idea on a sticky note and hand it to you when done.
- Give each kid a craft stick.
- Tell kids to place one end of their craft stick in their mouth and hold it with their teeth.
- Set out the marshmallows (or other small items).
- Explain that each time you read one of the ideas from a sticky note, the kids will place a marshmallow (or other small item) onto the end of their craft stick.
  - The goal is to see how many they can stack before it falls.
- After reading through each idea, ask kids to carefully remove their craft stick.
- Remind kids that everyone struggles with knowing when to stop, especially when it comes to our favorite things.
  - When we follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to help us make the wise choice.
  - ***[Make it Personal]* Share an age-appropriate example of when you had to ask God to help you with self-control. Maybe it's waking up on time, being on time, limiting your coffee, screen time, or other age-appropriate examples.**
- Set out the permanent markers.
- Tell kids to use the markers to make a warning sign on their craft sticks to take home.
  - Encourage creativity but, if needed, prompt kids with ideas like a stop sign, “know when to stop,” something that is specific to them, etc.

- Encourage kids to place their warning signs in an area where they will be reminded to use self-control.

### **Discussion Questions**

#### **[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]**

*Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** N/A

#### **What You Do:**

- **Ask:**
  - Why is it hard to stop?
  - How do you recognize when you need to stop doing something?
  - Who can you depend on to help you stop?
  - At what point do good things become bad for you?
  - Is it too much when you're spending a lot of time on something creative or productive?

### **Make It Personal With Prayer**

#### **[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]**

*Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application*

**What You Need:** Bible

#### **What You Do:**

- Us Remind kids that memorizing God's Word and praying to God are ways we can live a godly life.
- Invite kids to pray their own prayers as you read each phrase from 2 Peter 1:3a then pause.
  - Share that the kids can pray silently or out loud after each phrase.
- Read 2 Peter 1:3a from the Bible, phrase by phrase, then pause for kids to pray after each phrase.
  - *His divine power has given us everything we need (NIV)*

- *for a godly life. (NIV)*
- Close your group time in prayer.