

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 4 • Unit 9 • Week 4

SELF-CONTROL

OBJECTIVE:

To define self-control and to show areas in our lives where it is important for us to exercise self-control.

ATTENTION GETTER:

Option: Read the story "Cookies" from *Frog and Toad Together* by Arnold Lobel (available in the children's section of the library). The story would take about four minutes to read and is a humorous introduction to the subject of "willpower." Self-control, as a fruit of God's Spirit, is more than just our own willpower.

Say: Let's define "self-control."

Ask: What does "self-control" mean to you?

Do: Discuss the quality of self-control and let the kids come up with a definition.

Say: One way to describe self-control would be to say it is the ability to make yourself do the things you have to do when they need to be done whether you like doing them or not.

Ask: What are some areas in your life where it would be a good idea to make yourself do something? [Study, homework, sports, spend time with God, go to church, etc.]

Is there another way of defining self-control? [Discuss.]

Say: Self-control is a restraint you place over your own impulses, emotions and desires. In other words, self-control is the ability to say "no" to yourself.

Self-control is a fruit of God's Spirit. Ask God to help you have control over your thoughts, words and actions. Make a habit of praying for self-control every day.

Do: If time permits, hand out a sheet of paper and ask the kids to write down all the things that they might have to say “no” to in their lives. For example: smoking, fast foods, too many sweets, stealing flowers from a neighbor’s yard, alcoholic beverages, drugs, etc.

BIBLE LESSON:

JOSEPH—A GOOD EXAMPLE IN SELF-CONTROL

Say: Joseph’s brothers were jealous of him because he had been his father’s favorite child from the time he was born. The brothers wanted to get him out of their way. They threw him in a deep empty pit and thought about killing him. But they decided it would be better to sell him for 20 pieces of silver to some Midianite and Ishmaelite merchants who happened to pass by as they were eating lunch. The merchants took Joseph into Egypt and sold him as a slave to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the royal guard and chief executioner.

Despite the fact that he was a slave, God was with Joseph and he became very successful. He prospered in all he was asked to do. Joseph’s Egyptian master recognized that God was with him so Joseph was given a lot of freedom and power over the household where he served.

Ask: When we find ourselves in circumstances beyond our control, what does the Bible say that God will do for us if we put our trust in him?

Do: Read the last part of Hebrews 13:5.

Say: Potiphar was well pleased with everything Joseph did in serving him so he made him a supervisor. Joseph was put in charge of everything in Potiphar’s house. God blessed the Egyptian’s household, his gardens and his fields because of Joseph.

Joseph was a handsome, well-built, healthy and good-looking man with good manners and a likeable personality. As time went on, Potiphar’s wife was attracted to him and desired to possess Joseph for herself.

Joseph refused her advances because she was another man’s wife and it would be breaking the Seventh Commandment. However, she told her husband a lie when he came home. When Potiphar heard the words of his wife, he was very angry toward Joseph because he thought Joseph had betrayed his trust. He immediately put Joseph in the state prison.

It looked like Joseph’s efforts to use self-control had backfired. He ended up being confined to prison. In spite of how things appeared, the Lord was still with Joseph and He was merciful to him. In lovingkindness, God gave him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. Before long Joseph was in charge of caring for all the prisoners. The prison warden allowed Joseph complete freedom to be in charge. God was with Joseph. God saw that Joseph exercised self-control and that he wanted to obey God’s Commandments, therefore God blessed Joseph in every circumstance in which he found himself.

Say: Does God promise to bless everything we do when we exercise self-control and choose to obey Him?

Do: Read Exodus 23:25-26.

Say: As we can see from these scriptures, God will be faithful to bless us if we do our part by exercising self control when we need to. Ask God to help you have control over your thoughts, actions and words.

Do: Read Galatians 2:20.

Say: The most important part about self-control is that we cannot produce it ourselves when it applies to the spiritual relationship between us, God and others. One day, all of you will have to choose whether or not you want to have God's Spirit by accepting Jesus Christ as your Savior and being baptized. Only then will you have the real help directly from God to enable you to produce the fruit of self-control.

LESSON APPLICATION:

Make a self-control definition plaque.

Supplies: Alphabet pasta or letter stickers
dark-colored cardboard or foam board (enough to cut a 5 by 7 inch plaque for each student)
dark construction paper (to paste over surface if board is not already dark-colored)
Tacky glue or other quick-drying glue
One can of spray high luster lacquer or quick-drying varnish
Peel-and-stick magnets for back of plaque
One or two hand-held hair dryers to help speed the glue drying process

Prepare:

1. Due to limited class time, teacher must do plaque preparation work. Cut cardboard or foam board, etc. to size, one 5 by 7 inch piece per student. (If necessary, paste dark construction paper over light-colored board since pasta doesn't show up well against a light surface.)

2. Make a copy of plaque example sheet for each child.

3. Sort pasta letters. Each plaque will need letters to write the following:

SELF-CONTROL IS THE ABILITY TO SAY "NO" TO YOURSELF.

4. Multiply each letter group by the number of children in your class. It's a good idea to have several extras in case letters get lost or broken.

2	A's	4	L's
1	B's	2	N's
1	C's	6	O's
3	E's	2	R's
2	F's	4	S's
1	H's	5	T's
3	I's	1	U's
		3	Y's

5. Make plaque at home to get a feel for the activity and in order to have a finished sample to show the students.

Directions:

1. Hand each child a blank plaque, presorted letters in small plastic bag or paper cup, a copy of plaque wording and glue bottle to share.
2. Have children look at plaque example so they know where to place their letters. Have children squeeze out a spaghetti-thin strip of glue and position the letters of the first two words (self control) over the thin stripe of glue. Stress that they only need a thin line of glue, since you want it to dry quickly. Do each successive line one stripe at a time.
3. When done, use hair dryer to dry glue
4. When glue seems dry, take plaque outdoors and spray with lacquer spray sealer. Teacher must do this step for students.
5. The last step is to apply the self-stick magnet to back of plaque.
6. Suggest that kids add a ribbon, button, flower or a decorative border to the plaque for decoration.

MUSIC:

Sing "O How Love I Thy Law" from the United Church of God hymnal.

MEMORY VERSE:

1 Corinthians 9:25 "And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things."

Say: Self-control is the ability to say no to yourself.

Ask: How can self-control be developed? [Ideas: Being involved in sports. Getting up at the same time every morning. Learning to play a musical instrument. Master a new computer program. Do household chores daily. Learn to dance. Take an art class. Read a book from cover to cover. Going to church every week. Setting personal time aside to worship God and pray.]

Say: The fruit of spiritual self-control only comes from baptism and having God's Spirit. Ask for God to help you develop this important fruit of His Spirit.

Do: If time permits, ask kids to think of other ways to develop self-control in their lives.

Suggest that the kids read Proverbs 4:23-27 for biblical guidance on self-control.

family activity

THE POINT:

To define self-control and to show areas in our lives where it is important for us to exercise self-control.

ASK ME...

- How did Joseph end up in Egypt?
- How did Joseph show self-control?
- In the long run, does God bless us when we exercise self-control and obey Him?

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

Think of an idea to decorate the "self-control" plaque that was made in class. Suggestions: A small silk flower in the corner of the plaque, a border around the plaque using rope or ribbon, buttons, glitter, beads, etc.

MEMORY VERSE:

1 Corinthians 9:25 "And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things."