

*The WILD*  
*3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade*

*1/29/12*

*9:00*

*January 2012*

*Self-Control*

*Week 5*

# Guide

**Bible Story:** Guide (what you think about) • *Philippians 4:8*

**Big Idea:** God has given us Bible to **guide** our thoughts.

**Memory Verse:** My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry. *James 1:19*

**Virtue:** Self-Control—choosing to do what you should do, not what you want to do.

**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what.

## FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **SELF-CONTROL** and God's character,  
as shown through God's big story

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Have you ever been so angry that you just wanted to scream until your lungs fell out? Or maybe someone said the meanest thing possible and you wanted to get even. We all feel angry sometimes. But can you imagine a world where everyone *acted* on their anger? Or said what they thought right away? What if the adults and kids all threw a tantrum each and every time they got upset? The world would be a pretty scary place to live.

That's probably one reason the Bible advises us to have self-control. But self-control means a whole lot more than not acting out or cutting up. Self-control means choosing to do what you *should* do—and not what you want to do. And that's hard for all of us.

The good news is that God doesn't ask us to do anything on our own. God promises to help us. In fact, 2 Peter 1:3 says God's given us everything we need to lead a godly life. And self-control is even the last fruit mentioned in the list found in Galatians 5:22-23. The fruit of the Spirit is just a fancy way of saying that having self-control is a way to display that we have God in our life. And when we have God in our lives, He's present every hour of every day, ready to help us take control of our thoughts, words, and actions.

So, the next time you need a little self-control to help you hold your temper, to choose your words carefully, or to eat only *one* of your favorite treats, pause to pray and ask God for wisdom and help. Then you can make a wiser choice, instead of reacting in the moment. And remember: everyone benefits when we show a little self-control.

*This month, let's think about how:*

(1) *We can display self-control as a response to God.*

(2) *God empowers us with self-control to respond wisely.*

(3) *God uses self-control in us to influence our families, friends, and neighbors.*

*Remember:* A virtue is something God does in us to change the world around us.

**Opening Discussion:**

**What You Do:**

Greet the students.

**What You Say:**

“If I could take a peek into your brain, what would I find that you think about most? What would your friends or family guess that you think about most? Why would they say that?”

**[Personalize] If kids are feeling a little shy, step up and share personal answers to get the ball rolling.**

This week we are finishing our study on self-control with a look at a verse in Philippians. ***Let’s talk a little more about what God thinks is best for us to think about and pay attention to every day.***”

**Activity 1 - God Says ...**

**What You Need:** “God Says ...” (Activity Page), pens

**What You Do:**

Divide kids into partners. Provide each pair with a card. Explain to the kids that they will be coming up with a real-life example of how what God says can redirect their thoughts. You should provide the first example. It could be that you think you just can’t do everything you’re facing. It’s really tough and challenging, and you just can’t do it. But God says in Philippians 4:13, “I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me.” So, in real life, ... (Kids come up with an answer, such as “I felt defeated about learning the periodic table in science. It was so overwhelming, with so much to remember. But this verse reminded me that I could do ALL things with Christ as my strength. I prayed for His strength every time I studied, and I could really tell that He was helping me to learn and understand it all! I am so glad I don’t have to do it in my own strength.”) Have each pair share their real-life examples. Allow kids from the whole group to contribute if a particular verse really came alive to them.

**What You Say:**

“You can absolutely **use the Bible to *guide* your thoughts. Sometimes it just takes a little work to capture thoughts that don’t please God and replace them with thoughts that do.** I’m so glad we have the Bible, which is full of truth, to help us fight that battle!”

## Activity 2 - Brain Bubbles

**What You Need:** “Brain Bubbles “ (Activity Page), Bible, and pens or pencils

### What You Do:

Give each student a pen or pencil and a copy of the Activity Page. Ask kids to each find a partner. Give them time to complete their pages and look up the verse with their partner. For convenience, the directions are also included below.

1. Write what you think about in the bubbles around your brain. These should be things that consume you, keep you up at night, make you worry, etc. For example, “I think about what it would be like to be Taylor Swift.”
2. Now look up Philippians 4:8 and read it with your partner.
3. On the picture of your brain, write what God asks you to think about according to this verse. Don’t try to use big, fancy words. Just use your own words. (*God doesn’t want me to admire superstars. He wants me to admire Him.*)
4. Finally, pick your favorite thought bubble and be ready to share with the group.

After students have completed their Activity Pages, ask each group to share their favorite thought bubble.

### What You Say:

**“In Philippians 4:8 we are challenged by Paul to think about things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, worthy of respect, excellent, or worthy of praise. If we are honest, that is SO NOT where our thoughts naturally land. Use the Bible to *guide* your thoughts, and you can lean on God’s truth to help you.”**

## Activity 3 - Hoopin’ It Up

**What You Need:** Bibles

### What You Do:

Split the class into two teams. Make sure each team has several Bibles. You’ll provide a question, and Team #1 will have a chance to answer. If correct, their team receives a point. If Team #1 misses the question, Team #2 gets a chance to steal their point. If they answer the question correctly, they get a point and an opportunity to earn another point with the next question. Continue playing this game with the questions listed below – keeping track of the points.

Questions:

1. What is the reference of our memory verse? (*James 1:19*)
2. Is James 1:19 found in the Old Testament or the New Testament? (*New Testament*)

3. Who wrote the book of James? (*James*)
4. Who is the verse written to? (*Believers, brothers and sisters*)
5. What is the first thing this verse commands you to do? (*Pay attention to what I say*)
6. What should we be quick to do? (*Listen*)
7. What should we be slow to do? (*Speak and get angry*)
8. Give an example of how you can be “quick to listen.”
9. Give an example of how you can be “slow to speak.”
10. Give an example of how you can be “slow to get angry.”
11. Recite James 1:19.
12. Recite James 1:19 again.

**What You Say:**

**“This month we have truly committed James 1:19 to memory. We have used the Bible to guide our thoughts.”**

*Discussion Questions*

- What do you remember about the things we studied each week this month? Let’s review.
  - God can give you the **power** to control yourself. Proverbs 25:28
  - **Pause** before you lose your temper. Proverbs 16:32
  - **Select** your words carefully. Proverbs 12:18
  - Know when to **stop**. Proverbs 25:16
  - Which of these stuck with you the most? Why?
- **What are some good things you can think about to replace the bad things that sometimes consume your thoughts?** What can you use to visually remind you of these good things since it’s so easy for them to be crowded out by the bad?
- If we are to use the Bible to guide our thoughts, we need to be spending time reading it, right? Do you read your Bible? Do you have a certain version you like best or some kind of devotional? What helps you the most to be able to read, understand, and apply? How do we have self-control—choosing what we should do, not what we want to do—when it comes to setting aside time for God and His Word?

## **Pray and Dismiss**

### **Prayer Mail**

**What You Need:** ½ sheets of cardstock, pens and envelopes

### **What You Do:**

Have a student look up and read Philippians 1:3 aloud. Following Paul's wisdom, students will select someone in their life they want to thank. Then they will use the provided materials to make Prayer-Mail cards. Encourage the kids to thank the recipient for something they have done, something they have said, or just who they are. There should be enough supplies for kids to write more than one card, if they desire to do so. After time is given, students should hold their card and individually pray, thanking God for the recipient of their card. If time permits, students can share who they wrote to and why they chose this person. Encourage kids to deliver their Prayer-Mail over the next week. Finally, close the group in prayer. *(Option: For kids who seem reluctant or feel this is too crafty, try challenging them to take a piece of paper and compose a meaningful text that thanks someone specifically in 140 characters or less. They could send their thanks a different way!)*

### **What You Say:**

**"In Philippians, Paul had a thankful heart. Thinking of people we are thankful for is a great way to keep our thoughts positive and focused on the good in our lives that God's provided. Use the Bible to *guide* your thoughts."**

Pass out Fridge Door cards as adults arrive for pick up.