



Fruit of the Spirit

Self-Control – Lesson 2

“Let us be alert and self-controlled.” 1 Thess. 5:6

Lesson Time

Supplies:

Wrapped box or gift bag

Rock (inside gift)

Does anyone want this beautiful present? Doesn't it look nice? Who likes getting gifts or new stuff? Do you think we can have self-control and wait to open it or should we tear it open right now? What if I told you that what is in the box/bag is better than anything God has for you? It is really cool and you are going to wish you had more than one of it! Would you believe me and open it right away?

Remember last week we talked about how Satan tempted Eve and she decided to disobey God and chose to sin? Was that a good choice? No! And she had consequences for not obeying the good life God wanted for her. Just like your parents want what is best for you and know what will be good for you and keep you safe. When you disobey and choose to not control your actions, there are consequences. When we are tempted to do something we need to have self-control and stop and think, 'what does God say about this', so we can choose to obey Him.

That is what Jesus did. Jesus was also tempted by Satan. The Bible tells us that Jesus was in the desert and had not eaten for forty days. Can you imagine not eating for 40 days? Jesus must have been starving! Satan knew that and came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Wow! Don't you think that Jesus would have loved some bread? He was probably very hungry so of course that sounded very YUMMY. Do you think Jesus had the power to turn the stones into bread? Yes, He could, but Satan was trying to tempt Him and Jesus wasn't going to give in to him.

Instead, Jesus answered with scripture from the Bible saying "It is written, man doesn't live only on bread. He also lives on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matt. 4 & Luke 4)

Satan tempted Jesus when He was weak and hoped that Jesus would ignore God and focus on His own need to eat. But Jesus never gave in. He did not choose to follow Satan and sin. He knew God's way was best for Him. He trusted God and used self-control. He stood up to Satan by quoting scripture. Satan tempted Him two more times and all three times Jesus used God's word to come against him. And then Satan left because Jesus wasn't giving into him.

Satan knows what will pull us away from God and get us to focus more on ourselves instead of God's perfect way. That is why we need to learn the Bible so we know what God's way is and we can stand up to Satan when he tries to tempt us away from what God wants. Our verse says "Let us be alert and self-controlled." 1 Thessalonians 5:6. We must remember to be alert to Satan's traps and self-controlled to obey God and the good way He has for us to live. God loves us so much He chose to die for us. We need to remember how much He loves us and wants what is best for us, so when it looks like there is something better out there we can know that is a lie. There is no one better than God and no one that loves us more than He does.

Now, do you want to open the gift and see what is in it? Remember I am telling you what is in the box/bag is better than what God has for you? Anyone want to open it? You should now know it is a lie because nothing is better than God. Let's open it just to see if it would have been a good choice for you to open it instead of choosing God. (Open it or chose someone else to open it.) What is it? A rock? That's no good, but that is exactly what Satan does to us. He tries to make things look really good. He tries to make them look better than God and then when we choose those things we find out they weren't worth it. It was a trap. It wasn't good for us or better than God at all. Satan lies to us but God always tells us the truth.

God can help us have the self-control to make the right choices instead of the wrong choices but we have to know His word. The Bible says "Obey God. Stand up to the devil and he will run away from you." James 4:7. Let's pray for God to give us more self-control when Satan tries to tempt us to make a wrong choice. Let's pray that we can stand up to Satan and by obeying God's word we chase Satan off just like Jesus did in the desert.

Prayer Time

Activity Time

The goal of this time is to utilize a variety of engaging activities –passive and active play, crafts, application, and more – to reinforce what was taught in the lesson. While you may not get to every activity, we encourage you to complete the "Take-Home" activity so children leave with a tangible reminder of what was discussed today.

If numbers are high and/or time and space allow, you may want to use a center format: divide the class into groups (one for each activity) and rotate through the centers after an allotted time.



Obey God's Word Craft

Supplies:
Glue sticks

Colored cardstock half sheets with "God's Word"
Bible and verse cutout
Yarn
Stickers
Crayons
Craft sample picture

Have the kids fold the "God's Word" half-sheet in half, like a book. Then have them glue the Bible with verse cutout to the inside. Punch two holes along the spine and give each kid a piece of yarn to string through the holes and have them decorate the front (and back if they wish) with stickers and coloring.

The point: Go over the verse and remind them that remembering what God tells us and obeying Him will help us to stay in control and when we are tempted it will help us not to sin.



"I WILL OBEY" Game

Children will line up against a wall and teachers will call out various good and bad (temptations) scenarios (see below for ideas). If the teacher calls out a temptation, children will say loudly "I will say NO to temptation!" If the teacher says something good that the children should do, they will loudly say, "I will obey!"

Ideas: Go to bed on time; brush your teeth; talk unkindly to your friends; stomp your feet and slam your door when you're angry, read your Bible; make your bed; pray every day; hit your brother; take cookies when nobody is looking; watch a bad TV show; set the table for a meal; stay mad at your friend, etc.)



Sticky Temptation

Supplies:

Two sticky hands (1 per team)

Chairs set up in obstacle course

Set up an obstacle course with several chairs – there shouldn't be more than two or three feet between the chairs. Divide group into two teams and explain to each team that they will have one sticky hand. Each child will have a chance to go through the obstacle course by weaving in and out of the chairs. They have to swing the sticky hand back and forth out in front of them as they walk. The goal is to get through the course without the sticky hand getting stuck on anything. Make sure the course is set up so it will be just about impossible to accomplish this. Have each of the kids go through the course trying to race each other.

Was it easy or hard to run this race without getting the sticky hand stuck on something? How many of you got the sticky hand stuck on at least one chair?

The point: Sometimes temptation seems to be everywhere and it is easy to get stuck wanting to do the wrong things. But Jesus knows what it is like to be tempted and He promises to help us when we are tempted so we can avoid sin. We have to stay close to God by praying and reading the Bible and spending time with Him. We can keep our hands from getting into a sticky mess of sin by following what God says.



Battling Sin

Supplies:

Paper towel tubes (1 per child)

Paper wads

Tape a line down the center of the floor. Form two teams – one on each side of the line. Give each child a paper towel tube "sword."

Next, explain how the Bible is our sword. (They should use self-control and not hit each other with their swords.) Have the children call out some sins or temptations they face each day (lying, being unkind, throwing tantrums, disobeying parents, arguing with a friend, wanting to play video games all day long, not sharing their toys, hitting their siblings, etc). As they do, throw the wads of paper onto the floor, making sure they're on both sides of the battlefield.

Give the following rules of the game:

- The object is to move any "sin balls" from your side of the battle field to the other team's side. You must stand at home base in the "READY" position until you hear the word, "GO!"
- You must stay on your side of the battlefield and not cross the centerline.
- You must use only your sword to move the sin balls to the other side.
- You must stop when the leader calls out "Stop!"
- You must use your sword wisely or it may break in half.
- After saying, "Go!" give the children a few minutes then yell, "Stop!"



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