



JANUARY THEME

OPERATING SYSTEM

Update the Way You React

BIBLE STORY

Proverbs 25:16

Too Much | Too Much of a Good Thing

BOTTOM LINE

Know when to stop

MEMORY VERSE

“God’s power has given us everything we need to lead a godly life.”

2 Peter 1:3a, NIV

LIFE APP

Self-Control | Choosing to do what you should even when you don’t want to

BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice...and with God’s help I can!

FOR LEADERS ONLY

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

Key Question: How do you know when to stop? We don’t always know it’s time to stop until it’s too late. We pray that our families become more self-aware about the times when they need to trust God to help them stop.

We close out the month with another one of Solomon’s vivid word pictures in **Proverbs 25:16** and find out what happens when we indulge and eat too much. But this proverb isn’t just about how much we eat. Families will learn that too much of anything, even if it’s a good thing, can have serious consequences.

Bottom Line: Know when to stop. Knowing when to stop isn’t always easy. A lot of times it’s a neighbor, relative, parent or teacher, boss or friend who helps us know it’s time to stop what we’re doing and take a break. We hope that families start to see that stopping something—even if it’s fun—can be the wisest choice. We also want families to know they don’t need to do this on their own. God will help them know when to stop.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each group member by name. Ask God to show kids areas of their lives where they need to know when to stop. Pray that kids would understand that too much of a good thing can actually be a bad thing. Pray that they would know that God wants good things for us, and that God will help us use self-control to keep a healthy balance of the good things in our lives.

•• JUST FOR FUN

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Ball-pit ball

What You Do:

- Gather kids in a circle and ask, “What is your favorite food?”
- Toss a ball-pit ball to someone in the group, and when he catches it, encourage him to shout out his favorite food before passing the ball to someone else in the group.
- Continue passing the ball so everyone in the circle touches the ball once before returning it to you.
- Repeat several times starting with a new category of “favorites.” Examples of “favorite” categories could be: TV shows, hobbies, songs or musical artists, games, months.
- This is a fast-paced game. As soon as the ball returns back to you, shout out another category and keep the pace hopping.



●● **GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME**

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: Deck of cards

What You Do:

- Gather kids in a circle.
- Spread a deck of cards in the center of the circle, facedown.
- Encourage kids to pick cards one at a time with the goal being that the sum of their cards is as close to 17 without going over.
—The key is to know when to stop choosing cards so that the value of your cards does not exceed 17.
- The kid whose cards add up closest to 17 without going over wins.
- If there is a tie, play a tiebreaker round.
- Card values are:
—K, Q, J = 10 —Aces = 1 or 11 —2 through 10 = face value
- If time allows, play a few rounds.
- The winner of the round can pick the target number (*11 or higher*) for the next round.

What You Say: “The key to winning this game was knowing when to stop. Pick one card too many and you go over the target and you are out of the game. When you hit the target spot on, it is easy to know to stop. But sometimes knowing when to stop isn’t always clear. [Transition] **Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we’ll hear/we heard what Solomon says about knowing when to stop.**

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

●● **TAKE A SNAPSHOT** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Ball-pit ball, copy paper

What You Do:

- Give everyone in your group two pieces of copy paper and ask them to wad them up into balls. Keep the ball-pit ball for you to use.
- Recruit a volunteer and ask: What is your favorite food?
- Tell the group that the balls will represent the volunteer’s favorite food, e.g. pizza.
- Gently toss the ball-pit ball to the volunteer and encourage him to catch it.
- Challenge the volunteer to see how many balls (*pieces of pizza*) he can catch before he drops (*or “vomits!”*) one. He must keep all previously caught balls in his hands.
- Encourage kids in the group to gently toss their wadded up paper balls at the volunteer.
- When the volunteer can no longer catch additional balls, ask the group to list two or three downfalls of not knowing when to stop eating pizza.
- Repeat the activity several times, switching up the topic. Some additional suggestions could be:
—Ask who likes to play video games. Video games are fun. Pretend each of the balls represents an hour of playing a video game and



repeat the activity. See how many “hours” kids can hang on to before dropping the ball. Ask the group to list two or three downfalls of playing too many hours of video games.

—Does anyone have a favorite TV show? Pretend the balls are an episode of your favorite show or a video on your favorite YouTube channel. See how many “TV episodes” you can “watch.” Ask the group to list two or three downfalls of watching too many episodes of that TV show in one day.

—Encourage kids to give other examples of things that are good in normal quantities, but bad in large quantities. If kids are still interested, keep the game going, using the examples they provide.

●● **BIBLE STORY EXTENSION** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review Application Activity]

Made to Create | An activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

What You Need: Bible, copy paper, markers

What You Do:

- Read Proverbs 25:16.
- Ask: What would be a good warning label for a jar of honey?
- Explain that everyone struggles with knowing when to stop, especially when it comes to our favorite things.
- **[Make it Personal] Share a time you struggled with knowing when to stop. Maybe you love the game Candy Crush and when you start playing you lose track of time. Or if you eat one BBQ potato chip, before you know it, the bag is gone. Make sure your example is age-appropriate.**
- Using a few examples from the “Take a Snapshot” activity, briefly discuss what warning signs could be an indicator you need to stop before it is too late.
- Challenge kids to think of an area they tend to overindulge: an area in their lives where they need self-control to know when to stop. —Is it watching TV or playing video games? Is it eating salty snacks or ice cream? Is it listening to music? —Prompt them to think about the things they do when they lose track of time, the times when it seems like they have only been doing something for an hour and the next thing they know four hours have passed.
- Hand out copy paper and markers and let kids create a warning sign to remind them to know when to stop. —Allow kids to be creative. Suggest they use emojis, words, symbols, Bible verses, etc.
- Encourage kids to strategically place their signs to help remind them to know when to stop. Maybe place it near the snack bucket in their pantry, or near their TV, or, if it relates to their iPhones, they could take a picture of their sign and use it as the wallpaper.

●● **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask some of the following questions... —How do you recognize when you need to stop doing something? —Who can you depend on to help you stop? —Is it ever too late to stop? Are you ever in too deep that stopping isn’t an option? —How can good things be bad for you? —Is it always bad to lose track of time making something cool or doing something fun? What examples of things can you think of where it might be okay to let three hours go by while you barely notice the time passing? *(Get kids to think about stuff like practicing an instrument, making an art project, decorating a cake, taking a long walk, etc. Help them make the distinction between overindulging and “losing yourself” in something creative or productive.)*

●● **VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

