



JANUARY THEME

**OPERATING
SYSTEM**

Update the Way You React

BIBLE STORY

Proverbs 25:28

Busted Stuff | City with Broken Walls

BOTTOM LINE

Doing what you should can keep you safe

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 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.

THIS WEEK—Key Question: When do you lose control? The best way to discover how you should respond with self-control in a situation is to imagine the moments when you most feel like losing control. We pray that families not only start to identify the areas of their life where they have a tendency to struggle, but also create a plan for how to rely on God to help them.

We start with a word picture Solomon writes in **Proverbs 25:28**. Solomon uses the idea of giant city walls keeping people safe as a way to show the importance of living with self-control. Families will discover that, like walls can protect a city, choosing to exercise self-control can keep them safe in a wide variety of circumstances that they encounter in their everyday lives.

Bottom Line: Doing what you should can keep you safe. When you choose to do what you should, instead of doing what you want, you keep yourself out of danger. We hope families discover the value of relying on God for self-control even when it’s difficult.

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 help kids understand that their choices have consequences. Pray that they have courage to make good choices that can help to keep them safe.

●● **EARLY ARRIVER IDEA**

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

What You Need: “House” coloring pages, crayons

What You Do:

- Hand out “House” coloring pages and crayons.
- Give kids time to color their houses as you engage them in conversation about their Christmas vacations.

●● **GOOD FENCES**

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

What You Need: “House” coloring sheet from Early Arriver Idea activity, craft sticks, glue sticks



What You Do:

- Set out the craft sticks and glue sticks.
- Instruct kids to glue craft sticks on both sides of their house to make a fence.

What You Say: “You did a great job coloring those houses and building those fences. A lot of houses have fences around their back yards, don’t they? Why do you think they have fences? *(Pause for responses.)* **[Transition]** “Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we’ll hear/we heard about cities that have fences—or walls—around them.”

[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.

- **SNOWBALL FIGHT** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: Copy paper

What You Do:

- Divide kids into two teams, and have them gather on opposite sides of the small group table.
- Give each team half of the pieces of copy paper, and tell them to crumple them up into balls.
- Tell kids they will be having a pretend snowball fight.
- Show them how they can protect themselves from being hit with a snowball by holding their arms in front of their faces.
- On your “Ready?” kids should protect their faces with their arms.
- On your “Go,” they can start throwing snowballs toward the opposing team.
- After 30 seconds or so, tell kids they have to hold one arm behind their back.
- Encourage them to continue to throw snowballs at the other team.
- Play as long as interest holds. Then, engage them in the following conversation.

What You Say: “Wow, that was fun! But it was also frustrating at times, wasn’t it? When were you frustrated? *(Pause for responses.)* Yes, it was frustrating when you got hit with a snowball when you moved one of your arms to throw a snowball at the other team. It was even more frustrating when you had to keep one arm behind your back. Then, when you tried to throw a snowball, you didn’t have any way to protect yourself. When we used our arms to block our faces, they were like a wall or fence that provided protection. When we moved them to throw a snowball or because we had to put one behind our back, we weren’t as well protected anymore. Back in Bible times, cities had walls all the way around them in order to protect the cities from people who might want to fight or hurt them. If those walls got broken down, the city wasn’t safe any more. They needed to be strong and tall in order to protect the people in the city. When we have self-control, it protects us like a wall protects a city. It helps keep us safe from doing or saying things that could hurt us or other people. It helps us to do the things we should instead of the things we shouldn’t. **[Bottom Line]** **Doing what you should can keep you safe.”**

What You Do:

- Challenge the sides to race to see who can pick up the most snowballs. Continue until your space is all picked up.

●● **ACTS OF SAFETY** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask kids to stand up and face you.
- Explain that you will be asking them about things they can do that will keep them safe.
- They should silently act out the answers to your questions.
- Make sure kids understand there can be multiple answers to each question. They should act out the first one that comes into their mind.
- After they act out the answers, ask them why they should do those things—why those actions keep them safe.
- Questions:
 - What should you do before crossing the street? (*Hold someone’s hand and look both ways.*) Why? (*So a car doesn’t hit you.*)
 - What should you do before eating? (*Wash your hands.*) Why? (*So you don’t get sick.*)
 - What should you do before opening the door when the doorbell rings? (*Go get an adult.*) Why? (*So you don’t let a stranger into your house.*)
 - What should you do before hitting a baseball? (*Put on a helmet.*) Why? (*So your head will be protected from the ball.*)
 - What should you do before getting into a swimming pool? (*Put on your floaties. Make sure the adult with you is watching. Look to see if there’s a lifeguard.*) Why? (*So they can help keep you safe in the water.*)
 - What should you do before going outside into the snow? (*Put on your coat, hat, gloves, etc.*) Why? (*To stay protected from the cold.*)

What You Say: “That’s a lot of ‘shoulds,’ isn’t it? We use the word ‘should’ because those are things that are very important things to do in order to make sure we stay safe. We COULD go out into the snow without a coat and gloves because we’re just so excited to go out and play. But SHOULD we? No. Because we could get really sick and hurt if we don’t have self-control and wait to put on our winter gear. **[Bottom Line] Doing what you should can keep you safe.**”

●● **MOVE IT** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bible

What You Do:

- Guide kids to find 2 Peter 1:3a in their Bibles by using the following tips...

Finding verses with kindergartners + 1st graders: Open the Bible to the table of contents and show the kids what the page looks like. Lead them to find 2 Peter in the list under “New Testament.” You can help by telling them that 2 Peter starts with the number two, followed by the letter P. When the kids find 2 Peter, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find 2 Peter. Help the kids find the page. When they find 2 Peter, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 1. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 3 in chapter 1.

- Read the verse aloud to your group several times. Then, ask them to repeat it after you phrase by phrase. Repeat until your group knows the verse by memory.
- Then show kids a few motions they can do along with the words and/or let them come up with some of their own.
 - “power” | muscles
 - “everything” | spread arms wide
 - “godly” | point up
- Say the verse several times with the motions.

