

---

Godly Character Through Creation:  
A 12-Month Journey of Virtue, Nature, and Biblical Truth for  
Families

## Introduction: How to Use This Resource

Welcome to *Godly Character Through Creation*, a 12-month journey through godly character traits using the beauty of God's creation, biblical truth, and simple, hands-on learning. This resource is designed for use in homes, classrooms, or group settings and is flexible enough to adapt for multiple ages and learning styles.

Each month focuses on one key character trait—such as patience, boldness, or humility—and pairs it with examples from nature: animals, weather, or natural cycles that reflect that virtue in action. Alongside these lessons, you'll find Bible stories, discussion questions, journaling prompts, and tiered activity ideas for elementary, middle, and high school levels.

## Getting Started

Before beginning each month, it's helpful to take a few minutes to preview the upcoming nature topics. Consider checking out books from your local library on the featured animals or weather patterns. You might also search for short educational videos to help students visualize what they're learning.

Some educators like to gather free printable coloring pages, diagrams, or observation charts to enrich the experience. These can be added to a **character notebook or binder** that students build throughout the year—a visual record of the lessons they've explored and the values they've studied.

## Designed for All Ages

This guide was intentionally created to support **multi-age teaching**. Whether you're working with a single student or a mixed-age group, you'll find weekly lessons that can be adapted up or down as needed. Younger students may enjoy drawing, observing, and storytelling, while older students can engage in deeper discussion, written reflection, or personal Bible study.

There is no pressure to complete every activity. Feel free to adjust the pacing, simplify when needed, or go deeper when your learners are ready. The heart of this study is to invite students to see God's wisdom and character in creation—and to grow in their own spiritual maturity as a result.

*I pray this journey through nature and Scripture will not only enrich your teaching but also inspire deep, lasting conversations about who God is and how He calls us to live. May it be a blessing to your students, your learning environment, and your own walk of faith.*

*Amy*

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Responsibility</b> .....	1
<b>Chapter 2: Faithfulness</b> .....	21
<b>Chapter 3: Obedience</b> .....	41
<b>Chapter 4: Trust</b> .....	61
<b>Chapter 5: Self-Control</b> .....	77
<b>Chapter 6: Discernment</b> .....	93
<b>Chapter 7: Boldness</b> .....	109
<b>Chapter 8: Joy</b> .....	125
<b>Chapter 9: Humility</b> .....	141
<b>Chapter 10: Patience</b> .....	157
<b>Chapter 11: Peace</b> .....	173
<b>Chapter 12: Wisdom</b> .....	189



## Chapter 5: Self-Control

Out of all the character traits we teach our kids, self-control may be one of the hardest—but also one of the most life-changing. It doesn't always look big or bold. In fact, it often shows up in small, quiet choices: holding your tongue when you're frustrated, walking away from temptation, or doing what's wise instead of what's easy.

Self-control helps us not just *know* what's right—but *do* what's right, even when it's hard. And while kids are still growing in this area, let's be honest—so are we. Thankfully, God gives us His Spirit to help us practice self-control as we walk with Him.

This month, we're going to explore this powerful trait through God's Word and His creation. You'll find stories of animals that display remarkable restraint, natural forces that regulate themselves with precision, and Scripture that speaks to how important it is to master our own desires. Self-control isn't about perfection—it's about learning to pause, choose wisely, and rely on God's strength.

This chapter includes content for a range of ages—from young children to teens. You can use it one-on-one or with a group, adjusting questions and activities as needed. At the end of each section, you'll find suggestions broken down by age group, plus journal prompts and reflection questions. You'll also find printable visual pages to help reinforce the character trait and Bible verse throughout the month. There's nothing extra you need to get started—just a Bible, a space for notes or drawings, and an open heart. Let's begin this month by taking a deeper look at what self-control really means.

## **Character Trait of the Month: Self-Control**

### **Definition for Children:**

Self-control means choosing to do what is right, even when I feel like doing something else.

### **Definition for Parents/Leaders:**

Self-control is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in order to make wise and godly choices. It's choosing obedience over impulse, and discipline over desire. It is not a natural strength—but a fruit of the Spirit that grows through maturity and reliance on God.

### **What Self-Control Looks Like:**

- Pausing before speaking or reacting
- Finishing your work before play
- Saying no to things that aren't good for you
- Choosing kindness, even when you're upset

### **What Self-Control Does Not Look Like:**

- Interrupting or speaking without thinking
- Giving in to every emotion or craving
- Blaming others for your reactions
- Quitting when something takes effort

### **Memory Verse for the Month (New Living Translation):**

**“A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls.”**

— Proverbs 25:28 (NLT)

### **Suggested Printables for This Month:**

1. **Printable Character Poster:** “Self-Control” – with definitions
2. **Printable Memory Verse Page:** Proverbs 25:28 –These can be printed at the beginning of the month and placed on a bulletin board, in a journal, or in a homeschool binder as a monthly focus visual.

## Week 1: The Disciplined Beaver and Building Strong Walls

As we begin this month, take time to talk about the character trait of Self-Control. Read the verse together and imagine what it would look like to live with “strong walls” in your thoughts and choices. This week, we’ll study the beaver—a hardworking, focused animal that knows when to stop, when to work, and how to build wisely. Then we’ll explore the idea of “walls” in Proverbs and what they mean in our own hearts and minds.

### Animal Study: The Beaver

Beavers are known for their incredible self-discipline. They work with purpose, stopping only when the job is done. They don’t rush or get distracted. Instead, they build strong, protective dams—bit by bit—with patience and care.

Beavers remind us that building something strong takes time, focus, and self-control. If they gave up or got lazy, their homes would collapse. But because they stay steady, their homes are safe and strong—even through storms.

Just like beavers build dams, we build our lives with our choices. When we practice self-control, we create strong boundaries that protect us.

### Discussion Questions: The Beaver and Self-Control

1. What do beavers do that shows focus and discipline?
2. Why is it important that they don’t give up halfway?
3. What could happen if they didn’t stay steady or gave up easily?
4. What are some “walls” or boundaries we need in our own lives?
5. How does self-control help us stay safe—like a strong dam?
6. When do you find it hard to stay focused or do what’s right?

### 5 Fun Facts About Beavers

1. **Beavers build dams and lodges with incredible skill.**  
They instinctively know how to stack sticks, mud, and rocks to create sturdy homes and control water flow—showing responsibility and engineering built into nature.
2. **Their teeth never stop growing.**  
Beavers constantly chew on wood to keep their teeth from growing too long. It’s a picture of how daily habits and discipline are necessary to stay balanced and healthy.
3. **Beavers create wetlands that benefit other animals.**  
Their dam-building slows water and creates habitats for fish, frogs, and birds. Their work shows how taking care of your own task can bless others too.
4. **They store food for the winter.**  
Beavers prepare ahead by gathering and sinking branches into their ponds, so they have food when the water freezes. It’s a great reminder to plan wisely and think ahead.

5. **Beavers are excellent swimmers.**

With webbed feet, strong tails, and the ability to hold their breath for up to 15 minutes, beavers are perfectly equipped for their role—just like God equips us for the responsibilities He gives us.

### **Bible Story Connection: A City with Broken-Down Walls**

Read Proverbs 25:28 together.

Talk about what it means to be “like a city without walls.”

In Bible times, cities had tall walls to keep enemies out. If the walls were broken, the city was weak and vulnerable. That’s how God says we are when we don’t have self-control—open to harm, danger, and bad choices.

But when we live with self-control, it’s like building a strong, protective wall around our hearts. We can’t always control what happens around us, but we can learn to guard our responses.

### **Discussion Questions: Proverbs 25:28**

1. Why were walls important in Bible times?
2. What do you think it means to have “walls” in your own life?
3. How can self-control protect your heart and mind?
4. What are some situations where you need strong “walls”?
5. Can you think of a time when you lost self-control—what happened?
6. What helps you pause before reacting?

### **Journal Prompts**

1. Describe a time you stayed calm when you really wanted to react.
2. What kind of “walls” do you want to build in your life?
3. Draw a beaver building a dam—and write what it teaches you.
4. When is it hardest for you to stay in control?
5. What helps you stop and think before acting?
6. Write a prayer asking God to help you build strong walls of self-control.

### **Activity Suggestions by Age Group**

#### **Elementary:**

- Build a small dam or wall with blocks or sticks.
- Act out a story of a beaver building something carefully.
- Draw your own “city with walls” and label things that protect your heart.

#### **Middle School:**

- Write a short story called “The Day I Built My Wall.”
- Make a list of 5 things that test your self-control and how you can respond.
- Research how beavers build dams and why they don’t give up.

## High School:

- Reflect in writing: “When I lose self-control, what do I risk?”
- Memorize Proverbs 25:28 and write a reflection on it.
- Make a weekly self-check chart to track moments of strong self-control.

## Week 2: The Disciplined Elephant and Jesus Resists Temptation

Self-control isn’t just about saying “no”—it’s about choosing what’s best, even when something else seems easier or more tempting. This week, we’re learning from one of the most powerful animals—the elephant—and from the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness.

When we’re strong in spirit, we don’t let our emotions or desires lead the way. Instead, we follow truth.

### Animal Study: The Elephant

Elephants are massive, strong animals. Yet they’re also surprisingly gentle and self-controlled. In the wild, a mother elephant will carefully lead her calf through danger. A bull elephant will stay with the herd and only fight when necessary. Elephants show restraint, protect others, and often communicate calmly with their trunks and rumbles.

In captivity, elephants are trained not by fear but through repetition and trust. Their ability to follow commands and avoid outbursts comes from years of learning discipline.

Self-control means using your strength wisely. Elephants remind us that having power doesn’t mean you always need to use it. Sometimes, the strongest choice is the quiet one.

### Discussion Questions: The Elephant and Self-Control

1. What makes elephants strong? What makes them gentle?
2. How do elephants show restraint?
3. Why do you think being powerful doesn’t always mean acting powerful?
4. When do you feel tempted to react too quickly?
5. How can learning from elephants help us pause before acting?
6. What does it mean to have strength under control?

### 5 Fun Facts About Elephants

1. **Elephants live in strong family groups.**  
Led by a matriarch, elephant herds stick together, care for the young, and protect one another. Their loyalty and teamwork show how obedience and community go hand-in-hand.
2. **They “remember” important places and people.**  
Elephants are known for their excellent memory, especially for things like water sources and migration paths. This helps them survive—and shows the power of remembering what matters.
3. **Elephants show emotions like empathy and grief.**  
They comfort one another, celebrate births, and even mourn lost herd members. Their emotional intelligence reminds us that obedience isn’t just about rules—it’s also about love and care.

4. **Their trunks can do just about everything.**

An elephant's trunk has over 40,000 muscles! They use it to eat, drink, smell, greet, and help each other—like a multi-tool God designed for both strength and gentleness.

5. **They can hear through their feet.**

Elephants pick up low-frequency sounds and vibrations through the ground, using their feet and trunks. It's a beautiful example of listening carefully—something we need when learning to obey God's voice.

**Bible Story Connection: Jesus Resists Temptation**

Read Matthew 4:1–11 together.

Before Jesus began His public ministry, He spent 40 days in the wilderness fasting and praying. During this time, Satan tempted Him three different times. Each time, Jesus responded with Scripture—not with anger, fear, or panic.

Jesus showed self-control by standing on truth. Even though He was hungry, tired, and alone, He didn't give in. His self-control came from knowing God's Word and staying focused on His purpose. When we're tempted to give in or give up, we can remember that Jesus understands—and He gives us the strength to say "no" too.

**Discussion Questions: Jesus in the Wilderness**

1. What kinds of things did Satan tempt Jesus with?
2. How did Jesus respond each time?
3. Why do you think it's important to know Scripture when you're tempted?
4. What would self-control have looked like in this situation?
5. When do you feel like giving in to something you know isn't right?
6. How does Jesus give us strength to resist temptation?

**Journal Prompts:**

1. Write about a time when you had to control your words or actions.
2. What's something that's hard for you to say "no" to?
3. Describe how an elephant stays calm and what it teaches you.
4. What does Jesus' example in the wilderness show you about self-control?
5. When do you feel strongest in your choices?
6. Write a prayer asking God to help you stand firm when you're tempted.

## Activity Suggestions by Age Group

### Elementary:

- Make an elephant craft or draw a picture showing gentle strength.
- Act out a scene where someone is tempted but chooses the right thing.
- Play a “freeze” game to practice stopping and thinking before acting.

### Middle School:

- Write a short story about someone showing self-control in a tough situation.
- Memorize one verse from Matthew 4 and talk about how it helps in temptation.
- Create a “strength journal” tracking how you show control this week.

### High School:

- Reflect in writing: “What does it mean to have emotional discipline?”
- Study the 3 temptations of Jesus and how they relate to real-life struggles.
- Write about an area of your life where you’re asking God to help you stay steady.

## Week 3: Salmon, Swimming Upstream, and Nehemiah's Focus

Self-control also means staying on course, even when it feels like everything is working against you. This week, we'll learn from the salmon—a fish known for swimming upstream through rough waters—and from Nehemiah, who refused to be pulled off course while rebuilding Jerusalem's wall.

It's easy to give in to distraction or pressure. But when we stay grounded in our purpose, we build something that lasts.

### Animal Study: The Salmon

Salmon are born in freshwater rivers but live most of their lives in the ocean. When it's time to return home and lay eggs, they make an incredible journey—swimming upstream for miles against powerful currents, jumping over rocks, and avoiding predators. Many don't make it. But those that do show extraordinary focus and strength.

They're not the fastest or flashiest creatures in the water, but they are among the most determined. They keep going, even when the path is rough.

Salmon teach us that self-control isn't just about resisting temptation—it's also about pushing forward when things get hard.

### Discussion Questions: The Salmon and Self-Control

1. What challenges do salmon face when swimming upstream?
2. Why don't they turn around and stay in the ocean?
3. What helps them stay focused on their goal?
4. How can you keep going when things get tough?
5. What would it look like to “swim upstream” in your own life?
6. How does determination show up in your daily habits?

### 5 Fun Facts About Salmon

1. **Salmon can swim upstream for hundreds of miles.**  
They use their incredible strength and sense of direction to return to the very river where they were born—even jumping up waterfalls and rapids along the way.
2. **They change color when they return to spawn.**  
Most salmon go from a silvery-blue color in the ocean to bright red or pink as they prepare to lay eggs in freshwater.
3. **Salmon use smell to find their way home.**  
Their sense of smell is so powerful that they can detect the unique scent of the stream where they were born—even years later.
4. **They're a keystone species.**  
When salmon die after spawning, their bodies provide rich nutrients for forests, birds, and other animals. They help support entire ecosystems.

5. **Salmon go through big changes in their life cycle.**

They start in freshwater, migrate to the ocean, and then return to freshwater to reproduce. This cycle takes years and requires great endurance and timing.

### **Bible Story Connection: Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall**

Read Nehemiah 4 and 6:1–9 together.

Nehemiah had a clear assignment: rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. But he faced constant distraction—mocking, threats, and attempts to pull him away from the job. Still, Nehemiah stayed focused. He didn't argue or chase down every problem. Instead, he said, "I am doing a great work and cannot come down." Nehemiah's story reminds us that self-control means guarding our attention, using our time wisely, and refusing to give up just because the path is hard.

### **Discussion Questions: Nehemiah**

1. What was Nehemiah trying to accomplish?
2. How did others try to stop or distract him?
3. What does Nehemiah's response teach us about focus?
4. What kinds of "distractions" try to pull you off course?
5. What's your "great work" that you need to stay committed to?
6. How can you stay strong in your purpose like Nehemiah?

### **Journal Prompts**

1. Write about a time you kept going, even when it was hard.
2. What's one distraction that makes it hard to stay focused?
3. How does the salmon's journey inspire you to persevere?
4. What does Nehemiah's response—"I cannot come down"—mean to you personally?
5. Where do you need more focus or discipline right now?
6. Write a prayer asking God for strength to keep going when you feel like quitting.

### **Activity Suggestions by Age Group**

#### **Elementary:**

- Watch a short nature video about the salmon's journey upstream.
- Draw a salmon swimming against the current and label the obstacles it faces.
- Act out Nehemiah's story, showing how he stayed focused even when interrupted.

#### **Middle School:**

- Write a short story from the salmon's point of view: "Why I Keep Swimming."
- Create a list of your own "upstream battles" and brainstorm ways to stay steady.
- Design a poster with the quote: "I am doing a great work and cannot come down."

#### **High School:**

- Research the salmon migration and write about how it connects to perseverance.
- Reflect in writing: "When is it hardest for me to stay on task, and why?"
- Commit to one focused goal for the week and journal about how you stay on course.

## Week 4: Volcanoes, Steam, and David Spares Saul

Self-control doesn't mean we never feel strong emotions—it means we don't let those emotions control us. This week, we'll study volcanoes and pressure in nature, and how David chose mercy over revenge when he had every reason to act in anger.

Even in heated moments, God calls us to pause and choose His way.

### Nature Study: Volcanoes and Pressure Release

Volcanoes build pressure beneath the surface for days, months, or even years. If there's no release valve, the eruption can be destructive. But some volcanoes have smaller vents or steam holes that allow pressure to escape gradually.

Our emotions can feel the same. We build up anger or frustration, and if we don't handle it with care, it can come out in harmful ways.

Learning self-control means noticing our feelings and finding healthy ways to process them—before they explode.

### Discussion Questions: Volcanoes and Emotions

1. What causes a volcano to erupt?
2. How do steam vents help manage pressure?
3. How is this similar to how we feel emotions?
4. What can happen if we don't manage our emotional "pressure"?
5. What helps you calm down when you feel upset?
6. What does self-control look like when you're angry?

### 5 Fun Facts About Volcanoes

1. **Volcanoes can grow new land.**  
When lava cools and hardens, it creates new landforms. Entire islands—like Hawaii—were formed by volcanic eruptions!
2. **Some volcanoes stay "asleep" for hundreds of years.**  
A dormant volcano can suddenly erupt after centuries of silence. Scientists monitor them closely for signs of activity.
3. **Volcanic soil is rich and fertile.**  
Even though eruptions are destructive, they leave behind nutrient-rich ash that helps plants grow better.

4. **There are volcanoes under the sea.**

The world's largest active volcano, Mauna Loa, extends far beneath the ocean. Underwater volcanoes are called submarine volcanoes.

5. **Volcanoes release gases and pressure from Earth's core.**

These eruptions help regulate Earth's temperature and keep the planet's crust from becoming too pressured or unstable.

**Bible Story Connection: David Spares Saul**

Read 1 Samuel 24 together.

David had been chased and hunted by King Saul for no reason. Then one day, he had the chance to get revenge—Saul was alone and vulnerable in a cave. But David didn't act. Instead, he showed self-control and spared Saul's life.

David trusted that justice belonged to God. He chose mercy over anger.

This powerful story reminds us that self-control includes how we treat people who've hurt us. It takes great strength to respond with peace instead of revenge.

**Discussion Questions: David and Saul**

1. What happened in the cave with Saul?
2. Why didn't David take revenge?
3. How did David show self-control in that moment?
4. What would you have done in his place?
5. What does this story teach about trusting God with justice?
6. Is there someone in your life who's hard to be kind to?

**Journal Prompts:**

1. Write about a time you felt really angry—what helped you calm down?
2. What's something that "builds pressure" in your day?
3. Describe how volcanoes teach us about emotional control.
4. Why do you think David made the choice he did?
5. What does it mean to respond instead of react?
6. Write a prayer asking for God's help in handling strong emotions.

**Activity Suggestions by Age Group**

**Elementary:**

- Use baking soda and vinegar to make a mini volcano—talk about what happens when pressure builds.
- Act out the cave scene and practice choosing peace.
- Make a "feelings chart" and label ways to cool down.

**Middle School:**

- Write a fictional story where a character chooses mercy instead of revenge.

- Journal about how your emotions feel like “lava” sometimes.
- Research how volcanoes form and how they’re managed.

**High School:**

- Write an essay: “Choosing Peace When You Have Power.”
- Study the emotional intelligence of David in this story.
- Reflect on a time when you felt like “erupting” and how you handled it.

**Chapter 5 Wrap-Up: Self-Control**

Self-control may not get as much praise as some other character traits, but it is absolutely essential for a strong and steady life. Throughout this month, we’ve seen how it takes real strength to hold back, focus, wait, and choose wisely—especially when emotions or temptations feel loud.

From the disciplined elephant to the determined journey of the salmon, from the restrained pressure of a volcano to Jesus Himself standing firm in the wilderness—we’ve been reminded that self-control is not about pretending we don’t feel things. It’s about making space to pause, listen to God, and respond from His wisdom instead of our impulses.

The world often tells us to “follow our feelings,” but God’s Word tells us something deeper: to walk by the Spirit and keep in step with Him. That’s where true self-control begins—not in willpower, but in surrender.

As you finish this month, take time to notice the moments when self-control shows up quietly—in a thoughtful pause, a calm response, or a choice to stay on task when distraction calls. These little victories are the building blocks of spiritual maturity.

SAMPLE

Self-control  
means choosing  
to do what is  
right, even  
when I feel like  
doing  
something else.

SAMPLE

**A person  
without self-  
control is like  
a city with  
broken-down  
walls.**

Proverbs 25:28 NLT