

Day 2

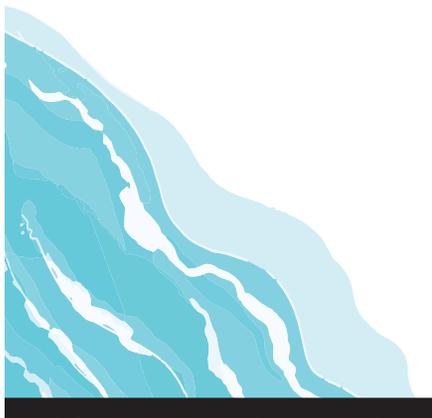
Read James 3:3-6

As you read James 3:3-6, circle the objects that are described as small but powerful. What are they?



Do you know what each of these things looks like? If not, with a parent's permission, do an internet search to look them up. It's pretty crazy how these small pieces can control things much bigger than they are.

You probably don't think about your tongue being that powerful, but it is! But when you allow God's Spirit to help you choose what you say carefully, you can do great things with your words.



Day 3

Try reading James 3:6 out loud while holding your tongue in between two fingers. It sounds kind of ridiculous, doesn't it?

Thankfully, that's not what it means to "control your tongue;" however, controlling your tongue is super challenging! And the word "self-control" is a little deceiving, because the truth is we need God's help to control ourselves! The best way to have self-control is to spend time talking to God, reading the Bible, and spending time with other people who follow God too. The more that you get to know God, the more you will naturally choose to do what you should even when you don't want to, including the words you speak.

Spend time talking to God right now and asking for help having self-control.



Dear God, it is sometimes hard to do the right thing in the moment, but I want to have self-control. Please help me choose to do what I should even when I don't want to. And please especially help me to control my tongue—to choose my words carefully, and to speak them with kindness, gentleness, and respect. In Jesus' Name, I pray, amen.

Day 4

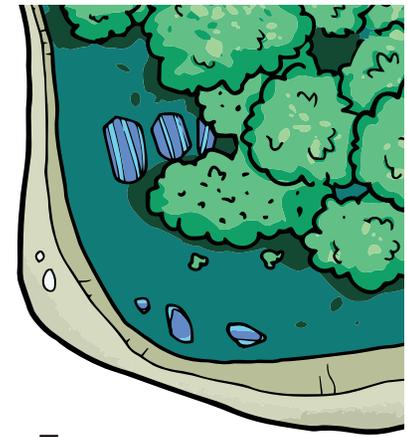
God's Spirit can help you choose self-control when you speak, and there are also some practical steps you can put into practice to help you choose to do what you should even when you don't want to.

Today, whenever you encounter challenging communication situations...

1. Think before you speak.
2. Count to 10 before responding in a frustrating situation.
3. Leave the room if you need a breather.
4. If you're feeling overwhelmed, grab a glass of water or a snack before continuing the conversation.
5. Most importantly, ask God for the strength to have self-control!



And in the meantime, draw a horse bridle, ship rudder, or a small fire somewhere (on your hand, your bathroom mirror, or a sticky note in your backpack) to remind you to choose self-control with your words.



Day 5

What can happen when you lose control?

Important: You MUST get a parent's permission for this activity.

Ask for a can of soda or other carbonated beverages. Take the can and shake it up a little.

Take the can outside and away from anything you wouldn't want to get wet. Point it away from yourself and open it up.

What happens? It's like an explosion, isn't it? It makes a big mess!

Life can be that way too—shaking us all up and making us feel a little out of control. And then, if we don't take a breather and ask God for help with our self-control, we can explode and make a big mess of everything, especially our relationships with others.

When you lose control, things can get messy really quickly. But thankfully, God gives you the power to have self-control, so ask God for help, take a breather, and chill out, and you'll find things stay a lot cleaner!