

# Character Trait for April 1-5 is Self-Control

## Ephesians 5:1, "Therefore, be imitators of God"

**CHARACTER:** qualities built into our lives that determine our responses, regardless of circumstances.

**Self-Control:** Rejecting wrong desires and doing what is right. The opposite of self-control is self-indulgence.

**Weekly Verse:** Proverbs 12:18 "Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing."

**Bible Story:** James 3:1-12. I was struck by the verse in Proverbs yesterday, and reminded about how hard it is to exercise self-control when it comes to what I say. I too often err on the side of making cutting remarks, and need to be someone whose words bring healing.

**Quote:** If you can't be kind, be quiet.

### Application:

#### 1. Look Beyond Today

Consider the long-term effects of every decision. It is not worth losing your job, your family, or your reputation for temporary satisfaction. Focus on something greater than your immediate wants, and do what is best in the long-run.

#### 2. Guard Your Steps

Everyone has weaknesses, although many are slow to admit them. It is better to admit a weakness and take precautions than to deny reality and fail. Identify the people, places, and circumstances that might cause you to stumble, and establish boundaries to protect yourself. Identify your weaknesses.

#### 3. Restrain Yourself

Those who give in to every whim or desire can damage themselves and many others in the process. Thus, they must have outward restraints in order to protect those around them. Restrain yourself so that others do not have to restrain you. Exercise your freedom by determining beforehand how you will respond to temptation. Use past experience to help you recognize when you approach an area of weakness, and determine beforehand to do the right thing. Do not give in to sudden impulses to do what you have already decided not to do.

### Discussion Questions:

1. In what area of my life is it hardest to exercise self-control?
2. How did Jesus model self-control?
3. Can you find one example in the news of someone who didn't exercise self-control, and how it affected them negatively?