

Today's Suggested Schedule—April 2024, Week 1

Today's Bible Story: The Waiting (A Patience Proverb) • *Proverbs 14:29*

Today's Bottom Line: Waiting can make you wise.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!* Psalm 27:14 (ESV)

Monthly Virtue: Patience—Waiting until later for what you want now

Basic Truth: I need to make the wise choice.

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might be visiting your group for the first time. Reflect on the perfect example of patience shown by Jesus. Thank God for the gift of patience through the work of the Holy Spirit. Ask God to help the kids in your group to grow in patience and to trust that God's plan is always good.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZI> for a visual on some of the activities.

LARGE GROUP (35 minutes)

STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God

Welcome/Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Bottom Line

Prayer

Closer

SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Story Exploration

Bible Story Review: To Wait or Not to Wait

Application Activity: Waiting Wisely

Memory Verse Activity: Serving Up Wisdom

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Use this if kids have questions about following Jesus.

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word gospel. Clarify that the word gospel means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

If a child has expressed interest in following Jesus, please let the parents know so they can be a part of the conversation that their child is having about faith.

What Now?

If you put your trust in Jesus Christ and believe in Him as the One who forgives your sins and makes it possible for you to know God, we are so proud of you! There is no greater single decision that you could make.

We believe that baptism is an important next step for you. Baptism is your way of telling your friends and family, “Hey, I'm a follower of Jesus!” If you're interested in learning more or participating in baptism, talk to a staff member about the next steps you should take.

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Story Exploration

What is the Bible?

The Bible is real and true. God gave us the Bible so that we could know Him. The Bible is filled with many books and stories, but it's all a part of one BIG story — God's Story.

What is God's Bigger Story?

Creation: God is the Creator of all things, and He is very good.

Fall: Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God. Sin broke the world, and people were separated from God.

Redemption: People could not fix their sin problem on their own. God sent His Son, Jesus, who died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

Restoration: When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, our relationship with God can be made right again through His grace. One day, Jesus will return and make the broken world new again.

Where is Today's Bible Story?

This week's story comes from the book of Proverbs. Proverbs is in the Old Testament and considered a Poetic Book. The author of this book is King Solomon, the son of David. The book of Proverbs gives readers a perspective on how the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

Open a Bible and show the kids the title page for the book of Proverbs. Then show them how to get to today's Bible passage (Proverbs 14:29).

Having patience is deeply connected to spiritual growth and drawing closer to Jesus for several reasons. Patience is not only a virtue encouraged in the Bible but also a reflection of the character of Jesus Himself. Here's how cultivating patience can bring you closer to Jesus:

Reflecting Jesus' Character

Jesus exemplified patience throughout His ministry on Earth. Whether He was dealing with His disciples' misunderstandings, the crowds' demands, or His enemies' plots, Jesus always responded with patience and love. By practicing patience, you imitate Christ's behavior, allowing His character to shape your own.

Trusting God's Timing

Patience involves trusting in God's timing rather than insisting on our own. This trust acknowledges that God knows what is best for us and that His timing is perfect, even when we don't understand it. Such trust deepens our relationship with Jesus as we learn to rely on Him more fully.

Practicing Spiritual Discipline

Patience is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) and, as such, is developed through the Holy Spirit's work in us. Cultivating patience requires prayer, meditation on God's Word, and dependence on the Holy Spirit. These practices draw us closer to Jesus as we spend time in His presence and allow Him to transform our hearts.

Strengthening Relationships

Jesus' ministry was deeply relational. He spent time with those society rejected and offered love and

forgiveness time and again. Patience strengthens our relationships by enabling us to bear with one another in love (Ephesians 4:2), fostering forgiveness, reconciliation, and unity. These qualities are essential for living out Jesus' command to love one another as He has loved us (John 13:34).

Growing Through Trials

James 1:2-4 encourages believers to consider it pure joy when facing trials because the testing of faith produces perseverance (or patience). Enduring trials with patience can draw us closer to Jesus as we lean on Him for strength and comfort. In these moments, we are reminded of Jesus' own sufferings and His faithfulness in all circumstances.

In essence, patience is much more than just waiting; it's an active, living expression of faith. It shapes us to be more like Jesus, deepening our relationship with Him as we learn to trust, wait, and love more fully.

Verses about Patience

Proverbs 15:18

Proverbs 16:32

James 1:19-20

Colossians 3:12

Romans 12:12

2 Peter 3:9

1. To Wait or Not to Wait

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: “Cookout Checklist” Activity Page, “Cookout Supply Cards” Activity Page, pens, and prepared cup

What You Do:

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Give each a team “Cookout Checklist” Activity Page and pen.
- Choose a team to go first.
- Ask that team a Bible Story Review Question that’s listed below.
 - If the team gets the answer correct, instruct one kid from the team to draw a card from the cup of cards from the “Cookout Supply Cards” Activity Page.
 - Direct that team to read the card and choose whether or not they want to keep it based on what they have marked off on their team’s “Cookout Checklist.”
 - If the team does not want to keep the card, instruct them to put it back and draw another.
 - Teams can only draw another card once more. If they don’t need that card either, they will put it back and it’s the next team’s turn to go.
- Direct teams to cross items off their “Cookout Checklist” Activity Page as they gather enough cards from the “Cookout Supply Cards” Activity Page to do so.
- Continue by asking the other team the next review question.
- Continue the game by alternating asking questions between the teams.
- The first team to gather all of their cookout supplies, wins!
 - Ask any remaining review questions after announcing the winner.
 - If you run out of questions before a team has won, allow teams to take turns choosing cards from the cup until you have a winner.

Bible Story Review Questions:

1. Today we heard about a verse from a book of the Bible known for wisdom. What is the name of that book of the Bible? (*Proverbs*)
2. What does Proverbs 14:29 call anyone who gets angry quickly? (*foolish*)
3. What does Proverbs 14:29 say about anyone who is patient? (*They have great understanding.*)
4. How long did King David wait before he was appointed as Israel’s king? (*more than 10 years*)
5. What kind of waiting did Joseph face? (*He waited years after being sold into slavery by his brothers. He was put in prison for unfair reasons, until finally he became second-in-command of Egypt.*)
6. Who is the perfect example of patience? (*Jesus*)
7. Who was Jesus patient with? (*everyone—friends, family, and even enemies*)
8. What is one way you can show patience this week? (*Answers will vary. Repeat this question, if needed.*)
9. How does waiting help us make wiser choices? (*Answers will vary. Repeat this question, if needed.*)
10. Describe a time you had to show patience at school.
11. What’s one way you can show patience at home?

What You Say:

“Whether you chose to pause with the card you first drew and were patient until you got all of your supplies, or you decided to try to choose an even better card, this game shows us why waiting can turn out pretty great.

“It’s not always easy to wait patiently. It can be tough to stop and think. But God can help us grow in patience. It’s worth it to take a breath and think before you react. Sometimes, it’s hard to wait. But just remember that **[Bottom Line] waiting can make you wise!**”

[Make It Personal] (Share about a time you had to have patience, waiting for something. Share some ways you were able to make the wise choice to wait. What helped you have patience?)

* 2. Waiting Wisely

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: “Waiting Wisely Thermometer” Activity Page, straws, red pipe cleaners, scissors, liquid glue, pencils, and cardstock

What You Do:

- Give each kid a “Waiting Wisely Thermometer” Activity Page, one piece of cardstock, a pencil, and a pair of scissors.
- Instruct the kids to write their name in the bottom corner of their piece of cardstock.
- Set out the glue to be shared.
- Direct kids to cut out their thermometer.
- Instruct the kids to glue their thermometer to the center of the cardstock.
- Give each kid one straw and one pipe cleaner.
 - *NOTE: If the straw is too long, direct the kids to cut it so it is the same length as the numbers on the “Waiting Wisely Thermometer” Activity Page.*
- Direct the kids to put one line of glue along the center of the thermometer, in between the numbers and the acronym, and place the straw on the line of glue.
- Encourage kids to hold their straw in place for a few seconds to secure it well.
- Direct kids to push the red pipe cleaner through the bottom of the straw, moving it up and down to change the temperature.
- Read through the acronym on the “Waiting Wisely Thermometer” Activity Page and talk to the kids about how each action can help them wait well.
- Set the thermometers aside for prayer time.

What You Say:

“Thermometers can remind us why it’s so important to wait. They can prevent us from having undercooked chicken or help us grill the perfect steak! Thermometers show us how patience can produce a better outcome—especially at a cookout.

“But, waiting in our everyday lives can be a lot harder than waiting for a piece of chicken, right? Perhaps you’re waiting for a parent to come home from a work trip, anxiously waiting to get your math test grade back, or waiting for what feels like forever for someone to take you to hang out with a friend.

“Showing patience can be especially hard when you don’t know how long you’ll be waiting. The next time you find yourself in a situation of waiting—whether big or small—visualize the thermometer you made to remind you that **[Bottom Line] waiting can make you wise.** (*Invite kids to read through the acronym on their thermometers one more time.*)

“What are some other ways you can spend your time to help you wait well?” (*Invite responses, like: help someone, encourage someone, ask God to help, etc.*)

3. Serving Up Wisdom

[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: Bibles, cups, plates, napkins, bowls, utensils, permanent markers, and sturdy cardboard pieces or disposable plates

What You Do:

- Direct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give each kid a Bible.
- Together, look up this month's Memory Verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd graders: Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Psalms in the list under "Old Testament." When the kids find Psalms, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Psalms. Help the kids find the page. When they find Psalms, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 27. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 14 in chapter 27.

- Invite anyone who would like to read the verse to the group to do so.
- Recite the verse together as a group a few times.
- Hand out the cookout supplies until everyone has at least one item.
 - NOTE: You should have one item for each word in the Memory Verse, including the reference.
- Give each kid a permanent marker.
- Go around the circle, read Psalm 27:14 from a Bible, and assign each word of the verse to a different kid.
 - Some kids may have multiple words and need more items, and that's okay.
- Direct the kids to write their assigned word(s) on their cookout supply item(s). (They can reference their Bibles, if needed.)
- When the entire verse has been written out, divide the group into two teams.
- Instruct both teams to sit at opposite ends of your group area.
- Designate one group as "servers" and the others as "customers."
- Give the "servers" the two cardboard pieces or disposable plates and all of the cookout supply items that contain the Memory Verse.
- Direct the "servers" to take turns carrying one cookout supply item at a time on the cardboard serving trays (or on the disposable plates) across to the "customers" so the "customers" can assemble the verse in order.
 - Since there are two pieces of cardboard (or two disposable plates), two cookout supply items will be traveling with the "servers" at one time.
- Once the verse is assembled, instruct the "customers" to read the Memory Verse out loud.
- Collect all of the cookout supply items and the cardboard pieces (or disposable plates).
- Switch sides.
- Designate the other team to be "servers," give them the cardboard pieces (or disposable plates), and the cookout supply items, and instruct them to serve the other team by bringing over the cookout supplies one at a time.

- Instruct the “customers” to put the verse together as it arrives from the “servers,” and read it out loud once it’s completed.

What You Say:

“You guys did a great job waiting on your friends, but waiting isn’t always fun and games, is it? Waiting looks different for every single one of us. Some of us just need to work on patience in the little things, while others are waiting on some big prayers to be answered.

“Our verse reminds us that God can give us strength in the waiting no matter what we’re facing. God has given us the Holy Spirit to help us stay hopeful and give us the gift of patience. As you find yourself waiting for something this week, remember that **[Bottom Line] waiting can make you wise.**”

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Say:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember?
- How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission?

What You Need: Thermometers from the Waiting Wisely activity, and pens

What You Do:

- Give each kid their thermometers from the Waiting Wisely activity and a pen.
- Ask kids to think about something that's hard to wait for.
- Encourage them to draw a picture or write a prayer anywhere on their page, on the front or back of the thermometer, asking God for help waiting.
- When kids are finished, close your group time in prayer.

What You Say:

"God, thank You for giving us hope and help no matter what we're waiting on. Whether we're waiting on the news of making the baseball team or remaining patient as we pray for our friend who is sick, we know that You care and will always be with us while we wait. Next time our impatience takes over and we are tired of waiting, help us to slow down. Remind us that **[Bottom Line] waiting can make you wise**. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show off their thermometers, sharing with the grown-ups that **[Bottom Line] waiting can make you wise**.

GETTING READY

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (15 Minutes)

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

(Choose one or both of these activities.)

1. Early Arriver

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need:

- Offering container
- Ball (to pass around), one for each Small Group

2. Opening Activity

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need:

- Game buzzer or bell, one for each Small Group

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

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

(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)

** If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2.*

1. To Wait or Not to Wait

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need:

- Print "Cookout Checklist" Activity Page on paper, two for each Small Group
- Print "Cookout Supply Cards" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, two sets for each Small Group
- Pens, two for each Small Group
- Plastic cup, one for each Small Group
 - Before group time:
 - Place the cards from the "Cookout Supply Cards" Activity Page in the cup.

*** 2. Waiting Wisely**

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need:

- Print "Waiting Wisely Thermometer" Activity Page on paper, one for each kid
- Clear straws, one for each kid
- Red pipe cleaners, one for each kid
- Scissors, enough for kids to share
- Liquid glue, one for every three kids

- Pencils
- Cardstock

3. Serving Up Wisdom

[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:

- Bibles, one for each kid
- Various disposable cookout supplies, like: cups, plates, napkins, bowls, utensils, etc.; one for each word of the Memory Verse
- Permanent markers, one for each kid
- Sturdy disposable plates or cardboard pieces to use as serving trays, two for each Small Group

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need:

- Thermometers from Waiting Wisely activity
- Pens

NOTE: Week 4 will require one empty water bottle for each kid. Begin asking leaders and others to save their bottles!

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app**