

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 Life App: 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: Great Understanding

Application Activity: Wait Well

Memory Verse Activity: Wait for the Lord

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. Great Understanding

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: Bible marked at Proverbs 14, “Great Understanding” Activity Page, and prepared zip-top bags

What You Do:

- Help kids get into groups of two or three.
- Give each group a set of the prepared “Great Understanding” puzzle pieces in a zip-top bag.
- Instruct each group to work together to assemble their puzzle.
 - Praise kids for practicing patience as they complete the puzzles.

What You Say:

“Some of you had pictures of David on your puzzles and others of you had pictures of Joseph. What did we hear about today that both Joseph and David had in common? (*patience*) Yes! They both showed great understanding by being patient. David waited more than 10 years from the time God told him he would be king until he actually became king. And Joseph waited years and years from the time his brothers betrayed him, through being put in prison unfairly, to when he was finally put in charge of all of Egypt!

(Use the marked Bible to read Proverbs 14:29 to the group.) “Someone who has understanding makes wise choices. Joseph and David made the wise choice, trusted God, and showed great patience. But who has been the PERFECT example of patience? (*Jesus*) Yes, Jesus! Jesus was ALWAYS patient! He was patient with His family, His friends, and even His enemies!

“It can be tough to stop and think, but God can help us discover how to get better at waiting. When can you be patient? (*Invite responses, like: I can wait for my dad to change my little brother’s diaper, I can wait for my stepmom when she’s talking with somebody, I can wait my turn in line, etc.*) Great ideas!

[Bottom Line] “Waiting can make you wise, so when you need to wait, ask God to help you be patient. And remember: **[Bottom Line]** waiting can make you wise.”

* 2. Wait Well

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask the kids to name times they need to wait.
 - Prompt them with examples, if needed. For example:
 - waiting in line at school
 - waiting for your turn
 - waiting for a sibling to get ready
 - waiting for an adult to get off the phone
 - waiting for a party
- Lead the kids in a variation of Mother May I? to practice different ways they can wait well.
- Guide the kids to line up shoulder-to-shoulder at one end of your environment.
- Read the phrases below.
- As you read each phrase, instruct the kids to act out each “wait well” strategy.
 - **[Bottom Line]** “**Waiting can make you wise.** While you wait, take three deep breaths. *(Pause to demonstrate.)* Great job! Take _____ *(number)* _____ *(baby steps, tiptoe steps, itty-bitty slide steps)* forward.”
 - **[Bottom Line]** “**Waiting can make you wise.** While you wait, ask God to help you wait well. *(Pause to demonstrate.)* Excellent. Take _____ *(number)* _____ *(baby steps, tiptoe steps, itty-bitty slide steps)* forward.”
 - **[Bottom Line]** “**Waiting can make you wise.** While you wait, color a picture. *(Pause to demonstrate.)* Ooh. Nicely done! Take _____ *(number)* _____ *(baby steps, tiptoe steps, itty-bitty slide steps)* forward.”
- Continue with the strategies below or add your own.
- Encourage kids to act out their own “wait well” strategies!
 - Put dishes in the dishwasher.
 - Sing a song in your head.
 - Take five deep breaths.
 - Take out the trash.
 - Read a book.
 - Play with a pet.
 - Cheer for your teammates.
- Praise the kids for showing “great understanding” by waiting well.

What You Say:

“Great job, everyone! When you make the wise choice to wait well, you show great understanding. We say it this way: **[Bottom Line]** **Waiting can make you _____ (wise).**”

“Patience is a gift from God's Spirit. So when you have to wait, ask God to help you. And while you wait, find something good to do. Take a deep breath. Help someone. Encourage someone. God has a good plan. God will be with you while you wait! And remember—waiting can be a GOOD thing because waiting can make you more like Jesus. So remember: **[Bottom Line]** **waiting can make you wise.**”

[Make It Personal] (Tell kids a strategy you use when you need to wait well. Tell kids how practicing waiting well has helped you be more like Jesus.)

3. Wait for the Lord

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bibles, cups, and paper plate

What You Do:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible. (Bibles should be marked at Psalm 27:14 for Kindergarteners.)
- Guide kids to look up and “read” together the verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

Finding verses with kindergartners: Guide kids to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word *Psalms* at the top of the page as you say “Psalms” aloud. Then guide kids to find the big number 27 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 27 for the little 14; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.

Finding verses with 1st 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.” You can help by telling them that Psalms starts with the letters P-S. 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.

- To unpack what it means to “wait for the LORD,” ask:
 - Who is “the LORD”? (*God, Jesus*)
 - What do you think it means to “wait for the LORD”? (*to trust God, to wait for God’s best, to wait for God to help us, to wait for God to show us what to do*)
 - If kids are stuck for ideas, ask, “How did Joseph and David ‘wait for the LORD’? (*They kept trusting God even though they had to wait A LONG time for what God promised.*)
- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle with you.
- Hold the paper plate and the cup.
- Say: “One helpful thing we can do while we ‘wait for the LORD’ is to help and encourage others.”
- Balance a paper plate on the top of a cup.
- Pass the cup and plate to the kid beside you as you say: “*Wait for the LORD.*”
- Instruct the kids to continue passing the cup and plate around the circle, saying the first phrase of the Memory Verse each time.
 - The kids will need to be patient as they wait their turn *and* as they carefully pass the cup.
 - Praise kids for helping and encouraging each other.
- Add a challenge by balancing a second cup on top of the plate!

What You Say:

“Psalm 27:14 tells us it’s best to wait for God. God wants us to be strong and hopeful while we wait. Why is it good to wait for God? (*Invite responses, like: God’s way is best, God loves us, etc.*) Great ideas!

“God knows that waiting isn’t always easy. That’s why God gives us the Holy Spirit to help us. So, when it’s hard to wait, ask God to help you. And remember: **[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: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Use the conversation below as a guide to lead the kids in prayer.

What You Say:

"The thing to remember this week is this: **[Bottom Line] waiting can make you wise.** God can help us grow in patience. While you wait, you can cheer for your team (*lead kids to pantomime*), pick up your toys (*lead kids to pantomime*), read a book (*lead kids to pantomime*), color a picture (*lead kids to pantomime*), play soccer with a friend (*lead kids to pantomime*), or take deep breaths (*lead kids to pantomime*). You can also do one REALLY important thing and ask God to help you wait well. Let's do that right now. Let's pray.

"Dear God, You showed Solomon that people who are patient show great understanding. This week, help us be patient and make wise choices. Help us wait well by taking deep breaths. Help us wait well by helping and encouraging others. Above all, help us wait well by remembering what's true: that You have a GOOD plan, that You LOVE us, and that You will be WITH US while we wait. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to share what they'll do this week to practice patience.

GETTING READY

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

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.*

Story Exploration – No Supplies

1. Great Understanding

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need:

- Bible marked at Proverbs 14:29
- Print the "Great Understanding" Activity Pages on cardstock and cut apart, one puzzle for every two to three kids
- Zip-top bags, one for every two to three kids
 - Before group time, place each set of puzzle pieces in a zip-top bag. It's ok for kids to get different puzzles.

* 2. Wait Well

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

3. Wait for the Lord

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need:

- Bibles (Mark the Bibles at Psalm 27:14 for Kindergarteners.), one for each kid
- Plastic or paper cups, two for each Small Group
- Paper plate, one 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:

- No supplies needed

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**