

## Today's Suggested Schedule—April 2024, Week 2

**Today's Bible Story:** Can't Hardly Wait (Esau's Impatience) • *Genesis 25:24-34*

**Today's Bottom Line:** When you think you can't wait, think twice.

**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. Ask God's Spirit to give you the gift of patience as you prepare for group time. Pray that as the kids of your group encounter situations where they feel like they can't wait, that they would stop and think in order to make the wise choice. Ask God to help them remember that God can help them wait.*

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

### **SMALL GROUP (15 minutes)**

#### **SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction**

Early Arriver  
Opening Activity

### **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**

Bible Story Review: Jacob's Stew  
Application Activity: Think Twice  
Memory Verse Activity: Grill Master  
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**

Genesis 25:24-34 recounts the story of Esau and Jacob, twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah, and how it relates to patience. Genesis is the first book of the Bible found in the Old Testament.

In these verses, Rebekah gives birth to Esau, the firstborn, followed by Jacob, who was born holding onto Esau's heel. As they grew older, Esau became a skillful hunter, while Jacob was more of a quiet and peaceful man, preferring to stay at home.

The significance of patience in this story is highlighted through the actions of Esau and Jacob. Esau, driven by his immediate desires and impulses, lacked patience. He came in from the field one day, faint with hunger, and saw Jacob cooking a stew. When Esau asked for some of the stew, Jacob seized the opportunity to bargain with him, offering to give him the stew in exchange for Esau's birthright as the firstborn son.

Esau, in his impatience and hunger, disregarded the value of his birthright and agreed to Jacob's offer, saying, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?" (Genesis 25:32). He prioritized satisfying his immediate hunger over the long-term benefits of his birthright.

This story shows us about the consequences of impatience and to consider the long-term implications of our actions. It illustrates how impulsive decisions made in the heat of the moment can lead to regrettable outcomes.

### **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

**Inheritance:** The concept of inheritance is central to both the Old Testament narrative of Esau and Jacob and the message of the Gospel. In Genesis, Esau and Jacob's story revolves around the birthright, which signifies the right to inherit the blessings and promises of the covenant God made with Abraham. In the Gospel, believers are heirs of God's promises through Jesus Christ. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus secured an inheritance for believers, granting them eternal life and a share in God's kingdom. (See Galatians 3:29)

**Sacrifice:** Esau's decision to trade his birthright for a bowl of stew illustrates the theme of sacrifice. He was willing to sacrifice his long-term inheritance for immediate gratification. In contrast, the Gospel emphasizes Jesus Christ's ultimate sacrifice on the cross for the redemption of humanity. Jesus willingly gave up His life to reconcile humanity with God, demonstrating the ultimate act of sacrificial love. Believers are called to follow Jesus's example by sacrificing their desires and worldly pursuits for the sake of the Gospel. (See Ephesians 2:4-5, 1 Peter 3:18, John 3:16)

**God's Grace:** Despite Esau's impulsive decision and lack of regard for his birthright, God's grace is evident throughout the story. God's covenant promises are not dependent on human merit or actions but are based on His grace and faithfulness. Similarly, the Gospel emphasizes that salvation is a free gift of God's grace, received through faith in Jesus Christ. No amount of human effort or merit can earn salvation; it is solely through God's grace that believers are reconciled to Him. (See Ephesians 2:8-9)

## 1. Jacob's Stew

### [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:** Prepared container of lentils (or beads/pom-poms) with “Jacob’s Stew” Activity Page cards, music player, and upbeat music

#### What You Do:

- Guide the kids to sit in a circle.
- Distribute a few lentils (or beads/pom-poms) for the kids to see and touch.
- Ask:
  - Do you know what lentils are?
  - What do lentils have to do with today’s Bible Story? (*Jacob made a lentil stew.*)
- *NOTE: If using brown beads or pom-poms for a non-food version, encourage kids to pretend they are lentils.*
- Play a game similar to “Hot Potato.”
- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give one kid the container of lentils.
- Start the music and instruct the kid with the container of lentils to quickly (but carefully) pass it to the kid on their left.
  - Encourage the kids to use gentle patience as they pass the container around quickly.
- Instruct the kids to continue passing the container around the circle until you stop the music.
- When the music stops, direct the kid with the container to carefully pull out a card, show it to the group, and tell what’s happening in the picture.
  - *NOTE: If a kid is shy or reluctant, invite them to pick a friend to share about the picture for them.*
- Continue play until the kids find all the cards.
- Instruct the kids to work together to put the cards in order.

#### What You Say:

“Patience is waiting until later for what you want now. Was Esau patient? (*No!*) Esau gave up all the good things he would have *later* for the bowl of stew he wanted *now!* And because Esau was impatient, he not only lost out on a lot of good things, but many bad things happened too—including a lot of fighting within his family.

“When you think you can’t wait, stop and think again. Esau gave up a lot of good things because he thought he couldn’t wait. So **[Bottom Line] when you think you can’t wait, think twice!**”

## \* 2. Think Twice

### [Live for God | Application Activity]

*Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment*

**What You Need:** “Think Twice Scenarios” Activity Page

#### What You Do:

- Lead the kids in a stop-action version of charades.
- Instruct the kids to stand in a circle.
- One at a time, read a scenario from the “Think Twice Scenarios” Activity Page
- Invite the kids to pantomime each situation as you read.
  - Be sure to read with expression and follow the instructions on the “Think Twice Scenarios” Activity Page.
  - Pause occasionally so the kids can pantomime the action.
- Direct the kids to freeze when you say, “stop.”
- Lead the kids to point to their temple with one hand when you say “think” and point to the other side of their temple with their other hand when you say “twice.”
- With the kids frozen in this position, read the two choices for the scenario from the “Think Twice Scenarios” Activity Page.
- Guide the kids to pantomime the wise choice.

#### What You Say:

“Great job! You made a lot of wise choices! You waited to eat a cookie, saved your money, chose not to take a shortcut, and finished cleaning your room! When is it hard for *you* to wait until later for what you want now? (*Invite responses, and prompt kids to think of things like: waiting to open presents, waiting to take a turn, etc.*)

“When it’s hard to wait, who can help you make the wise choice to be patient? (*Invite responses.*) Yes! God can. When you follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live inside you. Patience is a gift from God’s Spirit.

“So remember, **[Bottom Line]** when you think you can’t wait, **think** (*point to your temple with one hand*) **twice** (*point to your other temple with the other hand*). Stop and ask God to help you wait for what’s best!”

### 3. Grill Master

#### [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

*Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery*

**What You Need:** “Grill Top” Activity Page, “Burger Patties” Activity Page, spatulas, paper plates, and marked Bible

#### What You Do:

- Divide your group into teams of three or four.
- Instruct the teams to line up at one end of your area.
- Set a “Grill Top” Activity Page at the other end of the small group area, one grill top opposite each team.
- Put a set of “Burger Patties” Activity Page cutouts (word-side down) on each “grill.”
- Set a spatula and a paper plate beside each “grill.”
- At your signal, direct the first kid on each team to run to the “grill” and use the spatula to flip one “burger” word-side up.
  - Challenge kids to use only the spatula and not their hands to flip the “burger.”
- When a kid successfully flips one word, direct them to run back to their group and tag the next kid in line.
- Instruct the next kid in line to run to the “grill” and flip another “burger” word-side up.
- Once a team flips every “burger,” instruct the kids, one at a time, to run to the grill and use the spatula to move each “burger” from the “grill” to the plate.
- When a kid plates the final “burger,” instruct the team to bring the plate of “burgers” back to their team.
- Direct the team to work together to put the verse in order.
  - Point out the numbers on each burger to help kids order the cards.
- When every team finishes, open the marked Bible to Psalm 27:14 and read it.
- Lead kids to say the verse together.

#### What You Say:

“In our story today, did Esau wait for the Lord? (*Pause.*) No, he didn’t! He lost hope. Esau was so hungry he gave up his birthright for a bowl of Jacob’s stew. Esau was not patient and missed out on a lot of good things.

“Don’t give up what’s BEST for something you want NOW. Our verse this month shows us we can be strong and have hope while we’re waiting for something. We don’t have to try to do that alone. We can ask God to help us wait.

***[Make It Personal] (Share with kids some times when it’s hard for you to be patient—whether it’s saving money for a large purchase, being tempted to cut corners to finish something quickly, learning how to do something new, or waiting your turn when service is slow. Tell kids how God’s Spirit has helped you be patient.)***

“So remember, ***[Bottom Line]*** when you think you can’t wait, think twice. Ask God to help you be patient.”

## 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?

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

#### What You Do:

- Teach kids to say the phrase from the NIV, *be strong and don't lose hope* at your cue.
  - Or for the NIV, teach kids the phrase, *be strong and take heart* at your cue.
- Lead the kids in the responsive prayer below, cuing them to say the phrase at your signal.

#### What You Say:

"Dear God, Your Word tells us to wait for You.

*be strong, and let your heart take courage*

Lord, please help us be patient.

*be strong, and let your heart take courage*

Help us not be foolish like Esau.

*be strong, and let your heart take courage*

When we think we can't wait, help us think twice.

*be strong, and let your heart take courage*

Thank You, God, that when we follow Jesus, Your Holy Spirit will help us.

*be strong, and let your heart take courage*

You are ALWAYS with us.

*be strong, and let your heart take courage*

We love You SO MUCH, Lord. And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to share today's Bottom Line: **[Bottom Line] when you think you can't wait, think twice.**

## 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. Jacob's Stew**

**[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 "Jacob's Stew" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Dried lentils, about two pounds for each Small Group
  - For a non-food version: use brown beads or pom-poms
- Music player
- Upbeat music
- Sturdy container (plastic bowl or metal cake pan), one for each Small Group
- Before group time:
  - Pour the lentils (or beads or pom-poms) into a sturdy container, such as a plastic bowl or metal cake pan.
  - Bury the cards from the "Jacob's Stew" Activity Page in the container under the lentils (or beads or pom-poms).

#### **\* 2. Think Twice**

**[Live for God | Application Activity]**

*Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment*

**What You Need:**

- Print "Think Twice Scenarios" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group

#### **3. Grill Master**

**[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]**

*Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery*

**What You Need:**

- Print "Grill Top" Activity Page on cardstock with no margins, one for every three or four kids
  - Before group time, tape both pages of the "Grill Top" Activity Page together to form a grill.
- Print "Burger Patties" Activity Page double-sided on cardstock and cut apart, one set for every three or four kids
- Spatulas, one for every three or four kids
- Paper plates, one for every three or four kids
- Bible marked at Psalm 27:14, 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**