

Today's Suggested Schedule—April 2024, Week 1

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

Today's Key Question: When is it hard to have patience?

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 (Communicator Script)

Key Question

Prayer

SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Story Exploration

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot

Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You

Prayer Activity: Make it Personal with Prayer

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. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: Masking or painter's tape, mustard bottle, ketchup bottle, "Hot Dog" Activity Page

What You Do:

- Give each of the kids a "Hot Dog" Activity Page cutout.
- Ask kids whether they like ketchup, mustard, neither, or both on a hot dog.
- Set the mustard and ketchup bottles on the floor about four feet apart then place a line of tape between them.
- Explain that the yellow mustard will represent situations that are easy for them to feel patient, calm, and totally okay with. The red ketchup bottle will represent situations that make them feel impatient, frustrated, angry, and about to lose their cool.
- Tell kids you'll share a situation that is probably similar to something they have faced.
- Ask them to place their "Hot Dog" to the side of the tape line that indicates how easy or difficult it would be for them to be patient in that situation.
- Remind them to place their "Hot Dog" on the side with the red ketchup to indicate hot and ready to lose their temper and on the side with the yellow mustard for cool, calm, no sweat.
- Read the scenarios at the bottom of the page or add others that your group can relate to.
- With each scenario, allow kids to briefly share why they responded the way they did.
- Ask:
 - What made that particular situation easy or hard for you?
 - What do you normally do when you feel impatient?
 - What are some consequences you've experienced by getting impatient that have helped you be a bit wiser the next time in the way you respond?
- Direct kids to retrieve their "Hot Dog" and repeat with each scenario.

Patience Scenarios:

1. The dog destroyed a gift you made for your mom that you'd been working on for weeks.
2. Your hair looks kind of ridiculous today, and you don't have time to do anything about it.
3. You're so hungry after school, but you're not allowed any snacks before dinner.
4. Your little sister wants to watch a ridiculous show about puppies saving the world—AGAIN.
5. You've been practicing the same song for an hour and still can't get it right.
6. Your parents said "no" to something you want to do, and all your friends' parents said "yes."
7. You try out for the soccer team but don't make it.
8. A trip your family has planned keeps getting canceled.
9. You forget your lunch at home.
10. Your brother gets a bigger dish of ice cream than you do.

2. Bible Story Extension

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: Bible, foam or plastic plates, prepared snow dough, spray bottle of vinegar, trash bag, hand-wipes

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give each kid a golf-ball-size amount of snow dough on a plate.
- Invite them to form the dough into the shape of a marshmallow then place it back on their plate.
- Distribute hand wipes for clean up if needed.
- Read Proverbs 14:29 aloud to the group.
- Ask:
 - What does this verse describe as benefits that might come with being a patient person?
 - How would you describe a person who has great “understanding”? What about someone who is foolish? (*Clarify that being “foolish” doesn’t mean that someone isn’t smart. This verse is referring to those who repeatedly make unwise or bad choices.*)
 - When we’re in a situation that tests our patience, what consequences might be avoided if we choose to *RESPOND* with patience instead of *REACT* in anger?
- Invite one of the kids to share a situation when they are tempted to get impatient, angry, or frustrated. It can be as simple as a family member dominating the TV remote or as frustrating as being teased by a kid at school.
- Ask the other kids to push their plates forward toward the center of the circle if they, too, would have a hard time being patient in the situation that kid described.
- Ask the kids (particularly those who pushed their plates forward) to suggest what wise choices would look like in situations like the one their friend described.
 - What would be a “foolish” response to this situation?
 - What would be a response that shows great understanding or wisdom?
 - How does patience help diffuse or melt away anger when we’re feeling impatient?
- After a brief discussion, give the squirt bottle of vinegar to the kid who shared, then direct them to spray a mist of vinegar directly onto the snow dough marshmallow on their plate (only theirs).
 - The vinegar will react with the baking soda and dissolve the dough.
- Remind kids that it can be tough to stop and think, wait patiently, and make right choices. But God can help them grow in patience with every situation they face.
- Direct everyone to pull their plates back in front of them then choose another kid to take a turn sharing something that is hard to handle with calmness and patience.
- Repeat the discussion above allowing each kid a turn to share and use the vinegar to spray their marshmallow.
- ***[Make it Personal] Share an age-appropriate example of a time you got impatient then ended up doing or saying something foolish that you regretted. Invite the kids to suggest ways you could have done things differently to bring about a better outcome.***
- Gather up the plates and dough, then place them in a trash bag to clean up.

3. Discussion Questions

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

Ask:

- In what ways was Jesus an example of patience?
- Why is it harder to be patient with certain people than with others?
- If you know that someone is difficult for you to be around without losing your patience, what can you do to prepare yourself ahead of time so you don't react by saying or doing something you know you shouldn't?
- Does the fact that patience is a fruit of the Spirit change how you see patience?
- How can patience help you in your relationship with Jesus?

4. Verses to Take with You

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bibles, pens, scissors, “Patience Sandwich” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Give each kid a Bible.
- Direct kids to look up and read Psalm 27:14 using the Bible Navigations tips below.

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Our verse is from Psalms. Ask kids to tell you whether that's in the Old Testament or the New Testament. (*Old*) So we know it's toward the front of the Bible then near the middle. When they find Psalms, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Tell them to find chapter 27. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell them to then find verse 14 in chapter 27.

- Give each kid a “Patience Sandwich” Activity Page and a pen.
- Ask kids to write out the first line of the verse on the top of the sandwich, the next part in the middle, and the last portion on the bottom bun.
- Invite kids to explain if they would agree or disagree with the following statements and why:
 - Waiting for the Lord means sitting and praying or reading your Bible. (*We should always talk to God and learn what the Bible teaches us, but we can actively wait for the Lord by using our waiting time to do something kind and show God's love through our actions.*)
 - Patient is a gift from God's Spirit. When we follow Jesus, we can grow in patience. If you agree, what are some ways we learn to be patient? (*ask God's help, take a deep breath to give yourself time to respond wisely, pray for the person or problem that is annoying you*)
- Give each kid a pair of scissors.
- Ask kids to fold their paper into thirds (this doesn't need to be exact).
- Direct kids to unfold their paper and cut along both lines of the folds, stopping about 1-inch from the top on both sides of the paper (again, this doesn't need to be exact).
- Tell kids to hold one edge of their paper in their left hand and the other edge in their right hand.
- Explain that when you say, “Go,” kids will pull their paper apart on the two sides to create three separate pieces.
- Ask the kids to predict where they think the middle section of paper will land on the floor. (*Note: This is a trick question since the papers will most likely only tear into two pieces and nothing will fall to the floor.*)
- Say, “Go,” and direct kids to pull apart their papers.
- Ask:
 - Did you expect the middle of the paper to fall? Were you surprised that it didn't?
 - Sometimes things don't go exactly as we expect or want them to go. Situations like that can make us feel impatient. When that happens, what can you do that will help you be strong and not lose hope?
- Recite Psalm 27:14 together one more time to help everyone remember it.
- Encourage kids when they begin to lose patience this week to remember to take a slow breath and say a quick prayer. It will give them time to think about what they should say and do. Remind them that they have the power to make a situation better instead of worse.

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

[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:

- Teach kids the signs for WAIT and WISE.

- WISE — <https://bit.ly/3RwWJYL>



- WAIT — <https://bit.ly/3RQGNSs>



- Allow kids to practice the signs a few times.
- As you close in prayer, invite kids to respond with the appropriate sign whenever you say the words WISE or WAIT (or WAITING).

What You Say:

“Dear God, You know how hard it is sometimes for us to WAIT. We get impatient when we must WAIT in line, WAIT for dinner, or WAIT for our turn in a game. We ask that You help us make WISE responses and not foolish reactions that hurt others and us. Give us the ability to WAIT for You with patience for the things we want now. Remind us this week that WAITING can make us WISE.

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.)

Story Exploration – No supplies

1. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need:

- Print “Hot Dog” Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, one card for each kid
- Masking or painter’s tape
- Mustard bottle
- Ketchup bottle

2. Bible Story Extension

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need:

- Bible
- Foam or plastic dinner plate; one for each kid
- Spray bottle containing 1 cup of vinegar; one for each Small Group
- Hand-wipes
- Trash bag
- Before group time, prepare snow-dough by combining the following ingredients for every 8-10 kids. (If dough is too sticky, add more baking soda in small amounts. If dough is too flaky and doesn't stick together, add more shaving cream.)
 - 1 lb. box of baking soda
 - ¾ to 1 can of shaving cream

3. Discussion Questions

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need:

- No supplies needed.

4. Verses to Take with You

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need:

- Print “Patience Sandwich” Activity Page on paper, one for each kid
- Bibles; one for each kid

- Pens; one for each kid
- Scissors; one for each kid

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

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

What You Need:

- No supplies needed
- Before group time, familiarize yourself with the ASL for “Wise” and “Wait”:
 - WISE -- <https://bit.ly/3RwWJYL>
 - WAIT -- <https://bit.ly/3RQGNSs>

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**