

## 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 Key Question:** What could you miss out on by not waiting?

**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 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. 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.

### **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**

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. Take a Snapshot

### [Live for God | Application Activity]

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

**What You Need:** Index cards, pens

#### **What You Do:**

- Give each kid two index cards and a pen.
- Ask the kids to come up with two situations during which it would be wise to think twice and not act out of impulse or impatience.
  - One idea should be more serious or important and the other can be just plain silly. (For example: stealing something is serious; eating dirt, not so much, but both are worth thinking twice about before actually doing it.)
- If needed, write additional ideas such as the ones listed below on index cards and add them to the mix:
  - Eating a frozen drink too fast resulting in a “brain freeze”
  - Cheating on a test
  - Hitting the snooze button
  - Making fun of someone
  - Telling a secret
  - Eating a worm
  - Juggling knives
  - Gossiping
  - Over-eating
  - Starting a fight
  - Walking a tight rope
  - Crossing a street
- Tell kids to write their ideas on separate index cards without letting others know what they wrote.
- Collect the cards and shuffle them together.
- Choose a kid to go first.
- Lead that kid to draw a card and act out the situation without speaking as the remaining kids guess the scenario.
- Let the kid who guesses correctly go next, or if no one guesses in a timely manner, invite the kid acting to reveal what’s on the card then choose someone to go next.
- Add variety by challenging kids to begin acting out what’s written on the card in slow motion then progressively going faster and faster.
- Continue until all cards have been acted out.
- Invite kids to share about actual times when they took a moment to think twice, ask for God’s help, and respond wisely as well as times when they didn’t. ***[Make it Personal] Include yourself in this discussion by sharing an appropriate example of patience or impatience and how those actions played out.***

## 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, spoons

#### What You Do:

- Sit in a circle.
- Place the spoons (one less spoon than the number of kids) in the middle of the circle within reach of all the kids.
- Explain to the kids that you'll read Genesis 25:27-34—today's Bible story about Esau's impatience.
  - Whenever you pause, kids must quickly grab a spoon. There is one less spoon than there are kids in the circle.
  - Whoever is left without a spoon will be asked, "Why might it have been wise to think twice?" In other words, what were the choices someone was faced with? What could have led to a bad decision? Was there a moment of impatience?
  - If they think someone should have paused to think twice, tell them it's okay if they don't have ideas for each time you pause or if some verses have more than one "think twice moment."
- As you read the story, pause at random places (particularly where there was a situation in which it would have been easy to get impatient, frustrated, or tempted to do something impulsive that person might later regret).
- As you ask the kid without a spoon to reflect, suggest they imagine themselves being part of the story and consider what people might have been thinking and feeling.
- When finished reading, discuss the story together.
  - Why do you think Esau was willing to give away his first-born rights so easily?
  - We don't have the same rights to give away, and lentil soup isn't something any of us would sacrifice so much for, but are there things that we have a hard time waiting for?
  - Esau lost out big time. What can we lose out on when we only think about getting what we want right now?
- Remind kids that we can't always choose what happens to us, but we can choose our responses. When we think twice, we have a better chance of doing what is wise rather than getting upset with what's happening in the moment.
- Continue the discussion.
  - What are some situations when kids your age are tempted to make an impulsive choice?
  - What can you do to not end up in an "Esau Moment"?
  - There's no PAUSE or REWIND button in real life, but what can you do to make things right or even just better after you've made a choice without thinking it through?
  - If you follow Jesus, how can pausing in a situation help you hear the Holy Spirit?
  - How do your actions in any situation reflect your relationship with God?

### 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:**

- What are the signs that you're about to lose your patience? Why might it be helpful to know those signs?
- What can you do to be ready the next time you feel yourself getting impatient?
- Why do you think waiting can be hard for us?
- What are some situations you really want to do better at when it comes to waiting and thinking twice before you act?
- Do you think anyone has ever regretted being patient?
- Patience is a fruit of the Spirit. Does that change how you see patience?
- Why do you think patience is a fruit of the Spirit?
- How does having patience reflect a relationship with Christ?

## 4. Verses to Take with You

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

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

**What You Need:** Bibles, “Better Think Twice” Activity Page

### What You Do:

- Invite kids to look up and read James 1:19 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

**Finding verses with 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders:** Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

- Ask:
  - What do you think it means to be *quick to listen*? What about *slow to speak*? How about *slow to anger*?
  - How can James 1:19 help us think twice?
- Lead kids to get into groups of three or four.
- Give each team a Bible to look up James 1:19.
- Give groups some time to help each other memorize James 1:19.
- After a few moments to look up and work on remembering the verse, give each group an even amount of the “Better Think Twice” scenario cards and ask them to work together to come up with the following for each scenario:
  - One “Easy Esau Option”—a quick-fix-response that might feel good at the time but would have negative consequences later.
  - Two “Better Think Twice Options”—responses that follow God’s advice in James 1:19 and wait for what’s best.
- When finished, bring groups together and let them share what they came up with.
- Challenge kids to choose one of the scenarios they resonate with the most.
- Encourage the kids to avoid the “Easy Esau Options” as they wait for things.
- Remind kids that when we follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live inside us. Patience is a gift from God’s Spirit that grows in us as we follow Jesus.

## 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:

- Lead kids in a responsive prayer.
- Invite kids to pray their answers out loud (if comfortable) or silently as you pause throughout the prayer.
- Say:
  - God, today I learned that . . .
  - God, please help me remember . . .
  - God, please forgive me for . . .
  - God, please help me think twice before I get impatient with . . .
- Lead a prayer to close out the group.

#### What You Say:

"Dear God, we have learned a lot about patience today. Now it's time to put what we've learned into practice. Please help us remember to think twice before we act. Give us the strength to wait for what is best and not settle for something we will regret later. We know that patience is fueled by faith and the power of the Holy Spirit, so help us trust You as we wait. In Your name we pray, Amen."



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

**What You Need:**

- Index cards, two for each kid
- Pens

#### 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
- Spoons; one less than the number of kids in each Small Group

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

**What You Need:**

- Bibles; one for every 3-4 kids
- Print on paper and cut apart “Better Think Twice” Activity Page; one set for each Small Group

#### 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

### **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**