



**FOR LEADERS ONLY**

**GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN PATIENCE AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY**

Waiting is a part of life. Thankfully, we don't have to wait on our own. Through the Holy Spirit, God can help us experience the patience we need to wait well. After all, God is patient with us. God is in control and knows what's best for us. Even though God's people had been waiting for years for the promised Savior, at just the right time, God sent Jesus. Because we're created in God's image, we can reflect God's patience in our lives. We can be patient when we remember what God has done. We can lean on God's Holy Spirit to give us the strength we need to trust God and show patience with the difficult circumstances in our lives.

**CORE INSIGHT: The theological foundation for PATIENCE**

**Transformation** by the power of God's Spirit. God's Spirit is transforming my unique and imperfect life into the character of Jesus.

It can be difficult to find patience while you're waiting for something important—or even something that's not important. At its core, patience is about trust: trusting people to follow through . . . trusting that a process will run smoothly . . . and most of all, trusting that God has our best in mind and that God's timing is better than our own. Thankfully, as we follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit is helping us grow and transform to become more like Jesus. This transformation includes growing in our ability to trust that God will be with us while we wait. As we follow Jesus and trust God, we will grow in patience.

**PATIENCE is waiting until later for what you want now.**

**HEADS UP: IDEAS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU TALK ABOUT PATIENCE WITH KIDS**

First, areas where people struggle to show patience are subjective. For some, it could be extremely difficult to wait for something that another person might have no problem with at all. It's good for people working with kids not to belittle their experience with patience. We're all on a continuum of growth in this area. Show empathy and lead with love as kids share about their experience with showing patience while they wait. Some kids might even share some very difficult situations where they are waiting for resolution—such as their parents' divorce, unemployment, or illness. Be sure to have a plan for when kids share these sorts of situations. Take time outside of Small Group to have a follow-up conversation, and determine who else needs to know about the situation and how you'll follow up with them.

Patience can also be dependent upon where kids are developmentally. Preteens that are 10 or 11 years old might be able to wait longer because they've had more practice. Kindergarteners can only wait so long before they get distracted, start complaining, or rush to complete whatever they're waiting for. Have . . . patience with kids as they learn patience at their phase of development.

One last thing to keep in mind when it comes to patience: you may have kids in your environment that experience ADHD and struggle with impulse control. You may have other kids with a neurodivergence for whom waiting and demonstrating patience is extremely difficult—or perhaps even impossible. The way you talk about patience and what it means to show patience should be filled with grace for kids in situations where this will be a lifelong struggle. Don't equate a lack of faith as the reason they have difficulty waiting. This is not a faith issue, but rather a neuro-physiological issue over which they have little control.



# COOKOUT

It's worth the wait



WEEK  
**FOUR**  
APRIL 2024

LARGE GROUP  
**K-3**

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

## GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

### WEEK 4

We finish the month with a story found in **Luke 2:25-35**. God's people had been waiting for hundreds of years for the Savior. God promised Simeon that he'd get to see the Messiah before he died. We believe that Simeon waited a long time. But finally, when Mary and Joseph came to the temple with Baby Jesus, Simeon finally saw what he'd been waiting for.

Bottom Line: **God is with you while you wait.** We might have to wait for something small, like in a line at the ice cream stand . . . or we might have to wait for something big, like for a parent to get a new job. While it's true that patience is harder in some situations than others, we pray that kids will remember that they don't have to wait on their own. They can trust that God is with them while they wait.

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

#### I'm with You

Simeon Waits for the Messiah  
Luke 2:25-35

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Wait for the Lord. Be strong  
and don't lose hope. Wait  
for the Lord."  
Psalm 27:14, NIV

### MONTHLY VIRTUE

Patience—Waiting until later  
for what you want now

### BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

### STORY: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS (25 MINUTES)

#### 1. OPENER/CLOSER

##### WHAT YOU NEED:

- Host
- Two Small Group Leaders
- 12 kid volunteers
- Masking or gaffer's tape
- Four disposable aluminum trays (9"x13" or larger)
- Three large grilling spatulas
- Lots of brown, circle, disposable cork coasters that look like burgers
- Host's phone
- Bible

#### 3. BIBLE STORY

##### WHAT YOU NEED:

- Storyteller
- Bible
- Several different condiment containers that you'd associate with a cookout—ideally with lids that you can open (for example: ketchup, relish, barbecue sauce, pickles, bag of chips with a chip clip, soda or juice bottle, jar of grill spices, etc.)
- Table

##### MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS:

- Foghorn
- Ticking Clock
- Coins Jingling
- Footsteps
- Baby
- Fanfare



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25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

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Simeon Waits for the Messiah  
Luke 2:25-35

## TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you while you wait.

## MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**"Wait for the Lord. Be strong  
and don't lose hope. Wait  
for the Lord."**  
Psalm 27:14, NIRV

## MONTHLY VIRTUE

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## BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

## LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS KIDS ENTER.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**

Host enters.

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME**

## OPENER

**HOST:** "Well, hello, my friends! I'm so happy to be here with you all today. If you're glad you're here, give me a thumbs-up! (*Demonstrate.*) This month, we've been talking about patience.

**SLIDE: VIRTUE**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME TRANSITION TO VIRTUE**

"Patience is **waiting until later for what you want now.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): VIRTUE TRANSITION TO THEME**

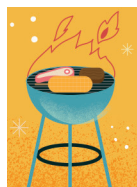
"Raise your hand if you think it's really easy to wait. (*Pause for response.*) I see. Not a lot of hands. I agree. I think it's tough to wait for something that you really want, or something that you hope will happen. But in those times when we have to wait, God's Spirit can help us have patience.

"I've been patiently waiting all month to play this really fun game with you, and it's finally time to play. This is another awesome cookout game that I like to call 'Burger Up!'

*Hold up one of the spatulas and a few of the disposable/cork coasters.*

"I don't know if any of you have cooked burgers before, but when one of the burgers is done, it's fun to say, 'Burger up!' . . . and then serve it to your guest. It's especially fun to do it like this.

"Burger up!



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*Use the spatula to toss the coaster high into the air. Try to catch the coaster.*

"We have two teams for this game—this side of the room versus this side. (*Indicate the two sides of the room, and the taped dividing line.*)

"I'll need one leader from each team . . . and five other players from each team. Raise your hand if you want to play.

*Bring up a leader from each team, and five kids from each team.*

*Give each of the two leaders a disposable aluminum tray.*

"All right. Leaders, you can stand over there on the X and get ready to catch some 'burgers.' (*Reference the two taped X marks.*)

*Set the tray for each team—each with a spatula and several disposable/cork coasters—next to the tape line for that team.*

(*To the kids on each team*) "Teammates, you will take turns using the spatula to flip the 'burgers' backward, over your shoulder, for your leader to catch. (*Demonstrate.*) Each time you flip a burger, you'll shout . . . (*Pause for response.*) 'Burger up!' You just need to make sure to stay behind the line. (*Reference the tape line for each team.*)

"Leaders, you'll wait patiently for the flying burgers to come your way, and then you'll try to catch them in your tray. You can move around, but try to come back to the X after each burger toss. That way your teammates will know where you'll be.

"After one minute of flipping burgers, we'll stop the clock and see which team has successfully caught MORE burgers in their tray. Are we ready to get started? (*To audience*) Audience, are you ready to cheer for your teammates? Then let's GO!

**AUDIO: FUN MUSIC**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (60-SECOND VERSION)**

*If you're not using an on-screen countdown, set a timer on your phone for 60 seconds.*

*Comment on the action as the kids flip the "burgers" toward their leaders. Make sure the teammates are taking turns flipping, and that they go in order so everyone has a turn. Celebrate big if/when a leader catches a burger in their tray.*

*Depending on how many coasters you have, you may need to let the team retrieve some of the missed coasters if they run out.*

*When time's up, find out how many burgers each team caught. Celebrate both teams, collect the supplies, and dismiss the contestants to their seats.*

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**

"Great job, teams! That was really fun. You are some expert burger-flippers . . . and burger-catchers. Let's give all of our volunteers a hand as they head back to their seats. And let's all get ready to sing and worship God together. Everybody up!"



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## WORSHIP

*Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** "Yes, up on your feet. Stretch a little bit. Move to the side and touch your feet. Reach up tall. Today, let's use everything we have to praise God—our hands, our feet, our words, and our energy . . . but most of all, our hearts. Let's worship God with this song, 'All to You.' Sing with me.

**AUDIO:** "ALL TO YOU / TRACK 1 FROM MY LIFE FOR YOU

**OPTIONAL VIDEO:** "ALL TO YOU" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO

"That's so good! We will follow God today, tomorrow, and always. We'll choose to live every day for God. Before we continue in worship, let's watch this.

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE):** LIVE LOUD VIDEO FROM GET REEL

"This month has been so good in challenging us to have patience. Waiting on God is always worth it. As David wrote in Psalm 40:1-3: 'I was patient while I waited for the Lord. He turned to me and heard my cry for help. . . . He gave me a new song to sing. It is a hymn of praise to our God.' (NIRV) Let's give our praise to God right now. Sing this with me, everybody."

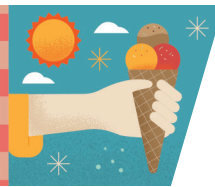
**AUDIO:** "KEEP ON WAITING" / TRACK 4 FROM MY LIFE FOR YOU

**OPTIONAL VIDEO:** "KEEP ON WAITING" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO



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## BIBLE STORY

**SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND**

*Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

### SETTING UP THE STORY

**STORYTELLER:** "Hi, everyone! Today's story comes from the book of Luke, in the Bible. (*Hold up Bible.*) The book of Luke is one of the four Gospels that tell the story of Jesus' life.

*Move behind the table with the condiment jars/containers.*

"I've brought some of these cookout containers to help me tell you the story. When I open one, you'll hear a sound effect. Here, let's try it.

*Open a condiment jar/container.*

**AUDIO: FOGHORN**

"Excellent!

*Replace the lid (after the sound is over).*

"Now, before we get into this story, we need to go all the way back to the beginning to understand everything that happened before. You see, in the very beginning, God created an amazing and wonderful world. But before long, people turned away from God. They didn't want to do what God told them to do. They chose their own way instead, and the world was broken. Still, God loved people. God had a plan to make things right.

"God chose one man, Abraham, and promised to bless the whole world through his family. Abraham's family became known as the Israelites. Over and over, they turned away from God. Then they were attacked and even taken captive. But through it all, God never turned away from the Israelite people. God sent prophets who shared messages from God. Through these prophets, God promised to send a Savior . . . a Rescuer . . . when the time was right.

*Open a condiment jar/container.*

**AUDIO: TICKING CLOCK**

*Replace the lid (after the sound is over).*

### GOD'S PEOPLE WAIT

**STORYTELLER:** "God's people, the Israelites, waited for hundreds of years. During that time, they were being ruled by other nations. When the Romans took over, the Jewish people were finally allowed to worship God . . . but they had to pay lots of taxes to Rome.

*Open a condiment jar/container.*

**AUDIO: COINS JINGLING**



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*Replace the lid (after the sound is over).*

"During all that time, there was no recorded word from God. Still, many of God's people waited and hoped for God to send the promised Savior."

## SIMEON WAITS

**STORYTELLER:** "One of the people who was still trusting and waiting on God was a man named Simeon. We read in the book of Luke:

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:25 (NirV) and read.*

*He [Simeon] was a good and godly man. He was waiting for God's promise to Israel to come true. (NirV)*

"Simeon was waiting.

*Open a condiment jar/container.*

### AUDIO: TICKING CLOCK

*Replace the lid (after the sound is over).*

"But listen to this.

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:25-26 (NirV) and read.*

*The Holy Spirit was with him. The Spirit had told Simeon that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. (NirV)*

"We don't really know how long it took for Simeon to get to see this amazing promise come true. But we do know that it didn't happen right away. Simeon had to wait . . . and wait . . . and wait some more."

*Open a condiment jar/container.*

### AUDIO: TICKING CLOCK

*Replace the lid (after the sound is over).*

## SIMEON MEETS JESUS

**STORYTELLER:** "Finally, one day, God's Spirit led Simeon into the temple courtyard.

*Open a condiment jar/container.*

### AUDIO: FOOTSTEPS

"When Simeon got there, who do you think he saw? (Pause for response.) Yes—Baby Jesus!



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*Open a condiment jar/container.*

**AUDIO: BABY**

*Replace the lid (after the sound is over).*

"At this time, Jesus was only eight days old. Mary and Joseph had brought Him to the temple so they could dedicate Him to God.

"Imagine what this moment must have been like for Simeon! He held Jesus in his arms . . .

*Open a condiment jar/container.*

**AUDIO: BABY**

*Replace the lid (after the sound is over).*

". . . and he praised God. He said:

*Open the Bible to Luke 2:29-32 (NIRV) and read, while looking up, with your other arm outstretched.*

*"Lord, you are the King over all.*

*Now let me, your servant, go in peace.*

*That is what you promised.*

*My eyes have seen your salvation.*

*You have prepared it in the sight of all nations.*

*It is a light to be given to the Gentiles.*

*It will be the glory of your people Israel." (NIRV)*

"What Simeon was saying was that Jesus is God's Messiah . . . and that Jesus had come to rescue not only Jewish people, but everyone, everywhere!

*Open a condiment jar/container.*

**AUDIO: FANFARE**

*Replace the lid (after the sound is over).*

"Simeon blessed Mary and Joseph. He told Mary once again that Jesus had been sent by God."

*Move in front of the table as you wrap up.*

## WRAPPING UP THE STORY

**STORYTELLER:** "When Jesus grew up, He taught people about God and healed people who were sick. Many people would love and follow Jesus. But many would not. In the end, Jesus would die and give up His life for all of us . . . and then come back to life!





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"Back when Simeon met Jesus, he didn't know exactly how the story would unfold. But he did know that Jesus was the Savior God had promised. Simeon knew that all of his waiting had been worth it!

"This story reminds us of something important:

*SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE*

**"God is with you while you wait.**

"God was with Simeon while HE waited. God is with us when we have to wait too. Let's pray."

*SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND*

## PRAY

**STORYTELLER:** "Dear God, thank You so much for the story of Simeon. Simeon trusted Your promise to send a Savior . . . and he waited patiently because, God, You were with him. We know that You can help us to be patient, just like You helped Simeon. You are with us always, and **we can trust You no matter what.** We are so thankful for that! We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."



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## CLOSER

*Host enters as Storyteller exits.*

**HOST:** "I don't know about you, but I want to have the kind of patience Simeon had. Simeon knew that God had promised to send a Savior, but he had to wait a long time—probably years and years—for God's promise to come true. God's people, the Israelites, had already been waiting for hundreds of years for God's words to be fulfilled.

"Through all that time, though, God had a plan. And when the time was right, God sent Jesus to be our Savior. After all those years of waiting, Simeon was able to hold Jesus in his arms!

"There might be things that you're waiting for right now. Or maybe you can think about a time when you had to wait for something in the past. But here's what I want you to remember: you never have to wait alone.

**SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE**

**"God is with you while you wait.**

Share a brief, kid-appropriate example of a time when you had to wait, but you were able to wait patiently because God was with you.

*(Hold up Bible.)* "As we look back at God's Big Story, we see how God promised to bless the whole world through Abraham's family. God's promise came true when Jesus was born! Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and then came back to life. Today, we can know that God is with us, through anything we might face in life. And we can know that everything will be made right in the end for those who follow Jesus.

"Remember, patience is something that God's Holy Spirit can create in us. With the help of God's Spirit, we can be patient while we have to wait. That's something that other people will be able to see in us, and they'll know that it comes from our faith in Jesus.

"Let's head to Small Group now and talk about this really good news (*reference the screen*)—that God is with us while we wait!"

*Dismiss kids to their small groups.*

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**