



**PRETEEN**

APRIL 2024

## 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.



WEEK  
**TWO**  
APRIL 2024

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

PRELUDE      SOCIAL      STORY      WORSHIP      GROUPS      HOME

## GETTING READY

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

### WEEK 2

Key Question: **What could you miss out on by not waiting?** We will face times when we have a choice between what's good and what's best. We might rush to take the good because we don't want to keep waiting for what's best. Yet it's in those moments when we might miss out on something really great. We pray that kids will learn how to wait with the future in mind. God has something amazing planned for them if they learn to have patience.

For week 2, we turn to **Genesis 25:24-34**, where we find one of the best examples of what happens when someone is not patient—the story of Esau. After a hunting trip, Esau was exhausted and hungry! And wouldn't you know, his brother Jacob had a pot of stew cooking on the fire. Jacob took advantage of this situation and offered a bowl in exchange for Esau's inheritance. Turns out, Esau couldn't resist. He lost something extremely valuable, all because he was impatient.

Bottom Line: **When you think you can't wait, think twice.** Through the story of Esau, we pray that kids will discover why it's important to have patience and wait. We will face moments when we want to rush and take the first choice that comes our way, but that might not be God's best for us. We pray that kids will discover that when they wait, they can experience something even better than they can imagine.

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

### MONTHLY VIRTUE

Patience—Waiting until later for what you want now

### BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice.

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

### 1. WELCOME/OPENER

#### WHAT YOU NEED:

- Host
- 5 kid volunteers
- 5 adult volunteers
- 5 chairs
- 6 cups
- Table
- Extension cord
- Blender
- Tasty smoothie ingredients like banana, apple, milk, ice
- Gross smoothie ingredients like raw onion, mustard, hummus, sour skittles
- Trashcan
- Paper towels or wet wipes

### 3. COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

#### WHAT YOU NEED:

- Communicator
- Bible
- 2 kid volunteers
- 3 donuts
- 2 plates
- Additional donuts for the volunteer playing Jacob (*Optional*)
- Wallet
- Scroll
- Crown



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**PRELUDE**      **SOCIAL**      **STORY**      **WORSHIP**      **GROUPS**      **HOME**

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

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### BASIC TRUTH

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## 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 STUDENTS ENTER.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

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

Host enters . . .

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

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

## WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game (The Masters Tournament), April Fool's Day, Easter Holiday, National Ferret Day, movie opening (The Ark and the Aardvark), a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

## OPENER

**HOST:** "Hello, hello, hello! Welcome to [Name of Environment]. When I come here to hang with all of you every week, I'm typically fully prepared for my job as Host. I comb my hair. I find matching shoes. I put on clean socks. And sometimes, I wear deodorant. However, today I forgot something critical. (dramatic pause) Breakfast.

*Move over to the table with the blender and ingredients.*

"I know you're worried about me skipping the most important meal of the day! Fear not, people. I can cook up something right here on the stage. Today, for breakfast I will be enjoying a refreshing, healthy, sweetly mixed smoothie! Anyone like smoothies? (Allow responses) Let me show you my World-Famous Smoothie Recipe.

*Have fun making a fruit smoothie with the blender. Make the smoothie about half full so additional ingredients can be added.*



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10 MINUTES

*After mixing things together, pour a bit into a cup and take a drink.*

“Wow! This is so good. My mom taught me that it’s rude to eat—or in this case, *drink*—in front of others. I realize there isn’t enough for everyone, but I can share with a few of our fantastic Small Group Leaders! They deserve a reward, right? They work so hard! In fact, let’s call up five Small Group Leaders to join in the festivities—and leaders, bring one other volunteer with you. The more the merrier!

*Invite five leaders to the stage even if they don’t indicate they want some smoothie. Confirm none of the leaders or kids have dietary restrictions.*

*Have the leaders sit in chairs with the kids standing behind them.*

“Sitting before you are some of the best volunteers on the planet. Each takes time out of their week to hang out with you, teach and talk through tough questions, and pour wisdom and understanding into your pre-teen brains.

“Seems only fitting that we pour back into them, right? It’s ‘Category Concoction’ time!

**SLIDE: “CATEGORY CONCOCTION”**

*Pour and set aside a small glass of the smoothie you just made—it’s the good tasting one.*

“The cup I just set aside contains a tasty smoothie—maybe even the tastiest smoothie of all time! One of our Leaders will get that smoothie while the others . . . let’s just say the others may get something a bit different.

“To play Category Concoction, I’ll select a category. Each kid, one at a time, will take turns saying an item from that category until someone can’t think of something or says something that doesn’t fit in the category.

“For example, a category could be ‘Things Found in a Lunch Box.’ One at a time, you’ll say things that fit that category . . . until someone can’t think of something! At that point, I will add something to the smoothie in the blender that’s . . . well . . . let’s just say that it’ll be a bit different than what you’d normally find in a smoothie.

*Pull out an onion and set it down on the table.*

“The kid who couldn’t think of something or said something that doesn’t fit the category is eliminated from the game—and his or her Small Group Leader must take a drink of the *new and improved* smoothie.

“After that, I’ll pick a new category, kids will think of things one at a time, and each time we get to the end, I’ll add a new ingredient! Make sense? Let’s play!

**AUDIO: UPBEAT GAME MUSIC**

*Select a category from the suggested list below or add your own that might be specific to your environment or location.*

*Add ingredients from the suggested list below after each round. To add a layer of surprise, pull the ingredients randomly out of a hat.*



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APRIL 2024

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25 MINUTES      10 MINUTES

*Declare a winner when all Small Group Leaders and volunteers have been eliminated, leaving only one to drink the untouched smoothie.*

**Suggested Categories**

- Names that start with the letter S
- Sports
- Types of instruments
- Books in the Bible
- Words that describe worms
- Sweet foods
- Things you'd find at an amusement park
- Presidents of the United States

**Suggested Ingredients to Add**

- Onions
- Cream cheese
- Ketchup
- Dijon mustard
- Hummus
- Sour Skittles
- Cooked tuna
- Pickles

"I think the Small Group Leaders need a huge round of applause for being such good sports!

*Lead applause for all volunteers.*

"I'm sure they would agree—that winning smoothie was worth the wait!"

"After seeing that, I feel like I can skip smoothies for some time. Everybody get on your feet and get ready to sing really loudly and worship God!"

*Host exits as Worship Leader enters.*



WEEK  
**TWO**  
APRIL 2024

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10 MINUTES

## WORSHIP

*Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** "Hi, everyone! I'm so glad you came today. Right, now we get to praise God for being so incredible and amazing, all the time. Let's have a party singing God's praises. Come on!"

**AUDIO:** "SING YOUR PRAISE" / TRACK 2 FROM MY LIFE FOR YOU

**OPTIONAL VIDEO:** "SING YOUR PRAISE" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO

"I love it when we praise God together! Before we continue in worship, let's watch this.

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

"It's so good to know that God can help us to be patient. God loves us, and God is WITH us—always. **[Basic Truth] We can trust God no matter what!** Let's sing this new song that we learned last week, 'Keep On Waiting.' Here we go.

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

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

"We can wait confidently on God, because God has proven over and over again to be faithful. As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:9: 'God is faithful. He has chosen you to share life with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.' (NirV) Let's lean in today as we sing this next song in worship. Let's thank God for being so faithful and good. Sing with me."

**AUDIO:** "YOU ARE FAITHFUL" / TRACK 6 FROM THIS LOVE

**OPTIONAL VIDEO:** "YOU ARE FAITHFUL" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO





WEEK  
**TWO**  
APRIL 2024

LARGE GROUP  
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PRELUDE      SOCIAL      **STORY**      WORSHIP      GROUPS      HOME

25 MINUTES

## COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

### INTRODUCTION

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Hello, everyone! I'm excited to be with you today, and I'll be honest, I get a little impatient waiting for this time to arrive. I love it, and I absolutely *do NOT* love waiting.

"Waiting can be difficult! I wonder if any of you have trouble waiting for something you really want—like donuts.

*Pull out a donut and show it to the audience.*

"The perfect food. The donut. A deep-fried, puffed pastry that no one can resist. How many of you love donuts? (*Allow response*) I love donuts, too. When I see or smell a donut, my brain tells my body to get that donut in my belly right now!

*Shove the whole donut in your mouth. (Or take a huge bite)*

*Take a moment to finish, then continue.*

"I know. I have a problem.

"I know I'm not the only one with this issue. Lots of people love donuts! I'm sure a lot of you want to eat a donut right now. Am I right? Some of you, though, might have the self-control to wait to eat one later. Is there anyone who'd say you love donuts but you could wait to eat it later?

*Both volunteers need to be boys; they'll be needed for the story later.*

*Choose a boy who says he could wait to eat the donut. After confirming they have no food allergies, put a donut on a plate and hand the plate to the volunteer.*

*Then have the volunteer stand off to one side of the stage.*

*Pull out another donut and show this one to the audience like before.*

"Sure you don't want it? It's right there. Just waiting. To be eaten. (*pause*) No? I am super-impressed!

"So, here's proof that some can resist a donut sitting right in front of their face! Are there any kids in the audience who would say it would be humanly impossible to delay the consumption of a donut if it's sitting before you? (*Allow response*) That's what I thought!"

*Choose another boy who couldn't wait to eat a donut. After confirming they have no food allergies, put a donut on a plate and hand the plate to the volunteer.*

*Give a thumbs up and wait for the volunteer to eat the donut.*

*When finished, have the volunteer stand next to the first, off to one side of the stage.*



WEEK  
**TWO**  
APRIL 2024

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

## TENSION

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Out of these two volunteers, which one do you think made the easier decision? (*Allow responses*) Interesting. Maybe it was an easy decision for [Name of First Volunteer] to *not* eat one. Maybe that choice wasn't hard at all.

"However, when holding something tempting in your hand, (*point to volunteers*) like a donut, it might be more difficult to resist—or more difficult to wait. This is true for us in all kinds of situations, isn't it? It's easy to try to do what you want right when you want to do it.

"Most of the time it's harder to wait.

"Is it ever better to just wait? Is it better to wait *all* the time? When are times in life when the best choice is to wait instead of acting immediately? More than that, what are you giving up by impulsively acting now instead of pausing and waiting for a little bit?

"Great questions—and maybe ones that don't have a clear-cut answer. It's a good thing we've got a starting point.

*Hold up the Bible.*

"This book has all kinds of wisdom when wrestling with tough questions. We'll be taking a look at two brothers today—and one of those brothers is pretty impatient. Might sound a bit familiar.

(*To the two donut volunteers*) "Mind sticking around for a bit to help tell the story? Great!"

## TRUTH

**COMMUNICATOR:** "After God created the entire world—animals, plants, planets, and people—He saw that it was good. The people, however, had a different idea. Sin made its entrance, and people started making a fine mess of things.

"They turned away from God. Forgot about God's love. People argued, fought, and lived in strife. They were getting more and more sin-sick. They needed help and rescue. But even though people had turned their backs on God, God did not turn away from them.

"God knew the world needed to be rescued. So God began a rescue plan through a man named Abraham. After years and years of waiting, Abraham and his wife, Sarah, had a son named Isaac. After Isaac grew up, he and his wife, Rebekah, also had to wait for a family. Twenty years after they got married, God blessed Isaac and Rebekah with twin boys, Jacob and Esau.

"This is where our story begins, and this is where (*point to the volunteers*) I'll need your help!

*Choose the volunteer still holding the donut to serve as Jacob and the volunteer who ate their donut to represent Esau.*

*Hand "Esau" a wallet and a scroll and place a crown on his head.*

(*Referencing the Esau volunteer*) "This is Esau. Everybody say, 'Hi Esau!'"





WEEK  
**TWO**  
APRIL 2024

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

PRELUDE      SOCIAL      **STORY**      WORSHIP      GROUPS      HOME

25 MINUTES

“Esau was born first. When this (*pat the volunteer’s head*) adorable bundle of joy arrived, they noticed he was flushed red. And he was also extremely hairy.

“Right on the heels of Esau, literally, came (*referencing the Jacob volunteer*) his twin brother, Jacob.

“While these brothers had the same mom and dad, they were super-different from each other! Esau was a skillful hunter. With a bow (*indicate for the volunteer to strike a pose*) or a slingshot (*indicate again*), he was a crack shot. In the wild, Esau knew how to handle weapons and sneak up on prey. Jacob, though, was good at different things. Jacob stayed close to home and knew his way around the kitchen, whipping up amazing food. (*Indicate to the volunteer to mime cooking*)

“Obviously, parents shouldn’t have favorite kids, but each parent had a number one in this household. Isaac loved his son Esau most, because of all the wild game he hunted and brought home. Meanwhile, Rebekah loved Jacob.

“On one day, Esau came home from a hunt extremely hungry.

*Point out that the Esau volunteer is without a donut.*

“Hmm. No donut. When he arrived, Esau found his brother, Jacob, cooking up something.

*Point out that the Jacob volunteer is holding a donut.*

“Hmm. He has a donut. Now, the Bible says that Jacob was cooking up a stew . . . but for today, we’ll tell the story with a donut. Either way, Esau’s stomach was growling.

“Esau spotted the food and said,

*Open the Bible to Genesis 25:30 (NirV) and read.*

*“Quick! I’m very hungry! Let me have some of that red stew!”*

“Or, in our story: ‘Give me that donut!’ (*have the volunteer act this out a bit*)

“Esau wanted desperately to eat the food Jacob had. His stomach was not going to wait.

“Jacob, though, saw an opportunity.

*Open the Bible to Genesis 25:31 (NirV) and read.*

*“Jacob replied, ‘First sell me the rights that belong to you as the oldest son in the family.’”*

“Wow. Bold move. You see, during this time in history, the oldest son received a special honor called a birthright. It only went to the oldest son—not the youngest. When Esau’s father Isaac eventually passed away, Esau, as the oldest son, was set to receive a large portion of his family’s wealth (*point to the wallet*), land (*point to the scroll*), and become the leader of the whole family (*point to the crown*).

“The birthright was a huge deal, and it was something Esau had that Jacob wanted.



WEEK  
**TWO**  
APRIL 2024

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

“But because Esau was so hungry, he was horribly impatient. He wasn’t thinking about the future. He was thinking about what he wanted *right now*.

“Simply put, he didn’t want to wait. He wanted what Jacob was holding.

*Open the Bible to Genesis 25:32 (NIRV) and read.*

“*Look, I’m dying of hunger.” Esau said. “What good are those rights to me?”*”

“And with that, Esau traded his future wealth (*have him hand over the wallet to Jacob*), his land (*hand over the scroll*), and his future leadership of the family (*hand over the crown*) for some food.

“Esau traded his future for a donut.

*Have the Jacob volunteer give the donut to the Esau volunteer.*

“Not caring or realizing what he had just done, Esau ate.”

*After the Esau volunteer eats the donut, thank both volunteers as they head to their seats.*

## APPLICATION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Impatience. It will make what you think you want now, way more important than what you know you’ll have later.

“Even though Esau and Jacob were twins, Esau was born first. Because of this, Esau was entitled to the birthright. This inheritance was nothing you would ever sell. Ever. For any price.

“The only downside was that the firstborn had to wait to get it.

“And in our story, Esau didn’t want to wait. All because he was hungry. Doesn’t seem like an even trade, does it?

“The lasting benefits of his rights as the firstborn son were handed over for a bowl of stew! Sure, Esau was hungry—maybe even really hungry. But let’s be real. Esau was not in danger of actually starving. Esau could have easily prepared his own meal without Jacob’s help . . . and without giving up his whole birthright!

“Because of Esau’s impulsive decision, more was lost than just that. Many bad things happened, including a lot of fighting within the family.

“I believe it’s easy for us to listen to this story and think we would never be so impulsive. But each one of us can easily fall into the same trap. Racing through homework just to get it done, instead of taking the time to understand it, which can help you not fail a test later.

“Sitting on the bench on your school team and not starting or not getting a ton of playing time. You might just quit—instead of sticking it out, practicing, and getting better.



WEEK  
**TWO**  
APRIL 2024

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

PRELUDE      SOCIAL      STORY      WORSHIP      GROUPS      HOME

25 MINUTES

“Regardless of how you need to exercise patience, waiting is hard! Regardless of your age, it’s something we have to constantly work on. Don’t forget what happens when we follow Jesus. God sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in us to help us. All we must do is ask God for assistance in those situations when we think we just can’t wait one more minute.”

**LANDING**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “By going to God, it could keep you from losing something valuable, or it can help you wait a little longer for something better. As you head to your Small Groups, think about this:

**SLIDE: KEY QUESTION**

**“What could you miss out on by not waiting?”** It’s probably not going to be your inheritance like Esau, but it might just be something significant and meaningful in your life. As we head off, let’s pray together to ask God for help being patient and learning to wait.”

**SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND**

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.*

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

**SLIDE: THEME**

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