



WEEK FOUR – APRIL 2024 – PRETEEN

Bible Story: *Simeon Waits for the Messiah | Luke 2:25-35*

Key Question: *What are you waiting for right now?*

Memory Verse: *“Wait for the LORD. Be strong + don’t lose hope. Wait for the LORD.” – Psalm 27:14*

Virtue: *Patience – Waiting until later for what you want now*

Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what*

Series Overview: 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. 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.

Key Question: What are you waiting for right now? As we finish our month talking about patience, we want to help preteens consider the current areas of life where they need patience. When we’re able to anticipate the moments when patience might be tricky, we can prepare and be ready to wait. We pray that kids will learn to trust God with each situation where they have to wait.

9:05 - 9:20 | 11:05 – 11:20 | EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

Opening Small Group Activity

Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: Smartphone timer; paper

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a fist bump or high five
- Challenge kids to a stare down to see who can stare at something the longest without blinking.
- Lead them to compete individually, with a partner, or as a group.
- Set a timer then begin.
- Continue with other challenges to see who can do them the longest.
 - Slow-Mo: tear a piece of paper the slowest without stopping.
 - Tongue Twister: say “Fried rice flies” as many times as you can.
 - Hold Up: hold outstretched arms out to the side.
 - Freeze Face: make a silly face and hold it without laughing.
 - Just a Minute: everyone remains seated then stands when they think it’s been EXACTLY 60 seconds.

What You Say:

“Did some of those challenges test your patience? Waiting can be hard! No one enjoys waiting, but with God’s help, we can learn to wait well. *[Transition]* **In Large Group, we’ll hear about a man who waited years and years for something. Talk about a patience workout! Even though it took a very long time, the wait was worth it.”**

9:20 - 9:45 | 11:15 – 11:45 | LARGE GROUP

Large Group Overview: 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.

9:45 – 10:05 | 11:45 – 12:05 | SMALL GROUP

Discussion Questions

[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Ask:
 - Describe a patient kid. Why is that kind of person more fun to be around than someone who is always impatient?
 - What would you say is the secret sauce or the main thing to remember when it comes to waiting well?
 - The next time you’re waiting for something longer than you’d like, think of yourself as a “waiter” in a restaurant. What can you do to help, encourage, or serve others as you wait?
 - Why can we have hope while we wait?

Verses to Take With You

[Hear From God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bibles

What You Do:

- Give Give each kid a Bible.
- Invite kids to look up Psalm 46:1 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.
 - ***Finding verses with 4th-5th 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.*
- Invite kids who would like to read the verse aloud.
- Then say it together several times.
- Ask:
 - What promise do you find in this verse?
 - In what ways does a test of your patience feel like a time of trouble?
 - How is God a refuge and strength when you're facing a situation that requires some patient waiting?
 - How can waiting teach us something or make us stronger?
 - How do we become stronger in our ability to wait well?
- Sit in a circle
- Ask one kid to stand in the middle of the circle and remain standing throughout the following game.
- Explain that two kids in the circle must always be standing along with the kid in the middle. (Decrease this to one kid if your group is small.)

- Kids in the circle can sit down and stand up as often as they want but can't stand for more than 5 seconds at a time.
- There is no particular order for when kids have to stand.
- Pause the game several times to give each kid a turn in the middle if they want it.
- After the game, lead kids in making some observations.
 - Staying focused was a crucial part of the game. How does Psalm 46:1 help you know what to focus on when you're waiting?
 - How can this game remind us that God is always with us?
 - When it's really hard to wait, who would you choose to have alongside you to encourage you to be patient?
 - What can you do to remember that God is with you as you wait?
- If time allows, practice saying Psalm 46:1 together by inviting kids to echo or repeat short portions of the verse from kid to kid until everyone has recited it.

Make It Personal With Prayer

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding + application

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Invite kids to share what they learned about patience this month in one sentence.
- Prompt them with some of the following ideas, if needed.
 - Waiting can make you wise. (Week 1)
 - When you think you can't wait, think twice. (Week 2)
 - When you have to wait, remember what's true. (Week 3)
 - God is with you while you wait. (Week 4)
- Invite kids to say a short prayer to thank God for helping them learn this month and for the kids sitting on both sides of them.

- Encourage those who would like to pray aloud to do so and the others to pray silently.
- When everyone has had time to pray, close with a final prayer.