

***UNIT  
GOAL:***  
**STUDENTS  
APPLY THE  
VIRTUE OF  
PATIENCE  
TO THEIR  
DAILY LIVES.**

# Patience

***TRUTH:***  
**PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE.**

***SLOGAN:***  
**PATIENCE IS WAITING  
UNTIL LATER FOR  
WHAT YOU WANT NOW.**

***BIBLE VERSE:***

**“BUT IF WE HOPE FOR WHAT WE DO  
NOT YET HAVE, WE WAIT FOR IT  
PATIENTLY.”  
ROMANS 8:25**



## LESSON 1: PATIENCE

### GOD KNOWS WHAT IS BEST FOR ME!

## Lesson Objective

God has an incredible plan for our lives, but we cannot/should not rush it.

## Materials Needed:

Prepare 8 large sheets of paper with the following headings up around the room: Baby, Preschooler, Elementary School, Middle School, High School, Young Adult, Adult, and Older Adult. Provide pencils/pens and post-it notes on the tables (Opening Activity), Paper to write their name, (*Option for younger kids-watch DVD Veggie Tales "Abe and the Big Promise"*).

## Scripture References

### Genesis 12:1-2

<sup>1</sup>The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. <sup>2</sup>"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

### Genesis 16:1-3

<sup>1</sup>Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; <sup>2</sup>so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her."

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. <sup>3</sup>So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife.

### Job 42:2

<sup>2</sup>"I know that you (God) can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted.

### Genesis 17:15-19

<sup>15</sup> God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. <sup>16</sup> I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

<sup>17</sup> Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?" <sup>18</sup> And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!"

<sup>19</sup> Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

### Genesis 21:8-13

<sup>8</sup> The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. <sup>9</sup> But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was

mocking, <sup>10</sup> and she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac."

<sup>11</sup> The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. <sup>12</sup> But God said to him, "Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. <sup>13</sup> I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring."

### **Jeremiah 29:11**

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

### **Exodus 13:17-18**

<sup>17</sup> When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." <sup>18</sup> So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle.

### **Deuteronomy 8:2-3**

<sup>2</sup> Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. <sup>3</sup> He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

### **Colossians 1:11**

<sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience,

### **Galatians 5:22**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance (patience), kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

### **Proverbs 3:5-6**

<sup>5</sup> "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup> in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

### **Psalms 145:15**

The eyes of all look to you (God), and you give them their food at the proper time.

### **Ecclesiastes 3:11**

<sup>11</sup> He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

### **Philippians 4:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

### **Colossians 3:12**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

### **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

<sup>1</sup> There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:

<sup>2</sup> a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,

<sup>3</sup> a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build,

<sup>4</sup> a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,

<sup>5</sup> a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,

<sup>6</sup> a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away,

<sup>7</sup> a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,

<sup>8</sup> a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

### **Hebrews 11:13-16**

<sup>13</sup> All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. <sup>14</sup> People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

## **Opening Activity**

Milestones-Prepare 8 large sheets of paper with the following headings and tack them up around the room: Baby, Preschooler, Elementary School, Middle School, High School, Young Adult, Adult, and Older Adult. Provide pencils/pens and post-it notes on the tables.

As the kids enter class, have them write down things they have learned to do on the post-it notes and stick them on the sheet with the appropriate age group. The headings are age categories, not necessarily the place they learned these milestones. E.g. baby-learning to talk, elementary-learning to ride a bike, preschool-learning ABC. Then have them write down things they hope to be able to do and add these to the "older" ages. E.g. high-school-learning to drive, middle school-join youth group, young adult-getting a job.

For early elementary the leaders may have to write for the children.

If you need more to do, have the kids try to draw a picture or write their name with the hand they don't normally use. If they make a mistake, they need to start over. Why is it so frustrating to write/draw with your opposite hand?

## **Large Group**

- What would you like to be able to do when you are in high school, in college, as an adult that you cannot do right now? Which ones do you wish you could do right now? Why can't you do them now?
- There are many things in our lives that we cannot do right now and it isn't always easy to wait.

- Let's look at a story in the Bible in Genesis starting with 12:1-2. (*Option for younger kids-watch Veggie Tales "Abe and the Big Promise".*  
Have the children count the number of times the word "Patience" is used. Discuss how patience is trusting that God will do what he promised to do.)
  - What did God tell Abram to do? (leave his home and go to a place God where God would lead him)
  - Where was this place? (God didn't tell Abram)
  - What did God promise would happen to Abram? (God would bless him, he would bless others, his name would be great, and he would become a great nation)
- There was a problem. Abram was pretty old and didn't have any children. How could he become a great nation if he didn't even have any children? Where would this nation come from? Abram's wife Sarai had an idea. Read Genesis 16:1-3.
  - What was Sarai's idea? (she told Abram to marry her slave Hagar so Hagar could have a child for them)
  - Do you think this is what God meant when he promised Abram that he would become a great nation? Was this God's plan?
  - Why did Sarai tell Abram to do this?
  - Is this going to be a good idea? Proverbs 19:2 says "Enthusiasm without knowledge is not good; impatience will get you into trouble" (GNT). How do you think this is going to turn out?
- Hagar did become pregnant and when she did, she became proud. She started making fun of Sarai because Sarai could not have a baby. Sarai went running to Abram, "Look, this is your fault!" she wailed. "I gave you my servant as a wife so that we could have a baby and a family but now she treats me badly. She thinks she is better than me. Do something!"  
Abram sighed, "She is your servant. You take care of the problem."  
So Sarai began to treat Hagar badly. She treated her so harshly, that Hagar ran away.
- Sarai didn't have any children and now she sent away the woman who was going to have Abram's baby. How was Abram going to become a great nation? Had Sarai ruined God's plan? Read Job 42:2.
- God is always in control. Nothing can thwart (stop, spoil, prevent, ruin) God's plans.
- God sent an angel to bring Hagar back and she had a son, Ishmael. Was this how God planned to keep his promise to Abram? Read Genesis 17:15-19.
  - God changes Abram and Sarai's name to Abraham and Sarah. What did God promise would happen to Sarah? (she would have a son, she would be the mother of many nations, there would be kings in her family line)
  - God said that Abraham and Sarah would have their own son. What problem did Abraham bring up? (he was 100 and Sarah was 90)
  - Do you know anyone that old? Do you think that someone that old could have a baby? Abraham had his doubts too, so what did he suggest? (let the promise be fulfilled through Ishmael)
  - Was that okay with God? (no, God said his plan was going to happen through Sarah and her son, who they would call Isaac)

- And the next year, Sarah had a son. The Bible doesn't tell us that Sarah had any more children after Isaac but Isaac's descendants became a great nation as God promised, the nation of Israel. Even now people all around the world call Abraham the father of the Israelites.
- This month we are talking about Patience. What do you think it means to be patient? **(being able to wait without getting upset or frustrated)**
- In our story, who had to be patient and what were they waiting for? (Abraham and Sarah had to wait for children, for their family to become a great nation)
- Who didn't show patience and what was the result? (Sarah was not patient and her idea led to the birth of Ishmael and problems with Hagar)
- Sarah couldn't wait for God's plan and her frustration led her to her own plan. Was her plan better? Why? (she ended up hating Hagar and Ishmael, trying to hurt Hagar and drive her away)
- But that wasn't the end of the story. Read Genesis 21:8-13.
  - What did Sarah tell Abraham to do? (get rid of Hagar and Ishmael)
  - Why? (she didn't want Ishmael to share Isaac's inheritance)
  - How did this make Abraham feel? (he was disheartened, upset)
  - Why did Abraham send Ishmael away even though he didn't want to? (God promised to take care of Ishmael)
  - Because Sarah was impatient she hurt Hagar and Ishmael but she also hurt Abraham. He loved both of his sons and now he might never see Ishmael again.
- It's not easy to wait but the verse in Proverbs says that when we are impatient it can lead to problems or trouble. (Genesis 16:12-it is prophesied that Ishmael will be openly hostile to all his relatives. Muslims believe that Ishmael is the father of Islam.)
- God promised something good for Abraham and Sarah. Sarah's impatience didn't stop God's plan, but it made things harder for them. (If you have time, you can ask the kids to list the benefits of God's plan and the problems with Sarah's impatience.)
- One of the reasons we need to wait without getting frustrated or upset and taking things into our own hands, is because when we are patient we get to enjoy God's perfect plan for our lives.
- Let's go to our small groups and talk about a couple more reasons we need to be patient.

## Small Group

- Why do you think it is important to be patient? Why do you need to be able to wait without becoming upset or frustrated?
- Do you like to eat fruit that isn't ripe? Have you ever burned yourself because you didn't take time to grab a potholder? Do you prefer your dinner raw or cooked? What happens when you take clothes out of the dryer before time is up? Have you ever given an answer before your teacher finished asking the question?
- What would happen if 6 year old kids could get driver's licenses? Would you want to be responsible for taking care of a family before you became an adult?

- *Leader, share a time when your lack of patience caused a problem. Examples might include trying to put something together but not wanting to take the time to carefully read the instructions first or cooking something but hurrying the bake time. Why do you have to be patient and leave the cake in the oven for a certain amount of time or what happens when you don't let glue or cement set, how do your projects turn out when you haven't taken the time to get everything you need ready or read the instructions?*
- There are many things in your life that you will have to wait for. Why does God want you to be patient?
  - Jeremiah 29:11 (God has a good plan for your life and even though you cannot stop that plan, if you aren't patient you might end up taking the hard road and hurt people on the way like Sarah did)
  - Exodus 13:17-18 (Sometimes you aren't ready for what is coming, if it happened too early you would become discouraged)
  - Deuteronomy 8:2-3 (Sometimes you need to learn to be humble and to obey trusting that God will take care of you)
- How do you become patient? What do these verses tell us?
  - Colossians 1:11 (Know that patience comes from God)
  - Galatians 5:22 (Patience is a gift from God, it is one of the Fruit of the Spirit which you receive when you become a part of God's family)
  - Proverbs 3:5-6 (trust God, He knows what is best for you)
  - Psalm 145:15 (trust God to take care of your needs)
  - Ecclesiastes 3:11 (God knows the perfect time for everything to happen and he makes everything work together in the best way)
  - Philippians 4:6-7 (when you are anxious and might become impatient, pray and ask God to give you patience and peace)
  - Colossians 3:12 (choose to "clothe" yourself with patience, to be patient)
  - If you have time, you can read and discuss Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. Why do you think God says there is a "right time" for everything? What would happen if we were not patient?
- Optional-did Abraham get to see all the things God promised him? What did he do? Read Hebrews 11:13-16. How can you be patient even if you might not get everything that God has promised? Does that mean that God has not kept His promise? Did God keep His promise to Abraham (and Noah, and the many others listed in Hebrews 11?)

## Application

- How old were Abraham and Sarah when Isaac was born? (100 and 90 years old)
- What is the longest you've had to wait for something you really wanted?
- Patience is a gift from God but it is also something you learn and practice. As you go thru life God gives you situations to help your patience grow.
- The next time something happens that requires you to wait, thank God for helping you practice your gift of patience. Being grateful may help keep you from getting upset and losing your patience.



- What is one area where it is hard for you to show patience? Do you always find yourself being impatient in those circumstances?
- What are some ways you can exercise your gift of patience in that area?
- How might thanking God for opportunities to exercise patience keep you from becoming upset?

## Prayer

Instruct each student to pray this quietly to our Father. "Father please help me be patient with/when (situation). In Jesus name I pray. Amen"

## Role Play

1. Three kids are hanging out, and one of them tends to shove others every time he or she makes a point. The other kids comment about these actions and ask the person to stop. But he continues shoving his friends. Finally, one of the kids loses control and puts the offending student in a headlock. At that moment, a policeman comes around the corner and sees the kids fighting. He grabs one of the students (who actually wasn't doing anything), arrests him and tells him that he will be charged with disorderly conduct. In this circumstance, the kid who was least to blame ended up in the most trouble. When arrested this kid responds with anger and anxiety. Act out what will happen.

2. Three kids are hanging out, and one of them tends to shove others every time he or she makes a point. The other kids comment about these actions and ask the person to stop. But he continues shoving his friends. Finally, one of the kids loses control and puts the offending student in a headlock. At that moment, a policeman comes around the corner and sees the kids fighting. He grabs one of the students (who actually wasn't doing anything), arrests him and tells him that he will be charged with disorderly conduct. In this circumstance, the kid who was least to blame ended up in the most trouble. When arrested this kid responds with patience and when given the chance calmly explains what happened. Act out what will happen.

3. You have been practicing hard all summer to be on the team when you get back to school (you can decide what kind of team-music, sports, etc.). You go to the tryouts and you think you did well enough to make the team. After practice the leader gets everyone together to announce who made the team. Your name isn't mentioned and you get very upset, cry, and say some mean things to the leader before you leave. When you get home you tell your parents that you are never going to play that stupid activity again and that you hate the leader. Act out how you would respond when you parents tell you the leader called and they apologized for overlooking your name and that you made the team.

4. You have been practicing hard all summer to be on the team when you get back to school (you can decide what kind of team-music, sports, etc.). You go to the tryouts and you think you did well enough to make the team. After practice the leader gets everyone together to announce who made the team. Your name isn't mentioned and you think to yourself that there may have been a mistake. You patiently wait for the leader to finish sharing the names of the team members that made the team and when he is finished you ask to talk with him/her. The leader can't talk now but tells you that he'll/she'll get back with you. When you get home you tell your parents that you don't think you made the team. Act out how you would respond when your



parents tell you the leader called and apologized for overlooking your name and that you made the team.

Optional-Some people in sports, music, politics, etc. don't want to be patient. What kinds of shortcuts do some people take to reach their goals? Why do they do this? (to win, to be famous, to make a lot of money) Do they hurt anyone with their actions? Do they hurt themselves?

## Craft

Paper Butterflies to remind us of God's perfect timing (2 choices are given)

- How does a caterpillar change into a butterfly?
- Do you know it takes about 10-21 days for this change to occur? What would happen if the caterpillar didn't want to wait?
- Just like the caterpillar has to be patient and let everything happen in the right way and time, God wants us to show patience in our lives too.

Materials

2 4- by 4-inch squares of tissue paper

12-inch pipe cleaner

Optional -string if you want to be able to hang them up

1. Stack 2 tissue squares then trim the edges to resemble wings. You can decorate the "wings" with scrap tissue paper.
2. Fold the pipe cleaner in half over the wings, as shown, bunching the tissue slightly.
3. Twist together the pipe cleaner ends to hold the paper in place. Then curl the pipe cleaner tips around your finger or a pencil to create antennae.
4. Tie one end of the thread to the pipe cleaner body for a hanger.



Materials

Colorful magazine pages

Pipe cleaners

Instructions

1. For each butterfly, choose 2 colorful magazine pages. Cut out 2 squares, one 5 "x 5", the other 4" x 4".
2. Starting at one corner, accordion-fold the squares on their diagonals to make wings; folds should be about 1/4 inch each. See picture for example.



3. Pinch the center of each folded square. Bend a 12-inch pipe cleaner in half and create a small loop. Center both squares in the pipe cleaner, smaller paper closest to the loop.
4. To secure the wings, twist the pipe cleaner above and below the wings and curl the ends for antennae.
5. You can hang them from strings or make a loop on the underside to wear them as rings.



## LESSON 2: PATIENCE

### GOD IS PATIENT WITH ME

### Lesson Objective

God is patient with people because He wants them all to be saved (know Him).

### Material's Needed:

(video clip-search for "Flying Silver Carp on Wabash River in Indiana"-  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3Bf0WhvsNk>) – File In google doc

### Scripture References

#### **Jonah 3:1-5, 10**

<sup>1</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: <sup>2</sup> "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you."

<sup>3</sup> Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. <sup>4</sup> Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." <sup>5</sup> The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

<sup>10</sup> When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

#### **John 3:16**

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

#### **Mark 16:15**

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

#### **2 Peter 3:9**

<sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

#### **Jeremiah 26:13**

Now reform your ways and your actions and obey the Lord your God. Then the Lord will relent and not bring the disaster he has pronounced against you.

#### **2 Peter 3:15**

Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

### **Romans 2:4**

<sup>4</sup> Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

### **1 Timothy 1:15**

<sup>15</sup> Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners-of whom I am the worst.

### **1 Timothy 1:16**

<sup>16</sup> But for that very reason I (Paul) was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

### **Nehemiah 9:17**

They (the Israelites) refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you (God) performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them,

### **Nehemiah 9:30-31**

<sup>30</sup> For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you warned them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you gave them into the hands of the neighboring peoples. <sup>31</sup> But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

## **Opening Activity**

Go Fish-You will need a deck of cards.

Deal 5 cards to each player and put the rest of the card in the center for a "Draw" pile. Starting with the player to the left of the dealer, each person takes a turn asking another player if they have a certain rank of card (e.g. "Do you have any nines?"). If asked for a rank he has in his hand, a player must hand over all of the cards of that rank. The asker then gets to take another turn. If a player has no cards of the requested rank, he responds, "Go fish." The asker then draws a card from the pile. If he happens to draw the card he was requesting, the asker shows the card to the group as proof and takes another turn.

When you acquire a set of four, place them on the table face up. Play continues until all sets have been made. The player who makes the most sets wins.

## **Large Group**

- How many of you have ever been fishing? What is your favorite part?
- (Show this video clip-search for "Flying Silver Carp on Wabash River in Indiana"-  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3Bf0WhvsNk>)
- Is this how most people fish?

- Usually you have to bait your hook, place it in the water, and wait for a fish to choose to bite, and if you are lucky, you might be able to catch a fish.
- Fishing is usually something that takes a lot of patience. What is patience? (**Being able to wait without getting upset or frustrated**)
- Having fish just jump into your boat is quite unusual, but let me tell you about another unusual fishing trip. (*You can bring props to make the story fun, things like: tuna fish, glass of water, eye patch for captain, flash light for in the belly of the whale, blanket and get under the table or chairs, cell phone when God gives Jonah the message. Use your imagination ☺*)

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh. He wanted Jonah to give the people there a message. The people there were very wicked and God was going to punish them. The only problem was that Jonah didn't want to go. Instead of heading to Nineveh Jonah decided to go the other way. He found a boat going to Tarsus, definitely the other way! He paid the captain and got on board.

Jonah must have thought that was the end of the discussion because he went below deck and fell asleep. But just because Jonah said "no", that didn't mean that God was done because soon after the boat left the shore a very bad storm came up and started tossing the boat around. All the men were very afraid. They tried to lighten the boat by throwing all their bags and packages overboard. They were doing everything they could in hopes that they wouldn't drown.

The captain called for help from everyone on board. Imagine his surprise when he found Jonah still sleeping in the boat. He shook him and woke him up. "How can you sleep? Give us a hand! If nothing else, pray to your god. Maybe he can help us!"

The sailors were running out of ideas so they tried to figure out if someone on board was the cause of this bad storm. They decided that it was Jonah's fault and when Jonah told them he was running away from his god, they became even more convinced. "Please, pray to your god to save us. What can we do to make this storm stop?"

Jonah told them, "The only thing you can do is to throw me overboard. If you throw me into the sea, the storm will stop."

The sailors thought that was too drastic. They didn't want Jonah to drown. They continued to try everything they could, but the storm only got worse. Finally they had no choice. They picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea. Immediately the storm stopped and the sea became calm. The sailors on the boat realized that Jonah's god was the one true God and began to worship Him.

Now God could have just been done with Jonah for disobeying him. He could have just let Jonah drown but he didn't. He sent a huge fish to swallow Jonah. Usually the fisherman catches the fish. This time the fish caught the fisherman!

Jonah didn't know what to think. He hadn't died, but then again, what was he going to do inside a fish? As he sat there, Jonah thought about all God had done for him and he began to pray. He asked God to forgive him and he thanked him for saving him.

After three days, God had the fish spit Jonah out onto dry land. I'm sure Jonah was pretty happy about that but he didn't have much time to think about that because for the second time God spoke to Jonah and told him to go to Nineveh. This time Jonah obeyed and did what God asked him to do.

- Sometimes in our lives God asks us to be patient but sometimes it is God who has to be patient with us! If God got upset or frustrated with Jonah He could have let Jonah die in

the ocean or even in the whale, but He didn't. He saved Jonah. What did God do then? Read Jonah 3:1-4.

- For the second time, God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and deliver a message to the Ninevites. How did Jonah respond this time?
- What was the message from God that Jonah was supposed to tell the Ninevites? (because of their sin, in 40 days their city would be destroyed)
- Read Jonah 3:5. Because God was patient with Jonah the Ninevites were given a chance to respond to the message/decide what to do. What did they do? (asked for forgiveness, fasted and put on sack cloth)
- What do you think it meant when they decided to fast and put on sack cloth?
  - Fasting is going without food not because you didn't have enough, but to use that time to pray instead of eat.
  - Sackcloth is a rough, black cloth made from goat's hair that was worn together with the burnt ashes of wood as a sign of sadness because something bad was happening, to say sorry, and to ask to be saved.
- The Ninevites believed what Jonah told them. They realized they needed to change and stop doing bad things. They wore sack cloth and fasted to show God that they cared more about asking God to forgive them than choosing clothes to wear or taking care of their stomachs. Even the king was a part of this.
- Read Jonah 3:10. What else happened because God was patient with Jonah? (the Ninevites were saved)
- God could have saved the Ninevites without Jonah, but he had a plan for Jonah's life. Jonah could have obeyed God the first time, however, God showed his patience with Jonah. In our small groups we are going to talk about times in our lives that God is patient with us.

## Small Group

- What kinds of things make you upset/mad? Why?
- How do you feel about people who do wrong things but aren't punished?
- What should happen to people like that?
- Did you know that God says that people who do wrong will be punished? The Bible says that the punishment for sin is death.
- Is God strong enough to get rid of bad people? So why doesn't He do that? Why does He let bad people continue to do bad things when He could stop it? Wouldn't the world be a better place if all the bad people were gone?
- Someone lied to his parents? Zap, he'd be gone. Someone stole her brother's game? Zap, she's gone. Putting TV first in your life instead of God? Zap. Using God's name in vain? Zap. Being envious of the stuff your friend has? Zap. Zap, zap, zap, zap! Who would be left?
- No one.

- But God doesn't hold back because He is afraid there would be no people left on earth. Why is God patient with you? What do these verses tell us?
  - John 3:16 (God loves everyone-even bad people-and He sent His son to give them eternal life)
  - Mark 16:15 (He wants everyone to hear the gospel/good news. What is the good news? That believing in Jesus is the way to be saved)
  - 2 Peter 3:9 (He wants to make sure lots of people have the chance to repent so they can become part of His family)
  - Jeremiah 26:13 (Reforming/changing your actions and obeying God is repenting-choosing to follow God, instead of ourselves and Satan. If you repent and turn away from the sin, you will be saved)
  - 2 Peter 3:15 (God's patience with you means more people will be saved)
  - Romans 2:4 (He shows kindness, forbearance, and patience to save you)
  - 1 Timothy 1:15 (That is why Jesus came to earth-not to hang out with good people, but to save sinners)
  - 1 Timothy 1:16 (When others see how God's patience can change a bad person, like Paul, they might decide to become a Christian too)
  - Nehemiah 9:17 (He is a forgiving God, slow to anger and full of love)
  - Nehemiah 9:30-31 (God could destroy everyone but He is gracious and merciful-giving what you don't deserve)
- God is patient with you because He loves you and He wants you to all be a part of His family, to live with Him forever in heaven!
- Remember the story of Jonah? Jonah's message to the Ninevites was that God was going to destroy them in 40 days. Why was God going to destroy Nineveh?
- The people of Nineveh were very wicked. They didn't just take over other cities in countries. They killed people...they hurt them...they were badder than bad.
- But even though they were evil people, God still loved them. He wanted to give them a chance to change. And these guys accepted their second chance. They asked God to forgive them and to change the way they lived. And because of that, you will meet some Ninevites when you go to heaven.
- You might not be as bad as the Ninevites, but if you have not asked God into your life, He is waiting for you. How long will God need to be patient with you?
- Don't mistake God's patience with changing His mind. If the Ninevites had not asked God to forgive them He would have destroyed them. In fact, many years later descendants of these Ninevites decided to turn their backs to God. They returned to their evil ways and God did destroy them.
- God has told you that someday He will bring the world to an end and if you haven't asked God into your life, He won't change the rules and let you into heaven just because you didn't make time to ask Him into your life.
- So ultimately, God is patient because He wants you to be saved and to be able to live with him forever. But God is also patient because He has a plan for your life. What is that plan?



- Reread 1 Timothy 1:15-16. Paul tells us that because God was patient with him, he could be used to tell others about God, that people would see what a miracle God did saving Paul.
- But how would people have known about Jesus and salvation if Paul had not told them?
- Can you think of someone in your life that does not know about Jesus?

## Application

- Have you ever done something that you wished you hadn't? Sometimes things that you do cause others or ourselves to be hurt. Can you think of some examples? (Breaking a lamp by playing ball in the house, telling someone you hate them, etc.)
- What did you do to make things right? Why did you want to make things right?
- When you accept Jesus' gift of salvation, He makes you right, clean (justification). Your sin is gone. But just because your sin is gone, it doesn't mean that you won't ever sin again.
- Did you know that God wants to help you every day? He sends the Holy Spirit to help you, He gives you His word/the Bible so you will know what pleases Him, He gives you a good church and teachers, He gives you parents and pastors. He helps you to "get right" everyday (sanctification).
- Someday you will go to heaven and you will be perfect but meanwhile on earth God is patient with you not just in the area of salvation, but in every area of your life. He doesn't give up on you, even when you make mistakes.
- Is there something you know God has been waiting for you to do?
- How do you know God wants you to do it?

## Prayer

Thank God for his patience with each of us. Ask God to open your ears to hear what He wants you to do.

## Why Wait Quiz?

Have all the children stand up. Ask the question and give a wrong answer (the correct answer is listed with the question). If the kids believe the answer is higher have them raise their hand high and hold it there. If they believe the answer is lower have them hold their hand straight out in front of them. If they get it correct they stay standing. If they get the answer wrong, they should sit down. (Note: For early elementary you may want to have them keep standing and keep track of how many they get wrong. That way they will stay engaged.) You can add questions.

Option-instead of giving them the correct answer, have them look up the answer.

1. How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? Genesis 21:5 (100 years)

2. How old was Jesus when he started his ministry, telling people about God? Luke 3:23 (30 years)
3. When Noah was in the ark, long did God make it rain? Genesis 7:12 (40 days)
4. How long did the Israelites have to wait to enter the Promised Land? Numbers 14:34 (40 years)
5. How long did Abraham and Sarah have to wait for a baby? (25 years from the time God gave them the promise until it was fulfilled)
6. How long were the Israelites in Egypt? Exodus 12:40 (400 years)
7. How long before Jesus comes back to earth? Matthew 24:35-36 (only God knows)
8. How long did Enoch "walk with God"? Genesis 5:21-24 (365 years)
9. How old was Moses when God called him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt? Acts 7:23, 30 (80 years old)
10. How old was David when he became king? 2 Samuel 5:4 (30 years old)
11. How old was Noah when he entered the ark? Genesis 7:6 (600 years old)

## Craft

### Planting flowers

Fill a plastic cup with potting soil and plant some flower seeds. It takes patience for a seed to become a beautiful flower. God is patient with us, knowing that we will develop into something beautiful for His kingdom.

## LESSON 3: PATIENCE

### BE PATIENT WITH OTHERS

## Lesson Objective

Just as God is patient with us, so we should be patient with others.

## Materials Needed:

*"Kid snippets math" on You Tube – Teacher is trying to teach student simple math.*

*"The Emperor's New Groove", chapter 19- Izma is trying to find the talking llama and the only one who can help her is a squirrel.*

*"Finding Nemo", chapter 7- marlin has a hard time communicating with Dory because of her memory problems.*

## Scripture References

### Luke 10:38-42

<sup>38</sup> As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

<sup>41</sup> "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, <sup>42</sup> but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

### Mark 10:13-16

<sup>13</sup> People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. <sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." <sup>16</sup> And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

### 1 Samuel 3:1-10

<sup>1</sup> The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions.

<sup>2</sup> One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. <sup>3</sup> The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup> Then the Lord called Samuel.

Samuel answered, "Here I am." <sup>5</sup> And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down.

<sup>6</sup> Again the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

"My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down."

<sup>7</sup> Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

<sup>8</sup> A third time the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup> So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup> The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

### **1 Corinthians 13:4**

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

### **1 John 4:7-8**

<sup>7</sup> Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:14**

And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

### **Proverbs 14:29**

Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly.

### **Proverbs 15:18**

A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel.

### **Ephesians 4:1-2**

<sup>1</sup> As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

<sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

### **James 5:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. <sup>9</sup> Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

### **Proverbs 16:32**

<sup>32</sup> Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city.

### **James 1:19**

<sup>19</sup> My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

### **Luke 10:27**

<sup>27</sup> He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

### **Proverbs 19:11**

A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense.

### **Ecclesiastes 7:8**

<sup>8</sup>The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride.

## **Opening activity:**

Guessing games where communication in some form is required: Charades, Heads Up, Pictionary, or other variations.

## **Large Group**

- *Play a clip showing someone needing patience in communication-suggestions include:*
  - *“Kid snippets math” on You Tube – Teacher is trying to teach student simple math.*
  - *“The Emperor’s New Groove”, chapter 19- Izma is trying to find the talking llama and the only one who can help her is a squirrel.*
  - *“Finding Nemo”, chapter 7- marlin has a hard time communicating with Dory because of her memory problems.*
- When you are trying to tell someone something, sometimes they just don’t get it. No matter how you try, you can’t seem to make them understand and you become upset or frustrated. But does that make things better?
- Let’s try something called “Teaching the Teacher”. *(You will need a bag with ingredients and utensils to make something simple like a butter and jelly sandwich. Choose a volunteer to give you verbal instructions to make the sandwich. The twist is that you must obey the instructions literally. For example if they tell you to put butter on the bread but don’t tell you to take items out of the bag, you will stack butter on top of a loaf of bread. They might tell you to take a piece of bread but forget to tell you to take it out of the bag. Will they remember to tell you to use a knife or to open the jelly jar?*
  - How successful was the one giving the instructions?
  - What was hard about this activity?
  - If you were giving the instructions how did you feel? How about the one trying to follow the instructions?
  - What could have been done to make this more successful?
- What is patience? **(Being able to wait without getting upset or frustrated).** Where did we need patience in our activity?
- It’s not always easy to be patient with others. Let’s look at some stories. Look up Luke 10:38-42.
  - What were the names of the two sisters? (Mary and Martha)
  - Who was being impatient? What did she do? (Martha was impatient with Mary. She was frustrated and so complained to Jesus asking him to tell Mary to help her.)
  - What was Martha doing that was so important to her? (She was busy with “preparations that had to be made” because Jesus had come to her home.)

- Why kind of preparations do you think this included? (Cleaning the house, making dinner, getting the guest room ready, answering the door when people came, other ideas...)
- Why did Martha do all these things? (She wanted to show Jesus how much she loved him, because He was important to her, to show off what a good host she could be, other answers....) How do you get ready for guests in your home?
- Did Jesus tell Mary to go help Martha? Why or why not? (No, he said that Mary had chosen to do the thing that was more important)
- What was Mary doing that was important to Jesus? (sitting at Jesus' feet, listening to what he had to say)
- Why didn't Jesus care about the things Martha wanted to do-nice dinner, comfortable place to sit? (The most important thing for Jesus was to tell others about God and to save them. That is why he came to earth.)
- If Martha had understood what was really important, do you think she still would have been impatient with Mary?
- Let's look at another story in Mark 10:13-16.
  - Many people wanted to see Jesus but the disciples didn't let everyone come near him. Who did they stop? (people who were bringing their children to see Jesus)
  - Why didn't they want the children to come near? (They thought that Jesus was too busy, that children weren't important.)
  - Can you imagine it? Parents were bringing their children hoping that Jesus would bless them and the disciples were shoo-ing them away. "Go away! Jesus doesn't have time for your kids! Jesus has more important things to do. He is teaching us. Why would he want to have noisy kids running around?"
  - Perhaps a little child ducked under the hands of the disciples who were waving them away. A disciple catches him and tries to return him to his parents and another parent tries to move in closer. The disciples are getting frustrated and impatient. "Didn't you hear us? Jesus doesn't have time for little children!"
  - What happened then? (Jesus saw what was happening and he was indignant/upset) Who was Jesus upset with? (the disciples) Why? (they didn't understand that Jesus loves everyone, even children)
  - If the disciples understood that Jesus loves everyone-even children, do you think they would have still been impatient?
- One more story. Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10.
  - Why did Samuel keep waking Eli up? (he thought Eli was calling him)
  - How many times did Samuel bother Eli? (3 times)
  - How do you think Eli felt each time? How do you feel when people interrupt your sleep or when you are doing something?
  - What did Eli tell Samuel to do? (If Samuel heard the voice again, he should stay there and reply, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.")
  - Who was calling Samuel? (God)

- Eli could have got impatient with Samuel and yelled at Samuel to stop bothering him but he didn't. Why was Eli patient with Samuel? (he realized it was God calling Samuel)
- What was the difference between Eli and Martha or the Disciples?
- Let's go to our small groups and see why we need to be patient with other people.

## Small Group

- Let's read 1 Corinthians 13:4. When you are patient, what are you doing? (showing love)
- How does God feel about loving others? (it is one of the two most important commandments He gave us-Love God, Love others)
- Who are some people in your life that you love? How do you show patience with them?
- How do you think they feel when you show them patience?
- Think about the people to whom you have a hard time showing patience. Do you think it is okay to be impatient with these people? Read 1 John 4:8 and 1 Thessalonians 5:14. What do these verses tell you? (If you don't show love to others, and subsequently patience, it means you don't get what God is about, that you are not living the way God wants you to live. We are to be patient even with people who are hard to love-people who are disruptive, idle, disheartened, or weak.)
- *Leaders, share about a time when you found it hard to be patient with someone else. What was it about the person or situation that made you impatient? What do you think the other person thought about you?*
- It is hard to be patient and show everyone love. According to these verses, why should you be patient with others?
  - Proverbs 14:29 (wise people are patient)
  - Proverbs 15:18 (patient people are peace makers, not trying to start a fight)
  - Ephesians 4:1-2 (God tells you to be patient)
  - James 5:8-9 (you will be judged on how you treat others)
  - Proverbs 16:32 (patience is better than being strong)
- What are ways you can show patience with others?
  - James 1:19 (quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to get angry)
  - Luke 10:27 ( love God-remember Mary, love others-Jesus and the children)
  - Proverbs 19:11 (overlook an offense/a wrong done to you. What are some examples of offenses you can overlook?)
  - Ecclesiastes 7:8 (don't demand to be "right"-you don't have to win every argument, even if you are right)
- Another way to help you show patience is through good manners. Do you know any good manner rules? How do they show patience?
  - Letting someone go first
  - Waiting for everyone to be served before you start eating
  - Opening the door for someone older than you
  - Waiting for someone to finish talking before you talk



- Not interrupting someone when you see they are on the phone
- Not being on your cell phone constantly
- Looking at the person who is speaking to you
- Giving up your seat to someone who needs it
- Not talking with food in your mouth
- Walking on the right side
- What good manner rules do you have at your home? Why?

## Application

- Can you think about a time when someone you loved was patient with you? How did you know they loved you?
- Who in your life do you have a hard time being patient with?
- When is it most difficult to be patient with this person?
- What do you think it would take for you to become more patient with this person?
- Are you willing to do this?

## Prayer

Have the kids pair up and pray for each other, Sample prayer, "Father, thank you for the times others have shown me patience. Please help (name) be patient with \_\_\_\_\_. Amen."

## Role Play

1. Your parents said they would be home at 7 p.m. to pick you up for your friend's party. It is now 7:30 p.m., and your friend is wondering where you are. He tells you that his mom will be right over to get you, and he hangs up the phone. A couple of minutes later, you see the friend and his mom coming down the street in their car. Just as you are getting into their car, your parents arrive. Act out how you would respond to your parents if they told you sorry, they were late because they lost track of time.
2. Your parents said they would be home at 7 p.m. to pick you up for your friend's party. It is now 7:30 p.m., and your friend is wondering where you are. He tells you that his mom will be right over to get you, and he hangs up the phone. A couple of minutes later, you see the friend and his mom coming down the street in their car. Just as you are getting into their car, your parents arrive. Act out how you would respond to your parents if they told you sorry, they were late because they were buying the present you were supposed to bring to your friend's party.
3. Lighting the fireplace has always been Dad's responsibility. You all have watched him do it many times. One cool evening, before Dad comes home from work and while Mom is visiting a neighbor, you are in the house playing with some friends. It gets chilly, and you would like to have a fire. Your friend comments that someone should light the fireplace.

Act out what you would say to your friends when they try to persuade you to light it. Have someone who is against lighting it bring up logical questions like: "What will you say when Dad comes home?" What if the house starts on fire?" and more.

4. Act out scenario 3 and the kids get the fire lit fine, however they didn't know about opening the flue. (This is what lets the smoke go up the chimney.) Soon smoke fills the house, and the fire department comes to their rescue. Have the children explain their logic for not waiting for their father to get home.

## Crafts

Heart chains-

1. Cut strips of construction paper.
2. Take one strip and fold it in half.
3. Staple just above the fold to make the bottom "v" of the heart.
4. Bring the outside edges of the V together to form the upper curves of the heart.
5. Staple these ends together close to the end to complete the heart.
6. Write down some things that you can do to show patience on the other strips before you add more links to your chains.

## LESSON 4: PATIENCE

### PATIENCE IS AN ACTION

### Lesson Objective

Patience does not mean just sitting around doing nothing.

### Materials Needed:

"Minute to Win it" Games- use a clock room or watch

### Scripture References

#### Genesis 6:9-13

<sup>9</sup> This is the account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. <sup>10</sup> Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

<sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. <sup>13</sup> So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth."

#### Genesis 6:22

Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

#### Genesis 7:6-7

<sup>6</sup> Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. <sup>7</sup> And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood.

#### Genesis 8:13

<sup>13</sup> By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry.

#### Genesis 7:12

<sup>12</sup> And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

#### Genesis 8:1

But God remembered Noah

#### Deuteronomy 31:8

The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.

**James 1:5**

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

**1 Corinthians 10:13**

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

**Acts 16:31**

<sup>31</sup> They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

**1 John 1:9**

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

**John 14:26**

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said.

**John 10:28**

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.

**1 John 2:25**

And this is what he promised us—eternal life.

**John 14:3**

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

**2 Thessalonians 3:6-13**

<sup>6</sup>In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. <sup>7</sup>For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, <sup>8</sup>nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. <sup>9</sup>We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. <sup>10</sup>For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."

<sup>11</sup>We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. <sup>12</sup>Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. <sup>13</sup>And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.

**Mark 13:32**

<sup>32</sup> But about that day or hour (when Jesus will return) no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

**1 Thessalonians 5:2**

<sup>2</sup>for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

### **2 Peter 3:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

### **Hebrews 6:12**

<sup>12</sup> We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

### **James 5:7-8**

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. <sup>8</sup> You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

## **Opening Activity**

"Minute to Win it" Games-you can find these on the internet.

## **Large Group**

- (You will need a clock/watch with a second hand.) How patient are you? We are going to sit quietly for 2 minutes. Try not to think about anything or do anything. You can look at the clock but don't look at others or look around the room. Don't speak or make any noise.
- How was it? How did you feel? Was it easy or hard to keep from doing or thinking about anything? Why or why not? Did 2 minutes feel like a long or a short amount of time? Why do you say that?
- Many people think that to be patient means to sit quietly and do nothing. What is our definition of patience? (**being able to wait, without getting upset or frustrated**) Did you know that you can be busy while you are patient?
- Let's look at a story from the Bible. Look up Genesis 6:9-13.
  - Who is this story about? (Noah)
  - What is the problem? (the earth was corrupt and full of violence, people were very wicked and there was a lot of sin)
  - What did God decide to do about this problem? (God decided to destroy all the people and the earth)
  - Why did God tell Noah what he was going to do? (Noah was a righteous man who was faithful to God)
- So God immediately destroyed the earth, end of story.
- No? When did God destroy the earth and all the people?
- We don't exactly know how long but Noah had to wait patiently for God to do what He said He was going to do. Did Noah just sit around and wait? What did he do? Why? (God told Noah to build an ark which was going to be used to save Noah, his family, and some animals. Some people estimate it took him 50-75 years to build the ark.)

- God told Noah to build a big boat. Not just any big boat. This boat was to be about 1 ½ football fields long, over a city block wide, and about 4 stories tall. It was to carry Noah, his family, at least two of every creature on earth (7 pairs of the clean animals and birds), and food to feed them all.
- What was Noah's response? Read Genesis 6:22. (He did everything exactly as God commanded)
- Finally the ark was finished. Read Genesis 7:6-7 and 8:13. How long was Noah on the ark? (Noah was 601 when he left the ark and was 600 when he got on so he was on the ark for over a year)
- So for over a year Noah could sit around and be patient while God destroyed the earth, right?
- Have you ever been around animals? What would happen to your pet if you sat around and did nothing?
- Someone needed to feed the animals. Someone had to clean out their stalls. Someone needed to take care of all these animals. Who do you think did all that?
- Noah had to patiently wait a year on the ark but he had plenty to do. How do you think Noah felt being cooped up in that ark?
- What does Genesis 8:1 say? (God remembered Noah) How do you think that made Noah feel?
- Even though it might have felt like he was in the ark a long time, God didn't forget about Noah. He knew what was going on and was taking care of Noah. Because Noah knew this, he could be patient during all the years it took to build the ark and the year he had to live on the ark.
- The God that didn't forget Noah is the same God that never forgets us. He loves us too much to ever forget any one of us. We need to remember that when things are happening and we don't have the patience to wait for it to end or what is coming next.
- In our small groups we are going to talk about what we should do while we are waiting on God.

## Small Group

- In the Bible you can read many promises God has made. Some of these promises require patience. Let's look up a few. Which promises does God give you now and which ones do you need to wait for?
  - Deuteronomy 31:8 (He will never leave you or give up on you)
  - James 1:5 (if you ask, He will give you wisdom)
  - 1 Corinthians 10:13 (He will not give you a temptation that you cannot handle with His help)
  - Acts 16:31 (salvation)
  - 1 John 1:9 (if you ask, He will forgive your sins)
  - John 14:26 (He gives you the Holy Spirit to help and teach you)
  - John 10:28 (if you are a part of His family, nothing can take that away from you)
  - 1 John 2:25 (eternal life)

- John 14:3 (Jesus is coming someday to take you to place He has prepared for you-in heaven)
- One of the biggest promises God gives is that Jesus will come back to earth again someday to remove Satan (Revelations 20) from earth where Jesus will rule forever.
- Paul wrote about this in a letter to the Christians in Thessalonica. People were treating them badly because they believed in Jesus. Paul told them to remember that Jesus would be coming back and that they would get to live with Him forever.
- This made the Thessalonians very happy but Paul had to write them another letter. Why? Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13.
  - What was the problem? (some people were idle and disruptive)
  - What does it mean to be idle? (sitting around, not doing anything)
  - The Thessalonians were excited to hear that Jesus was coming back. But some of them were worried that they were going to miss it so they stopped what they were doing. They quit working and began waiting.
  - They thought they were being patient, but when you have nothing to do, that can be more trouble. Verse 11 says they weren't busy, they were.... (busybodies) What is a busybody? (someone who gets into other people's business)
- Were they wise to be waiting for Jesus? It is wise to be ready, and that means asking Jesus to be a part of your life, joining His family. But why shouldn't we just be watching the sky, waiting for Jesus to come back? How long is it going to take? What do these verses tell you?
  - Mark 13:32 (no one know when Jesus will return, not even Jesus!)
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:2 (Jesus' return will be like a thief in the night, unexpected)
  - 2 Peter 3:8 (It isn't taking God a long time to keep His promise. God's time is not like our time. For someone who lives forever, 1000 years is like just one day)
- So what should you do in the meantime?
  - 2 Thessalonians 3:7 (imitate Paul's example and not take anything without working for it)
  - 2 Thessalonians 3:12 (work for a living, to provide for yourself)
  - 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (keep on doing good)
  - Hebrews 6:12 (don't be lazy. Imitate those who show you good examples through their faith-men like Moses, Noah, David, other heroes of the Bible. Are there heroes of faith now-people that you know?)
  - James 5:7-8 (be patient like a farmer. He plants seeds in the ground and has to be patient for the harvest, but that doesn't mean he doesn't do anything. There are lots of things he has to do to get the crop ready.)
- Why hasn't Jesus come back yet? Read 2 Peter 3:9. (God wants to give as many people as he can the chance to become Christians)
- Sometimes life on earth can get rough and we wish Jesus would come back now and get rid of Satan and sin. But if He did, would there be people who would not be able to go to heaven? Do you know anyone who has not asked Jesus into their lives?
- What should you do-just be patient and wait? Our church talks about "Prayer, Care, and Share". Does anyone know what this means? (You should pray for those who do not



know Jesus, show them how much you care about them by doing nice things for them and helping them, and when they see that you care about them, you might have the opportunity to tell them about Jesus).

## Application

- Does time ever seem to move slowly for you? Perhaps you are waiting for something exciting like a trip or your birthday. Maybe your parents have asked to you to be patient and wait while they finish talking on the phone. What is patience? **(Being able to wait without getting frustrated or upset)**
- It is hard to be patient, and even harder when we have nothing to do. Do you find yourself sometimes getting in trouble while you are waiting for your mom or dad to get off the phone?
- Waiting may seem like a long time, but it really isn't. Remember how long 2 minutes felt when we were just sitting and not doing anything? What about if you only had 2 minutes to play your video game? What about only 2 minutes left on earth? Would 2 minutes feel like a long or short time? What would you do with those 2 minutes?
- Paul told the Thessalonians that to keep from getting into trouble, they should be busy doing the work that God wanted them to do.
- What can you do to keep yourself busy while you wait? Can you think of people you know who do not know Jesus? How can you remember to pray for them? What can you do to show them that you love and care for them? What are ways you can share Jesus with them?

## Prayer

Group Prayer: "Father please help us believe that you will always keep your promises. Help us to do good while we wait for you to come back to earth. Amen"

## Role Play

1. For as long as you can remember, your parents have had you shovel snow, rake leaves and sweep dirt off your elderly neighbor's driveway. They always said that someday you may need some help and someone will help you. As you grow older, you automatically cleaned your neighbor's driveway anytime you did your own. One winter afternoon, you go outside to shovel the driveway, and some friends asked you to come with them ice-skating. You explain the situation to them, but they laugh and encourage you to "let the old geezer's driveway go," especially since you don't get paid for this kind of work. Immediately after you make your decision, your parents come out of the house. Act out how you responded to your friends and then to your parents.

2. In the morning you read in your Bible, Romans 8:28 "we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him ...." You and your best friend both love God and try to follow him but while at school your best friend tells you they are moving away to a different state. Act out what you would say to your friend.
3. You have prayed to God and have asked your parents for an iPod (or some other item) for over a long time. Most of your friends have one and they play games on them every day before school. After lunch your friend comes up to you and gives you an iPod with some cool apps on it. He mentions that he found it on a table in the lunch room. Act out how you would respond when you take it home to your parents.
4. You have prayed to God and have asked your parents for an iPod for over a long time. Most of your friends have one and they play games on them every day before school. After lunch your friend comes up to you and gives you an iPod with some cool apps on it. He mentions that he found it on a table in the lunch room. Act out how you would respond to let him know that you are waiting for your parents to get you one

## Craft

Patience Jars-Decorate jars or other containers. Have the kids brainstorm ideas of things they can do when they are bored to keep them out of trouble. Write these down on pieces of paper and put them in the jar. When they need to be patient, they can take out an idea and do it.

Examples of ideas might be:

Read a book

Make my bed

Do something nice for someone in my family without them knowing about it

Write a letter to a friend or relative

Make dinner/dessert (with a parent's permission)

Design/draw a machine to make life better

Play/practice (insert game name) or invent a new game

Play with my brother/sister

Put on a CD and dance