

KIDS *of*  
INTEGRITY

*Patience*



**Study the patience of a bird on its nest, or grow sugar crystal candy. Measure your progress in patience with a paper chain!**

Take your pick of over a dozen activities that help kids:

- wait calmly for an event or reward
- trust God’s timing
- be more tolerant of others’ shortcomings.

This lesson also helps curb a quick temper, a demanding attitude, and intolerance for the failings of others.

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## Parents’ prayer

Before you begin leading your children through this study, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in patience, and to release His power in your kids.

Use the sample prayer below, or build your own prayer using the verses under “Scripture-guided prayer.”

### Sample prayer

God of Love, You demonstrate Your patience for us through Your continual forgiveness of sin. Day after day I fail, yet Your Word assures me of Your enduring love and forgiveness (Psalm 13:5-6, Psalm 85:2-3). It is the riches of Your kindness, tolerance and patience that lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4). Thank you for Your Son Jesus, and for the way He modelled patience with His disciples. Jesus was exasperated with them to the point that He said, “How long must I put up with you?” Yet He still continued to mentor them in the “little faith” they had (Matthew 17:14-21). Thank you for Your unending patience with all of us.

Please forgive me for my impatience, especially when \_\_\_\_\_. God, I ask that You will enable me to have patience with the everyday innocent and not-so-innocent failings of my children. It is my job to teach them how to be Your little disciples. Please enable me to reprimand my children and restore them with gentleness and mercy as You do. Thank you, that with Your help, I can be patient as You are. Not a day goes by, that I don’t need Your Holy Spirit poured out in me so I can be Christlike in my patience, especially with those who live in our home, or \_\_\_\_\_. (List any other items that challenge your patience personally).

Lord Jesus, I pray You would help me to put up with others, to forgive whatever complaints I have with them and forgive as You forgave me (Colossians 3:13). To live in way that is worthy of You and to bear fruit that is pleasing to You, I need to be strengthened with all power according to Your glorious might (Colossians 1:10-12).

I pray as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ grow in You, that they will be patient with everyone, not paying back wrong for wrong but instead, they will always try to

be kind to others (1 Thessalonians 5:14b-15). When things are not going their way, they may be tempted to be impatient with You or others. Please give them the faith to trust in Your perfect timing, the patience to wait on You, and the strength to be joyful in hope, patient in affliction and faithful in prayer (Romans 12:12, Psalm 130:5). As circumstances and people are difficult, I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ will remember to come to You for help when they are tempted to be impatient. In Jesus' name, I pray against any plan Satan would have to cause impatience to take root in my children's lives. Rather, I ask that You shape their characters, through the power of Your Holy Spirit, so they will be patient and gracious as You are Lord, I pray that as a family we could be completely humble and gentle, patient, and bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:2). I ask that our love for You and each other would be expressed as patience and kindness (1 Corinthians 13:3-4). Please send Your Holy Spirit to work in us so others can see Your love in us, by the way we are patient with each other. Amen.

### **Scripture-guided prayer for parents**

*Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.*

#### **Character focus**

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His patience and forgiveness.

Nehemiah 9:5-6,29-31 | Isaiah 54:7-10 |  
Jeremiah 33:6-9 | 1 Timothy 1:15-17 | 2 Peter 3:9,14-15

#### **Heart search**

Acknowledge when and how you lack patience.

Psalm 37:7-8 | Proverbs 14:29 | Proverbs 15:18 |  
1 Corinthians 13:4-5 | Colossians 3:13

#### **Gratitude**

Thank God for ways you have seen patience exhibited in your family.

#### **Family requests**

Ask God to enable you and your children to be patient.

Proverbs 19:11 | Ephesians 4:2-3 | Colossians 1:10-14 |  
Colossians 3:12-14 | 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

## **Kids talk with God**

*Use this section to help your children learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord).*

*If your children are ready to pray original prayers, you may wish to use the Bible verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer for children."*

### **Sample prayers**

Dear God, thank You for showing me Your love by being patient with me. Please help me to show others I love them by being patient, too. Amen.

Dear God, I have been finding it hard to wait for \_\_\_\_\_. Please help me to be more patient. Amen.

Dear God, I have been bothered by \_\_\_\_\_. Please help me to be more patient with him/her. Amen.

Dear God, please send Your Holy Spirit to give me the fruit of Your Spirit, especially patience. Amen.

Dear God, I have been impatient. Please forgive me and send Your Holy Spirit to help me to be patient like You are. Amen.

Dear God, I have sinned in the way I \_\_\_\_\_. Please forgive me and help me to remember that love is patient and kind (1 Corinthians 13:4a). Amen.

Dear God, are there ways I am impatient? Please show me so I can say sorry. Amen.

Dear God, please make me more like You. Please send Your Holy Spirit to help me to be patient. Amen.

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## Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

### Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His patience and forgiveness.

Psalm 78:38 | 1 Timothy 1:16 | 2 Peter 3:9

### Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are impatient.

Proverbs 15:18 | 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 | Colossians 3:13

### Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have been patient.

### Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and your parents to be patient.

Proverbs 19:11 | Ephesians 4:2 | Colossians 3:12

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## Speak a blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to grow in the area of patience. Use this section as a reminder to “speak a blessing” when you see this godly characteristic in your son or daughter.

- \_\_\_\_\_ is a patient boy/girl.
  - Patience is a quality I admire so much. Thank you for being patient, \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Awesome job being patient, \_\_\_\_\_!  
The Bible says you are better than a warrior or someone who can’t control their temper (Proverbs 16:32)!
  - \_\_\_\_\_, you are doing well to wait so quietly. I know it can be hard to wait when you would rather have something right away.
  - You have done so well to wait \_\_\_\_\_. I am proud of your patience, and so is God.
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## Memory verses

Memorizing Scripture with your children helps God’s Spirit bring about lasting change. Choose a verse that your kids can learn in a pre-determined period of time. Aim to review the verse at least once every day.

Psalm 37:7 “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out wicked schemes.”

Proverbs 14:29 “A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly.”

Proverbs 15:18 “A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel.”

Proverbs 16:32 “Better a patient man than a warrior, a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city.”

Proverbs 19:11 “A man’s wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offence.”

Proverbs 25:15 “Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone.”

Romans 12:12 “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

1 Corinthians 13:4 “Love is patient, love is kind. . . .”

Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Ephesians 4:2 “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”

Colossians 3:13 “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you have against one other. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

Colossians 1:10-12 “And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened

with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.”

1 Thessalonians 5:14 “And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.”

2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

James 5:7-8 “Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord’s coming is near.”

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## Kick-off craft

For this kick-off craft, you will make a paper chain of heart-shaped links. This activity is based on 2 Peter 3:9 and 1 Corinthians 13:4. God shows His love for us by being patient with us. We can show our love for others by being patient with them, as God is.

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### Patience heart chain

#### Directions

- 1 Write your selected memory verse on a heart-shaped piece of paper. Use this paper as a starting point for a paper chain of heart-shaped links.
- 2 To make a chain link heart, cut a strip of construction paper 2 cm wide and 30 cm long. Fold it in half. Staple it 0.5 to 1 cm above the fold to make the bottom point of the heart. Open the paper so it makes the shape of the letter “V.” Bring the outside edges of the V together to form the upper curves of the heart. Staple these ends together 0.5 to 1 cm from their ends to complete the heart.
- 3 Start your chain with one heart-shaped link. On it, write “God loves you.” Tell your children

one of the ways God shows His love for us is by being patient with us.

- 4 Read 2 Peter 3:9: “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”
- 5 Add another link to the first one with the words “I love you.” Tell your children you love them and that we can show our love for others by being patient with them, too. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4a.
- 6 Add a heart shaped link each time you find more ways you can demonstrate love to others by being patient.
- 7 Record on the paper hearts the way the family member showed patience as it is added to the chain. For example, a child waiting patiently for a parent to serve his/her meal shows Mom and Dad the child loves them. Write, “\_\_\_\_\_ waited patiently for supper to be served. He/She showed Mom he/she loves her.”

To review, read through the chain link hearts and recall the instances when family members demonstrated love by being patient with each other. Pray and thank God for the ways He has helped family members to be patient.

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## Bible stories

Choose one Bible story that is most appropriate for your children. Before reading aloud, take a few minutes to review the story. If the Bible passage is too complex for your kids, paraphrase the story yourself or use the summary provided under “key concepts.”

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### God is good

Read Nehemiah 9.

*In personal preparation read Nehemiah 9, focusing on verses 7-31. Then read appropriate sections aloud to your children. Close by reading verses 29-31.*

## Questions for discussion

1. What good things did God do for the Israelites?
2. How did they try His patience?
3. What did God do?
4. What good things do your parents do for you?
5. Is there anything you do to continually disobey your parents and try their patience?
6. Do you think this tries God's patience, too?

## Key concepts

God loved and cared for the Israelites, and we (your parents) love and care for you. When the Israelites disobeyed God, He was very patient with them, but in the end He had no choice but to discipline them. You probably expect us to do good things for you, but you can also expect that if you disobey us, we will discipline you, too. One way we may do this is by removing privileges like treats and toys.

## Jesus is patient

Read 1 Timothy 1:15-16 and 2 Peter 3:9.

## Questions for discussion

1. How hard is it to wait for a special visitor to come and visit?
2. What happens if they are late?
3. What is Jesus waiting for people to do?
4. How is Jesus patient with us?

## Key concepts

Paul talks about how Jesus displays unlimited patience, waiting for people to confess their sins. God has a lot of patience. Every day He waits for people to tell Him they are sorry they have sinned. God is so patient that He keeps waiting. He loves us all so much that He doesn't want anyone to miss out on having his or her sins forgiven (2 Peter 3:9).

## The patient farmer

Read James 5:7-9 and Mark 4:18-19.

## Questions for discussion

1. How long does it take for a crop to grow?
2. What would happen if the farmer tried to harvest his crop too early?
3. What would happen if the farmer got tired of waiting and ploughed the field before it had a chance to rain?
4. What kind of crop would God like to see growing in our lives?
5. What kind of harvest does God want us to have?
6. What stops our lives from being fruitful? (Mark 4:18-19)

## Key concepts

Our lives are like a different kind of farm. God wants us to be patient in helping Him bring in a harvest of people for His kingdom. Every time someone asks God to forgive their sins and tells Him they want Jesus Christ as the leader of their life, it is part of the harvest for God's kingdom. When we show God's love to others and/or tell them that God loves them, we are "farming" for God.

## Is God unfair?

Read Habakkuk 3.

*Note: If your kids like drama, they will love this story. Read with lots of expression! Prior to reading the passage, share with your children the history of Habakkuk's time found in the summary section.*

## Questions for discussion

1. Does life ever seem like it is unfair?
2. Do you ever feel like your brother, sister or someone at school always gets away with being bad?

## Key concepts

From the book of Habbakuk, we learn that Habbakuk was deeply concerned about the wickedness, strife

and oppression in Judah. The thing Habbakuk found even more troubling was that it seemed God was doing nothing about it. Even though Habakkuk was not seeing the results he expected, he waited patiently and rejoiced in God. Likewise, when it seems like life is not fair and God is letting others get away with being bad, be patient and remember Habbakuk. Remember that God will eventually bring punishment on those who do wrong. It is not our job to punish wrongdoers, but God's. It is our job to be patient.

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### **Being patient with others**

Read Psalm 37:1-8 and Colossians 3:13.

### **Questions for discussion**

1. When do you find it easy to get mad?
2. What do people do that bothers you and tempts you to be impatient?
3. What does the Bible say about getting mad and fretting?
4. What did David do when he was frustrated with the behaviour of other people and when he felt like things weren't fair?
5. How will you remember to "put up with" that behaviour or person in the future?
6. What will you do to help you remember to go to God?

### **Key concepts**

It can get frustrating when it seems like someone else is "getting away with" causing trouble. Often, when someone does something wrong, we want to punish that person ourselves. But the Bible says that fretting and getting angry only leads to evil. When David got angry with people, he talked to God (Psalm 37:1-8).

God wants us to put up with each other and forgive whatever complaints we have about each other. He wants us to forgive as He forgave us (Colossians 3:13). A suggestion to help your children remind themselves that they are "putting up" with someone is to have your children clench their hands into fists, as though they are preparing for a boxing match. Have them say,

"David was a warrior, but he went to God in prayer!" Then have them fold their hands into a praying position and talk to God about what is bothering them. They can select one of the **kids talk with God** prayers to pray.

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## **Creative discipline**

*Few parents enjoy their God-given responsibility of disciplining their children, and even fewer children enjoy being on the receiving end. The Bible tells us to expect discipline to be uncomfortable, but also promises positive results. This section will provide you with innovative suggestions to use when correcting your children, to help them learn to practice patience.*

### **Biblical basis**

God sometimes used time when He needed to teach people a lesson. The Israelites wandered 40 years in the desert. Jonah spent three days in the belly of a great fish. Sometimes time is the best teacher.

### **Suggested disciplinary action**

When your child is impatient, make sure he/she has to wait doubly long for what they have asked for. While they are waiting, you can help them practice their memory verse. If it is a significant problem, do not give your child what he/she has been impatient about.

### **Affirmation**

Remind your child of Proverbs 16:32: "Better a patient man than a warrior, a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city." Pray with your child, asking God to help him/her to be strong like a warrior and fight off the temptation to be impatient.

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## Hands-on options

In the busyness of day-to-day life, we often forget to look for opportunities to teach our children God-honouring character traits. These ideas require very little preparation, making it easy for you to share some simple but memorable lessons with your kids. Read over the options at the beginning of your week and choose one or two that will fit your schedule.

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### Patience makes perfect

*creative crafts*

Choose a craft that requires careful and patient work. Work at it together! Use it as an opportunity to talk to your children about patience.

The Canadian Oxford Dictionary defines patience as “calm endurance of hardship, provocation, pain, delay, etc.” and as “tolerant perseverance.” For a young child, patience can be defined as “keeping going, even if things get hard; staying calm when someone or something is bothering you; and waiting calmly for things.”

For young children, working at a challenging craft requires patience because it can be tempting to get frustrated or quit if the project does not take shape quickly or as they had envisioned it. Ideas include gluing small objects, threading beads, drawing a grid and colouring the grid squares in a pattern. Talk about how the patience you used while putting the craft together paid off in the end with how satisfying it was to complete the project. Talk about how the craft would have looked differently if you had not been so patient with it.

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### Patience fruit

*drive time or any time*

Tell your children a story about a child who experiences the challenges and joys of growing their own little garden. Kids love these impromptu stories, especially if it fills the time during a car ride. Here is a sample story called “Kari’s garden”:

#### **KARI’S GARDEN**

*Kari loved springtime because she loved looking for little green leaves sprouting out of the ground. One spring, Kari’s mom surprised her by telling her that she could grow her own garden. Kari hoped that*

*her garden could grow all kinds of wonderful things that she had eaten from her grandparents’ garden.*

#### **Planting patience**

*Soon, Kari’s mother brought her to buy the seeds. “You can choose four different plants to grow,” Kari’s mother explained. Kari decided to plant carrots, peas, and strawberries because they were her some of her favourite foods. She also wanted to grow some pumpkins because she loved the big leafy vines and the golden yellow flowers.*

*When they came home, Kari was ready to put the seeds in the ground. “Not so quick, sweetheart,” her mom said. “First, we must prepare the soil so the seeds will be happy where you put them. We need to throw away old weeds and break up any hard clumps of dirt we find.”*

*After they had cleared the site, Kari was about to start putting the seeds in the ground, when her mom said, “Wait! We need to read the seed package and see how deep the seeds need to be placed in the soil.” Kari sighed. She was surprised how long it took to plant a garden.*

*Kari’s mother helped her measure one-cm-deep furrows in the soil where she planted the seeds. Then, Kari watered the carrot, the peas, the strawberry plants and each hill of pumpkins.*

*Now that the garden was finally done, Kari’s mom went inside, and Kari stayed outside to admire her garden. She wondered how the seeds were doing and decided to check on the pumpkins. She dug a little hole where she thought the pumpkin seeds were. “I wonder if they liked the water. Maybe they are sprouting already,” Kari thought. Her mom looked out the window and called to Kari, “What are you doing, Sweetie? You just planted those seeds. Why are you digging them up?”*

*“Oh Mommy,” explained Kari, “I was just checking to see if they liked the water enough to sprout.”*

*“Gardeners have to be patient, Kari,” her mother replied. “Your seeds will not start to sprout for a few days yet.” Kari sighed again and decided to go*

into the house. She had no idea gardens could take so long.

### **Growing patience**

That night, Kari dreamed about her garden and the magnificent fruit and vegetables it produced. In the morning, Kari looked out the window and saw a patch of black dirt where they had planted the seeds. Kari had to wait for almost a week before any seeds sprouted.

Soon, the carrots came up. Kari thought they looked like baby carrots. Ever so carefully, Kari pulled one up. All she saw was a teeny tiny white root that didn't look at all like a baby carrot. Kari watched and waited for the pumpkin leaves to show too. It took a little longer for them to sprout, but Kari was proud of herself for not digging down into the hill to take a look.

Kari was not so patient with the strawberries. When one turned the slightest bit pink, she gently picked it and tried to eat it. She put it in her mouth, only to find she had to spit it out! The taste was so sour! Her mom saw Kari's reaction. She smiled and said, "I guess gardeners have to grow patience as well as fruits and vegetables." Kari laughed, too.

Finally one day, Kari noticed the baby peas forming on the vines. "What cute little pods!" she thought. "Maybe I should open one to see what is inside." Can you guess what she found? You can imagine Kari's disappointment when all she found were eight tiny peas, each the size of the head of a pin. "I am going to get really good at practicing patience this summer," she told her dad when she showed him the miniature peas.

### **Tantrums don't please God**

Kari was also enjoying watching the progress on her pumpkin patch. Under each "female" flower, she would find a little green ball the size of a small marble. Her dad explained that when the bees took nectar from the "male" flower, its pollen would stick to the bee and pollinate the "female" flower so it could turn into a pumpkin.

Some days, Kari would wonder if the bees were doing their job. So Kari decided she could help

them. She picked a male flower and sprinkled the pollen into the female flowers to make sure that little pumpkins would form. When her father saw her doing this, he called her his friendly little bumblebee.

"Dad," she asked. "Does God think I am impatient because I am helping the bees do their job? Would He be mad?"

"No, honey," he answered. "The kind of impatience that doesn't please God is the kind that comes along with stamping of feet, whining, crying or a combination all three called a tantrum." Unfortunately, Kari knew exactly what he meant.

### **Fruit of the Spirit harvest**

As fall came, and the pumpkins in Kari's garden were plump and starting to turn orange, something very good and very bad happened all in the same day. Kari's two-year-old cousin, Benny, saw her beautiful pumpkins and asked, "One for Benny?" After seeing how her dad had cut a pumpkin off the vine for her, Kari got the scissors and cut a nice, round pumpkin for Benny.

As they were walking towards the house to show his parents, Kari saw Benny throw the pumpkin on the ground. It splattered all over the concrete patio. Benny laughed, but Kari wanted to scream and cry and jump up and down and shout. The very good part of the day was that she didn't.

"Dear God," she prayed, "please give me the same kind of patience that Grandma has." Kari had tears in her eyes when the parents came out to see what Benny was laughing about.

"Ball broke," laughed Benny. Then Kari started to laugh, too. Benny had thought the pumpkin she had given him was a ball. That is why he threw it on the ground. Kari was so glad that she hadn't been impatient and yelled at him. It had been an innocent mistake.

Later, when Benny was leaving to go home, Kari's mom helped her pick another pumpkin to send home with Benny. Kari explained that he was

supposed to eat it, not bounce it. Benny laughed and said, “Tank oo, Kari. You are my best cousin!”

Kari’s parents both gave her a big hug after their company drove off. “Kari,” said her mom. “I really do see that you are letting God grow one of the fruits of his Spirit in your heart.”

“Can you guess which one, Mom?” Kari asked.

Smiling, her mom said, “Let me guess . . . patience?” Kari smiled, too, and thought, “Dear God, thank You for growing patience fruit in my heart this summer!”

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## **Puzzling patience**

*creative crafts*

As you work on these activities, use this time to discuss what patience is. For a young child, patience can be defined as keeping going, even if things get hard; staying calm when someone or something is bothering you; and waiting calmly for things.

### **Mini-jigsaw**

Choose a challenging puzzle to complete with your children. Even if this project takes a day or two, ensure that patient work pays off with a completed project.

### **Family photo**

Many photo labs make “picture puzzles” from your choice of a family photograph. While completing the puzzle, you will see the picture of each family member take shape. Ask your children what “patience” looks like and if they think others can see patience in them.

### **Create your own puzzle**

You can make your own puzzle using a picture of fruit. Glue a glossy magazine picture of fruit on to cardboard and cut it out randomly. Your children may be able to help with the random cutting. As you complete the puzzle, talk about how patience is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

### **Relevant Scripture**

Galatians 5:22-23 *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

*gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*

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## **“Patient Polly tossed a bally”**

*physical activity*

Standing in a circle with a ball, try to accomplish a set number of tosses to each other without dropping the ball. Say the rhyme below as you throw the ball, taking turns deciding what to eat for the treat when you are done practicing patience. You may also change the person’s name in the rhyme. For example, “Patient Mary tossed a cherry.”

*Patient Polly tossed a bally.*

*This is what she said: “Are you ready for my throw?”*

*Things go better when we’re patient,  
this is how I know.*

*I throw, you catch – then we all eat cookie dough.*

Predetermine how many passes you want to complete and what the reward will be when you meet your goal. Encourage each thrower to be patient. Talk about how being patient can help you accomplish the task. Emphasize that if you are impatient and throw the ball quickly before the other person is ready to catch it, it makes reaching the goal harder for everyone. Do not set an overly lofty goal or this activity may try the patience of the parents more than the children!

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## **Rewarding cotton balls**

*any time*

Start by decorating a clear bottle or jar with fruit stickers or pictures. Explain the connection between patience and the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Tell your children that each time they are able to wait patiently for something, you will give them a cotton ball for their bottle or jar. Explain that when we are soft-hearted towards one another like the soft cotton, we will be patient with each other, rather than short-tempered or easily irritated. Each child’s goal is to see if they can fill his/her jar to the top. Pray one of the **kids talk with God** prayers with your children to encourage them before you begin awarding cotton balls.

There is a famous exercise for diffusing anger that requires a person to count to 10. Most of us forget to do it. Instead of counting to 10, you could have

your children count the cotton balls in his/her jar as a patience exercise.

Alternatively, when you see your children being tempted to be impatient, encourage them to say their Bible memory verse. For a Biblical perspective, read aloud your choice of the Bible verses listed below. Let your children know beforehand that when their container is full, you will celebrate by playing some silly games with the cotton balls. Ideas include using tape to stick the cotton balls onto parents' faces or having a snowball fight with them.

### Relevant Scripture

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Proverbs 14:17 "A quick-tempered man does foolish things, and a crafty man is hated."

Proverbs 16:32 "Better a patient man than a warrior, a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city."

Proverbs 17:27 "A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered."

Proverbs 25:28 "Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control."

Proverbs 29:11 "A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control."

Proverbs 29:20 "Do you see a man who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him."

Ecclesiastes 7:9 "Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools."

### Mealtime manners

*fun with food*

Mealtime is a good time to practice patience. Suggestions include waiting until everyone is sitting down and has been served prior to beginning eating; eating slowly using utensils; waiting patiently until everyone is finished their first helpings before having

seconds; and waiting patiently when you have asked for an item to be passed. Talk about how mealtime is more enjoyable when we show patience and use respectful manners.

### Give patience a fighting chance

*drive time or any time*

Watch for opportunities to talk about how patience calms a quarrel (Proverbs 15:18). You can even use a real quarrel as an example. In this case, discuss how patience could have stopped it. Talk about how hot tempers stir up trouble and discord. Review how responding with love and patience could have changed the situation. The discussion questions are provided to help stimulate dialogue.

### Questions for discussion

- What caused the fight?
- Did anyone try to stop it? If so, how?
- How would it have turned out differently if one person had been patient?
- How would it have turned out differently if both people involved had been patient?
- Did anyone try to show love?
- How does the verse, "Love is patient, love is kind" apply to this quarrel?

### Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 15:18 "A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel."

1 Corinthians 13:4 "Love is patient, love is kind. . ."

1 Peter 4:8 "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."

### Growing "patience candy"

*science with a twist*

This science-related activity is based on Colossians 1:10-12.

You will need one cup of water, three cups of sugar, a glass jar, a paper clip, food colouring (optional), a paper towel or coffee filter, and wool or cotton string.

- 1 As the adult supervising, boil a cup of water on the stovetop.
- 2 Remove the pot from the stove and have your children help you stir in the three cups of sugar, one teaspoon at a time. (This is the first patience exercise.) As your children stirs each teaspoon of sugar until it dissolves, talk about situations where it is hard to be patient. Encourage them to stir diligently. (If the sugar is not stirred in gradually, your “patience candy” will not form properly.) Once sugar starts to clump at the bottom of the pot, enough has been added.
- 3 Next, pour your sugar-saturated solution into a clear glass jar. If you wish, now is the time to use food coloring to tint the sugar water.
- 4 To create a growing surface for the crystals, tie a wool or cotton string to the middle of a pencil. Tie a paper clip or similar sterile, lead-free weight to the other end of the string.
- 5 Dangle the string into the sugar solution, making sure the weight is very close to, but not touching the bottom of the jar.
- 6 Move the jar to a location in your house where it will be undisturbed, but can be observed closely. Cover the top with a paper towel or coffee filter to protect it from contamination.
- 7 All that is left to do is watch and wait. About 24 hours afterward, you should see crystals forming. Crystals will continue to form until the sugar is used up.
- 8 Finally, remove the crystals and allow them to dry. You can save them or eat them.

As you enjoy eating or admiring the crystals, take time to discuss with your children that it is God’s power in us that helps us to be patient. Just as the crystals did not grow right away, sometimes it takes time for the Fruit of the Spirit to grow in us. Explain that being patient is hard, but with God’s help it is possible. Talk about how being patient pleases God. Finish by praying with your children, asking God to

send His Holy Spirit to grow patience in the hearts of your family members.

*Note: For a sugar-free alternative, encourage your children to be patient as they grow a flowering plant and wait for it to bloom.*

### **Relevant Scripture**

Colossians 1:10-12 “And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.”

### **Patience in nature**

#### *getting into nature*

Animals display significant patience while incubating their eggs. Many go for significant lengths of time without food and water while waiting for their eggs to hatch. Use the questions for discussion to introduce your children to the idea of birds being patient. Birds usually incubate their eggs for at least a couple of weeks prior to their chicks hatching.

- How long does a bird have to sit on her eggs before they hatch?
- What would happen if the bird became impatient and went away, leaving her eggs for too long?
- Is there anything you have a hard time waiting for?

For a patience reminder, ask your children to practice making a bird noise or chirping the next time they are tempted to be impatient. You may also want to start chirping like a bird as a reminder when you see a child beginning to get impatient. Birds can remind all of us that being patient has its own reward. For their patience, the birds are rewarded with a nest full of baby birds. Likewise, when family members are patient with each other, their reward is a peaceful household.

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## **Fruit ripening**

*fun with food*

Buy some green fruit. Have your children taste them when they are green, then wait a few days and taste them when they have ripened. Explain that life is like waiting for fruit to ripen. Sometimes when we are impatient for things and demand them right away, the end result will be that they will not be seem as good as if we had waited.

Give examples that are applicable to your children's lives, like a birthday cake. When a pretty cake is decorated for a birthday party, it is hard to wait until the guests arrive to eat some, but it would be very disappointing to serve friends a birthday cake with a chunk taken out of it.

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## **Recommended resources**

For a list of children's stories that reinforce the theme of this lesson, consult the home page for the **patience** lesson at [Kidsofintegrity.com](http://Kidsofintegrity.com).