

FAITH-FAMILY-FUN

KIDS NIGHT IN BOX



Dear adults,

Welcome to your Faith Family Fun discussion guide! Thank you for letting us join you as you encourage your little one(s) to experience the love of Jesus. Our hope is to offer an interactive and enjoyable way for your little one(s) to connect to the beautiful message of the Gospel.

With so much anticipation of things to come during the Christmas season, let this be an opportunity to teach your little one(s) to recognize the beauty of God's perfect timing. When we have patience, we are able to experience blessings while we wait. Through your discussion with your little one(s) today, our prayer for each child is that they will see how God uses our patience to align our hearts with His great purpose for our lives.

MEMORY VERSE: Luke 1:37 "For no word from God will ever fail."

STORYTIME

It can be hard to be patient even for a small amount of time, can't it? We want the commercials to be over so we can get back to our show. We want dinner to be over so we can eat our dessert. We want the car ride to be over so we can get out and play! Can you imagine waiting over 400 years for a promise to come true? That's just what the Israelites did when they were promised a savior. God was preparing the hearts of His people to receive the gift of Jesus. When we practice patience, God prepares our hearts to receive gifts, too!

PAUSE AND DISCUSS

QUESTIONS FOR LITTLE ONES: *What are you using patience to wait for right now? Is it easy or difficult? Why? [Give your little one(s) an example by sharing something that you are being patient for, too!]*

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER ONES: *Imagine if you could have whatever you want, exactly when you want it, all of the time. Do you think it would be hard to feel grateful? Why?*

In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, God told Abraham that through his family He would send a savior to His people. He reminded Abraham's son, Isaac, and grandson, Jacob, of His promise. Genesis 17:7 says, "I will always keep the promise I have made to you and your descendants, because I am your God and their God." All the way through the first half of the Bible (called the Old Testament), God reminded His people of His promise to send a savior. They had to wait a very long time, didn't they?! The people's hearts were not ready to listen to God's commands, so they had to wait even longer for their promise to come.

Sometimes, when we are asked to wait a long time for something, it is because our parents or guardians know what is best for us. They are able to look ahead and see that waiting just a little bit longer will be better. Parents, grandparents and other guardians have had a lot longer than us to practice patience, and they know that God can use our patience to make us more like Jesus.

PAUSE AND DISCUSS

God knows when our hearts are ready to receive His gifts. Sometimes it means we have to wait, just like the cat in your book had to wait for snow.

Do you remember a time when you had to wait for something you were excited about?

Was it even more special after you waited?

Did you feel proud when you practiced patience?

The nation of Israel, who were God's people, had many kings. These kings did not follow God's commands and did not listen when God spoke to them. Because of this, the people of Israel did not hear from God for 400 years! During this time, God was setting the stage for the coming of His Son, Jesus. Just like a stage crew sets up the stage for a play, God was moving pieces and getting everything ready for Jesus to come.

When God decided that the time was right, He sent an angel, Gabriel, to a young girl named Mary. Gabriel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High" (Luke 1: 30-32). It was time for God's promise to come!

Mary rejoiced that the time of waiting was over and that the promised savior was coming. Jesus was born and through His time on earth, He led many people to know God, His Father.

We still celebrate this promise as God's people today. We celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas and we remember the patience of the Israelites as they waited for Jesus to come at God's perfectly chosen time.

PAUSE AND DISCUSS

God chose the perfect timing to send His Son, Jesus, to be born on Earth. When the good news was given to Mary, there was much rejoicing!

Did Mary trust that God had perfect timing?

What did Mary do when she learned of Jesus' coming?

LET'S REJOICE!

Mary sang a song of thanks to the Lord for the good news that she received. Let's rejoice together with the same song that Mary sang! Use your box as a drum, clap your hands or use your voice to make a beat while you read Mary's song with your parent or guardian (repeat several times if you'd like).

"My soul praises the Lord;
my heart is happy because God is my Savior.
I am not important, but God has shown His care for me, His servant girl.
From now on, all people will say that I am blessed,
because the Powerful One has done great things for me.
His name is holy.
God will always give mercy
to those who worship Him.
God's arm is strong.

He scatters the people who are proud
and think great things about themselves.
God brings down rulers from their thrones,
and He raises up the humble.
God fills the hungry with good things,
but He sends the rich away with nothing.
God has helped His people in Israel who serve Him.
He gave them His mercy.
God has done what He promised to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to His children forever."

Luke 1:46-55

PRAYER TIME

God knows that it can be difficult to wait for the things that we want. That's why He invites us to pray to Him for strength to be patient. Next time you are asked to be patient for something, pray this prayer and God will give you the strength to do it!

Let's pray this prayer together now:

"Dear God, please give me the strength to be patient while I wait for Your perfect timing. Amen."

CARRY THE CONVERSATION FORWARD:

- When you see your little one(s) struggling to be patient, remind them that they can pray to God for strength all on their own. Let them know that they are loved by God and that God's timing is the best timing.
- Encourage your little one(s) to recite their memory verse this month, Luke 1:37: "For no word from God will ever fail."
- As you witness your little one(s) making choices to practice patience this month, don't miss the opportunity to offer them praise and encouragement by acknowledging their effort.



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