

DON'T BE IN SUCH A HURRY!

7-10

BIBLE VERSES: Proverbs 14:29, 15:18, 25:15, James 5:7-11, Psalm 37:5-8, Matthew 13:31,32, Galatians 6:19, 2 Peter 3:9 and 15.

The aim of this session is to see that we must learn to be patient because the best things take time to grow. We should also be patient with other people if we want to get the best out of them!

LEADER'S NOTES

When was the last time that you were in a supermarket on a Saturday afternoon? It is a total nightmare! People push past one another in the aisles and sigh and tut as they wait in the queue. Heaven help the poor checkout girl if she has to stop and change a till roll! Patience might be a virtue, but it isn't one that is practised with any great success in the average superstore!

Everything is a rush: people spend hundreds of pounds on new computers that will work five seconds faster. We can get cash instantly from cash machines. We have 24 hour shops so that we don't have to wait until the morning for something we want NOW. We have instant coffee. Credit on demand so that we don't have to save up for life's luxuries. Nicorette and crash diets to help us give up smoking or lose weight quickly.

Our society is too fast – and it isn't healthy: adrenalin builds up as we stress through daily life always in a hurry to do the next thing. In fact at any given time around 10% of workers are off work with a stress related illness.

Our young people are growing up in a world where they don't need to wait for anything. They have what they want when they want it! Often, they don't have to save up for things because they are given outright what they want. Everything is instantly granted – except time to be heard! Children are naturally impatient and egocentric, and this means that they find it very difficult in group discussion when they have to listen to other people's ideas before they can have their say!

W H Davies wrote years ago, "What is this life, if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare?" He had a point.

We need time to just be - to learn to slow down and to wait. Waiting is valuable - it produces perseverance and trust in God. Also, when you are waiting, you learn things about yourself. Abraham waited many years for a son, and by the time the child arrived Abraham was wise, close to God, and in tune with what He wanted. Abraham was ready to be a father to a people.

We need patience to help us to persevere. Many children give up at the first hurdle - they want instant results and are easily discouraged if something doesn't work first time. They need to learn to persevere and to try, try, and try again, until they get something right! Patience helps us to be more accurate, less

haphazard in what we do.

The other side of patience is being patient with other people: we tend to become stressed and to take our stress out on other people, but we get far better results by taking time for people to develop at their own pace. We need to learn how to give people time: they aren't pot noodles that transform instantly when hot water is added - they are plants that have to grow in good soil. Jesus understood this and was infinitely patient with his disciples, who were anything but promising when He took them on. However, by the time He ascended, they were ready to turn the world upside down. One of the Bible activities focuses on Peter and the way Jesus helped him.

We as leaders need to pray that God will help us to be patient with the young people in our groups – especially the difficult and diffident ones! We also need to ask God to help us to be patient with one another as we work together for the Kingdom!

CHARADES

GAME | 🕒 WARMING UP

Put the group into 2 teams, making sure that there is a good mix of ages and an equal boy/girl ratio in each team.

A volunteer from one group comes up and is given a title of a TV show by one of the leaders. They have to act it out for their group. If at the end of 3 minutes the group have guessed the programme correctly, they get 2 points. If the group can't guess the programme, the other team can have a guess, and if they are right they can score a bonus point.

Then a member of the other team comes up, is given a programme title, and the game continues.

Younger or less confident children may like to perform in pairs.

When acting, the child needs to hold up fingers to indicate how many words are in the title, and you may want to agree actions for different types of programme – kicking a pretend ball for sport, holding sides and laughing for comedy, a dramatic stance/hands pose for drama, and so forth.

Other signs that are universal include touching the ear for “sounds like”, an appropriate number of fingers tapped on the elbow to show the number of syllables in the word, making a circle with the hands for “whole thing”.

When all the children who want to have a go have done so (an equal number from each team!) then add up the points and declare a winning team.

The Point: Just for fun.

EQUIPMENT

Small pieces of paper with names of TV shows written on them.

DURATION: 15 MINS.

GRAB AND BUILD!

GAME |  **WATCHER** |  **WARMING UP**

Put all the items in a case that is open in the middle of the room. (Alternatively, they could be spread out on a blanket.)

Divide the group into teams of no more than 6 people.

Put each team in a different corner, but make sure that all are the same distance from the case.

On a given signal, the first person from each team runs to the case, picks up an item and runs back with it. When he returns to the group, the next person runs to the case and picks out something, and so on until the case is empty. (Obviously, the faster teams will get more items than the slower ones!)

When the case is empty, ask the teams to make a sculpture of a person, using the things that they have taken from the case. The person can be lying down or standing up – standing up is harder and therefore more impressive.

Give 3 minutes for the children to make these sculptures.

They can use the things they have picked up to their advantage – for instance, if they have picked up Sellotape they can use it to stick their model together, if they have taken a newspaper, they can take it to pieces and use it to build as well.

Admire all the sculptures, but choose a winner and give a reason for your choice.

The Point: Just for fun.

EQUIPMENT

A large suitcase full of odd shaped items, (ask each leader to bring things from home: wooden spoons, Sellotape and so on).

DURATION: 10 MINS.

SLEEPING LIONS

GAME |  **WATCHER** |  **WARMING UP**

All the children should sit or lie down in a space on the floor, keeping as still as possible.

They are allowed to breathe and to blink, but apart from this they should not move at all.

The leaders should watch carefully and any child who is seen moving is out and should sit up. Children who are out can help judge those who are still in – but make sure that they stay at the sides of the room!

The winner is the last person to be seen moving.

The Point: Just for fun, but also leads into the theme of patience!

EQUIPMENT

None.

DURATION: 10 MINS.

ARE WE THERE YET?

VISUAL AND AUDIO CLIPS | [▶](#) GETTING STARTED

Shrek has married Princess Fiona, and the newlyweds are on the long journey to Far Far Away Land to be blessed by Fiona's parents. Donkey has come along for the ride and finds the journey rather tedious!

Start time: 8:20 – “We're not going!”

End time: 12:20 – The carriage stops in front of the palace.

Duration: Approximately 4 mins

Show the clip and then discuss with the group:

- Why does donkey keep asking if they are nearly there when it is obvious that they aren't?
- How do you think Fiona and Shrek feel about it?
- How patient are Shrek and Fiona with Donkey?
- Do you think it is hard to be patient with other people? Why?
- In what other circumstances might you get impatient?
- How do you show it?
- Is it bad to be impatient?
- What can you do to help yourself be more patient?

The Point: Every child has said "are we there yet?" so this clip will ring true, and provides a good way in for a discussion about patience!

EQUIPMENT

A copy of the film “Shrek 2” and the means to play it.

DURATION: 10 MINS.

CARD HOUSE

ACTIVITY | 📧 GETTING STARTED

Give each child a small pile of playing cards and ask them if they can build a house out of cards. This is traditionally done by balancing 2 cards together in an upside down “V” shape, and repeating with 3 or more sets until you have a row of upside down “V” shapes. Then a line of cards are placed horizontally on top and the process is repeated on a second level. However, the children may want to try other ways.

After a few minutes of trying, see if anyone has achieved anything!

Ask the group:

- Who do you think is the most patient person in this room? (The answer will be evident!)
- What are the benefits of patience – why is patience a good thing?

Make the point that although we have only been building a house of cards which hasn't any real lasting value, there are many things that take real patience to put together: gardeners need to be patient when planning and making gardens, people who enjoy sewing need to be patient when working on tapestries and quilts. And when we want to see our lives change, or want to learn something new, we need to be patient to see results – being patient is about not giving up!

The Point: This activity will reveal the patient and impatient among the group! It should lead quite naturally into discussion about why being patient is so important.

EQUIPMENT

Playing cards - enough sets for each child in the group to have 10 – 20 cards. If your group is varied in age, bring in old greetings cards for younger children.

DURATION: 10 MINS.

WHERE ARE WE WAITING?

DRAMA | 📧 GETTING STARTED

Ask the group to find a space on the floor. Say that you are going to give them some places where they might have to wait. When you say a place, the group needs to act as if they have been waiting at that place for some time. They can use body language and voice!

Allow the young people to act together in groups so that no one feels self-conscious!

Situations:

- Waiting in the car while Mum is in the supermarket.
- Waiting to go into the cinema to see Harry Potter.

- Waiting to have a go on the Play Station.
- Waiting to have an injection.
- Waiting to use the bathroom.
- Waiting in the queue for school dinners.
- Waiting to cross a busy road.
- Waiting for a bus.
- Waiting for an aeroplane.

If you feel it appropriate, you could ask some of the children to repeat dramas that have been particularly well done for the rest of the group to watch.

Ask the group:

- How easy they find waiting?
- Are some things easier to wait for than others?
- How do you feel when you have to wait a long time?
- Why is waiting so hard?
- Are there benefits of waiting?

Explain to them that because everything in our society is so instant, we often find it hard to wait because we don't have enough practice! You could include some examples of when you have had to wait for something.

Waiting teaches us how to be patient, and how to learn to trust what people have said to us.

The Point: This activity helps children to focus on the idea of being patient, and helps them to begin to see that being impatient can be negative.

EQUIPMENT

None.

DURATION: 10 MINS.

OH SO PATIENT!

DISCUSSION | DIGGING IN

Ask the children to think of 2 patient people – one from the Bible and one from their everyday life. Go round and let each child say who they have thought of. Why are these people patient? Ask if the children think *anyone* can be patient – or only those who are patient naturally?

Say that we are going to look at the life of David and at some of the situations where he was prepared to be patient. Divide the children into small groups and after each passage ask them to write what David **COULD** have done and what the consequences might have been if he had done that thing.

Say that David was promised that he was going to be King of Israel when he was a boy, but he did not become King until he was 30! He spent at least 15 years, and probably longer, waiting for God to fulfil his

word.

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13 to see how David was anointed king.

Say that when Samuel went home, David went back to look after the sheep. Ask the children how David might have felt about that? What might he have done had he been impatient?

(For instance he could have told his father that as the next King he was going to stop looking after sheep and be treated better! He could have demanded to go to Jerusalem.) Let the children write down David's options here ... and the consequences had he followed those options.

Read 1 Samuel 19:9-17.

Explain that this is one of many times that Saul tried to kill David. David was a brave soldier by this point – what could he have done? Let the children write down David's options here ... and the consequences had he followed those options.

Now say that instead of this David was patient and went and hid – and then came back and then hid again!

Read 1 Samuel 24:1-7

Ask the children why they think David didn't kill Saul when he had such a good chance? Why was David able to keep being patient? What might have happened had David chosen to kill Saul now?

Read 2 Samuel 2:1-7

Explain that Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle and David, having heard that the king was dead, decided that it might be time for God's word to come to pass. Let the children write down David's options here ... and the consequences had he followed those options.

Finally read 2 Samuel 5:1-5.

Ask the children how David showed patience? Ask them why David was able to be patient so long? What might have happened if he had been impatient during those years of waiting?

Say that David could be patient because he trusted God.

You can leave the activity here, but if you want you could ask the children to make a cartoon strip showing how David was patient.

The Point: To look at an example of patience from the Bible.

EQUIPMENT

Bibles, pens, paper.

DURATION: 10 MINS.

GOD TAKES TIME!

BIBLE STUDY |  **WATCHER** |  **DIGGING IN**

Tell these short stories about Peter. After each story, the children can get into pairs to make a statue with their bodies to illustrate a point in the story.

(For instance, Peter walking on water could be shown by one child standing tall holding out their hand to a child who is lying down as though swimming or drowning.)

Peter was one of Jesus' disciples. He was a brave man, but very impatient, and Jesus often had to be patient and help him out when he was in trouble.

One day, Jesus had gone off to pray while the disciples crossed the lake in a boat. In the evening, Jesus walked across the water to the disciples. He called out to tell them that it was only Him, not a ghost, so that they weren't afraid. Peter challenged Him, "If it's really you, Lord, command me to come and walk with You!"

"Okay," said Jesus, "come on."

Peter had no choice – he climbed over the side of the boat and began walking on the water. But the waves were big and he was scared, and soon he began to sink.

Jesus held out his hand and rescued Peter. When he looked at Jesus and focussed on Him, Peter felt braver, and they went to the boat together.

Make a picture of Peter on the water.

On the night that Jesus was betrayed by Judas, Peter and the other disciples were with Jesus. Jesus had warned them that he was going to be captured, but when the mob came to arrest Jesus, Peter went into action! He seized his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, who was a servant of the high Priest.

Jesus told Peter to put the sword away, and then he healed the servant's ear.

Make a picture of Peter in the garden.

Later on that night, Peter was skulking in a courtyard to be near to Jesus and to find out what would happen to him next. Three times different people asked him if he was one of Jesus' followers and three times Peter claimed that he had never known Him.

Peter realised that he had denied Jesus and he was bitterly upset. He went away and hid, feeling as bad as Judas.

Jesus forgave Peter, and after He had risen from the dead, He met Peter and told him to keep a watch over the other disciples.

Make a picture of Peter denying Jesus

When telling these stories, you may need to adapt language appropriately for your group.

Because Jesus was so patient with Peter when he made mistakes, Peter learned a lot about God and his patience with us. Jesus changed Peter from being an impatient man who made mistakes by rushing at things, to being a wise and gentle leader who was in charge of the Church.

Later Peter wrote a letter to the churches and he said this about God's patience:

“Don't forget that God is so big that time means nothing to him – a thousand years and one day are the same! God hasn't forgotten his promises – He will come and judge us one day and let us into Heaven. But because of his kindness and His patience, He is waiting and waiting to give everyone a chance to repent and to become Christians.

Because God is so patient with us, many people will come to know him before He comes again to judge us. God is giving people all the time that He can to get to know Him.”

Ask the group:

- How is God patient with us?
- What are the results of God's patience with us?
- What can we learn about the way we should treat other people from the way God treats us?

God's patience is incredible! He never gives up on us but always gives us a chance to turn to Him. We should learn from God's example to be more patient with one another.

The Point: To look at the example of Jesus showing patience with Peter.

EQUIPMENT

None.

DURATION: 10 MINS.

A GOLDEN CALF

BIBLE STUDY |  **WATCHER** |  **DIGGING IN**

Tell the story using sherbet and water as visual aids.

Moses was leading his people from Egypt into a land that God had promised to give them. On the way, Moses left the people and went up a mountain to talk to God about the laws He wanted the people to obey.

Moses was gone a long time. Then he was gone longer. The people began to get worried, and then they became impatient. They thought Moses was never going to come back to them. So they went to Moses' brother, Aaron.

“Moses has deserted us and we don't believe in this invisible God anymore,” they said. “We want a God we can see, like everyone else has.”

Aaron was worried about Moses too, and he didn't want the people to be angry, so he asked the people to give him all their earrings and any other gold they had. He melted the gold in the fire and moulded it to make it into the shape of a calf.

(Give each child a small pot of sherbet and see if they can mould it to make it into a shape. It will be easier if the sherbet is slightly damp.)

The people were thrilled with their new God and they had a feast. They drank wine and danced, and got drunk and silly. They began to do things that they knew God didn't like.

God saw what the people were doing and He said to Moses, "I have had enough of these people! They keep disobeying me! Stay here, Moses, while I kill them all, and then I will start again with you and your family."

"No, God, don't," Moses pleaded. "Forgive them again – you have been so patient for so long. Please be patient a bit longer."

God agreed, and Moses went down the mountain and hurried back to the people. Before he was back at the camp, he could hear the music and dancing, and he realised that the people were having fun doing things that God wouldn't like.

He strode into the camp and threw the stones on which He had carved God's laws onto the ground. *(Have a leader standing at the back of the hall throw the plate onto the ground so that it smashes. They can sweep up the splinters during the rest of the story!)*

"What have you done? Why have you stopped following God already?" he asked.

"You'd been gone so long, we thought you were dead." Aaron explained.

Moses picked up the golden calf and ground it into powder.

"Look at your God now!" he thundered. He poured the gold dust into the river and scooped up jugs of gold dust and water.

(Pick up the sherbet models and put them into a jug of water.)

Moses made the people drink the water and gold.

(Give the children sherbet water to drink.)

He was angry and upset that the people had so little faith in God. He wanted them to trust God so that they could be patient and wait.

Ask the children:

- Why do you think the people became impatient with Moses?
- Because they were impatient they sinned, and did the worst thing they could – they made a false God.
- Do you think you can sin when you are impatient?

How can we be more patient?

The Point: To show that impatience can lead us to disobey God.

EQUIPMENT

Sherbet, water, small cups, an old plate.

DURATION: 15 MINS.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT PATIENCE

BIBLE STUDY | 🕒 DIGGING IN

Read James 5: 7–11

- How is a farmer a good example of patience?
- What sort of things should we be growing in our lives? Why does it take patience to grow them? Think of things like good temper, love for people, etc.
- Can you think of any examples of patience from people in the Bible?

Read Psalm 37: 5–8

- Why should we trust in God?
- When might we begin to get fretful and impatient?
- Why should we trust God even when it seems that bad people are doing better than anyone else?

The Point: To look at what the Bible says about patience.

EQUIPMENT

Bibles

DURATION: 10 MINS.

TOFFEE PATIENCE

PRAYER | 🕒 RESPONSE

Ask the children where they might find it hard to be patient.

Write these places on separate sheets of A3 paper: one might say “school”, one might say “home” and so on.

Spread the pieces of paper out in the room. Give each child 5 pieces of toffee.

Ask the children to go to each piece of paper in turn. They should think of a time that they feel impatient in this place – for instance “At swimming club I feel impatient when the teacher is helping other children.”

They should eat a toffee as they pray that God will help them to be patient in this situation. When they finish their toffee they should glue the wrapper onto the A3 paper and go to one of the other pieces of paper to pray about another situation.

Children only need to go to the pieces of paper that are relevant to them, and they can go to a piece more than once. They should pray for the entire time that they are eating their toffee!

When all the toffees are gone display the pieces of paper with their toffee paper patterns!

The Point: To patiently pray for patience!

EQUIPMENT

A3 paper, pens, glue, wrapped toffees.

DURATION: 10 MINS.

PLANTING SEEDS

ACTIVITY |  **WATCHER** |  **RESPONSE**

Read the parable of the mustard seed from Matthew 13:31-32 to the children.

Explain the meaning of the parable – that although the seed is small, eventually it grows and becomes a big tree. We need to be patient and wait for things to grow fully.

Ask the children if they can think of things that take time to develop. *For instance, you may be learning to play a musical instrument. It takes time to learn to play well – you have to be patient while you practise if you are to become a good player.*

We need to be patient in our Christian life, too. God wants us to spend time with Him so that we grow more like Him, and that is a long process, because we have a lot of things that we need to change!

Sometimes we have to pray for things for a long time before God makes them happen. For example, some people pray for years for others to become Christians.

God's kingdom is like a seed – it takes a long time to grow, but eventually it will be big and strong, like a tree. God's word is like a seed that is planted in us and over the years we become better and stronger Christians.

Give each child a pot and the paints to decorate it with. They should write on the pot, "God's word is like a seed." You can have the children paint the pots or use fabric and glue to decorate them.

When the pots are ready, have each child fill their pot with dirt and plant a seed or bulb in it.

The Point: An object lesson about patience! The children can think about things that they want to grow in their lives, and can watch their seeds growing, thus reminding them about patience over the coming weeks.

EQUIPMENT

A small plastic cup or flowerpot for each child, paints that will adhere to the surface of the pot, potting compost, seeds or bulbs for each child.

DURATION: 10 MINS.

BEAR WITH THEM!

CRAFT IDEAS | 🔄 RESPONSE

Read Proverbs 14:29, 15:18, and 25:15 to the group. (Use a simple version of the Bible such as the Living Bible)

These verses talk about being patient with people and the benefits of this.

- Why should we be patient with people?
- What happens when we are impatient? How do people react?
- What examples can the young people think of from their own lives? - do they do things better if someone is patient? Do they clam up if someone is cross?

Give each child a sheet of paper and a pencil and ask them to create a cartoon strip showing the benefits of being patient. Younger children could just draw a picture to illustrate a time in their life when someone was patient with them and it was helpful.

The Point: To think about why we should be patient with other people and how we should put this into practice.

EQUIPMENT

Bible verses written out, paper, pencils or felt tips.

DURATION: 15 MINS.

WE SHALL REAP

MEMORY VERSE | 🔍 WATCHER | 🔄 RESPONSE

"Let us not grow weary while doing good, because in time we shall reap if we don't give up."

Galatians 6:9

Put the children in a line stretching from the bucket of potatoes to the end of the room. As you repeat the verse together, the child nearest the bucket takes a potato and passes it along the line until the last child receives it and puts it on the floor. This carries on until the bucket is empty and the children are fed up moving potatoes from hand to hand! At this point, the sweets should be discovered and the children can share their reward!

The Point: To encourage young people to learn the Bible.

EQUIPMENT

A large bucket full of potatoes with a small packet of sweets hidden at the bottom.

DURATION: 5 MINS.

IMPATIENT PATIENT - A DRAMA ABOUT PATIENCE

DRAMA |  WATCHER |  WARMING UP

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