

## Patience

Some things take time—and that's not always easy. Whether it's waiting in line, holding back a reaction, or trusting God through a long season of uncertainty, patience stretches us. It's not just about waiting quietly—it's about waiting *well*.

This month, we're learning about patience—why it matters, how it grows, and what it teaches us about God's timing. Through nature, we'll look at plants and animals that develop slowly but steadily. Through Scripture, we'll see how patience shaped the lives of people God used in powerful ways.

Patience isn't weakness—it's strength under control. It's trusting that God sees the whole picture, even when we're stuck in the middle.

## **Character Trait of the Month: Patience**

### **Definition for Children:**

Patience means waiting with a good attitude, even when you really want something now.

### **Definition for Parents/Leaders:**

Patience is the ability to wait, endure, or respond calmly when things don't go as expected. It is rooted in trust that God is working—even when we don't see results right away.

### **What Patience Looks Like:**

- Waiting your turn without complaining
- Taking a deep breath instead of reacting in frustration
- Trusting that God's timing is better than your own
- Staying kind while things take time
- Continuing to pray even when answers are slow

### **What Patience Does Not Look Like:**

- Getting upset or angry when things don't happen quickly
- Interrupting others or rushing ahead
- Giving up because results aren't instant
- Pushing your way to the front or always needing to be first
- Reacting out of pressure instead of peace

### **Memory Verse for the Month:**

**“But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.” — Romans 8:25 (NLT)**

### **Suggested Printables for This Month:**

1. **Printable Character Poster:** “Patience”
2. **Printable Memory Verse Page:** Romans 8:25

These can be printed at the beginning of the month and placed on a bulletin board, in a journal, or in a homeschool binder as a monthly focus visual. They serve as simple reminders that God grows good things slowly—and our job is to wait well.

## **Week 1: The Bamboo Plant and Abraham's Long Wait**

Some of the best things God does take time. We don't always see what's happening right away—but that doesn't mean nothing's happening. This week, we're learning about bamboo—a plant that seems to do nothing for years, then suddenly shoots up almost overnight. We'll also meet Abraham, who waited a very long time for God's promise to come true.

Patience isn't just waiting—it's trusting that God is working behind the scenes, even when it looks quiet on the surface.

### **Nature Study: The Bamboo Plant**

Bamboo is one of the fastest-growing plants on Earth—but only after it waits. For the first few years, you won't see much above the ground. It looks like nothing is happening. But under the soil, bamboo is growing a deep, wide root system. Then suddenly—sometimes in just a few days—it can grow several feet tall.

Patience is like that. It may feel slow, but God is laying a strong foundation. And when the time is right, the results will come quickly and beautifully.

### **Discussion Questions: Bamboo and Patience**

1. Why does bamboo take so long to grow at first?
2. What do you think is happening under the ground when we can't see anything?
3. Have you ever felt like you were waiting forever for something?
4. What helps you stay calm and trust while you wait?
5. How can you remember that God is still working—even when it feels slow?

## **Bible Story Connection: Abraham's Long Wait**

**Read Genesis 15:1–6 and 21:1–7 together.**

God promised Abraham that he would have a son and become the father of many nations. But years went by—many years—and nothing happened. Abraham was already old when God made the promise, and he got even older while he waited.

But God didn't forget. When Abraham was 100 years old, his wife Sarah had a baby named Isaac. Abraham's waiting wasn't wasted. It built trust, hope, and faith that God always keeps His promises.

### **Discussion Questions: Abraham**

1. What did God promise Abraham?
2. How long did Abraham have to wait?
3. What do you think he felt during the waiting?
4. How did God keep His promise?
5. How can this story help you when you're waiting on something?

### **Journal Prompts:**

1. Write about a time you had to wait a long time for something.
2. How did it feel? Was it worth the wait?
3. What's something you're waiting for right now?
4. How does bamboo remind you to trust God's timing?
5. Write a prayer asking God to help you grow strong while you wait.

### **Activity Suggestions by Age Group**

#### **Elementary:**

- Draw a picture of bamboo growing from tiny roots to tall stalks.
- Create a "Promise Leaf"—write a promise from God on a green leaf cutout and hang it as a reminder.
- Act out Abraham's story with simple props, celebrating when the promise comes.

#### **Middle School:**

- Write a short story called "The Plant That Waited" about a bamboo shoot with big dreams.
- Track something you're waiting for this month and reflect on how you're growing during the wait.
- Create a patience timeline showing key events in Abraham's story.

#### **High School:**

- Reflect in writing: "Why does God sometimes take His time?" Use Abraham's story as an example.
- Research how bamboo spreads underground and relate it to unseen spiritual growth.
- Choose a personal goal or prayer request and create a journal page tracking your growth during the wait.

## **Week 2: Fruit Trees and Joseph in Prison**

Some things take a long time to grow—but when they do, the result is sweet and full of purpose. This week, we’re learning from fruit trees, which require years of watering, pruning, and care before they ever produce fruit. We’ll also learn from the life of Joseph, who spent years in prison before seeing God’s plan unfold.

Patience isn’t just about waiting—it’s about trusting that something good is growing, even when we don’t yet see the fruit.

### **Nature Study: Fruit Trees**

Apple trees, peach trees, orange trees—they don’t give fruit right away. In fact, most fruit trees take several years before their branches are strong enough to produce anything. Gardeners wait patiently, watering, pruning, and feeding the tree, believing that one day, it will be worth it.

God does the same with us. Sometimes He’s growing things in us slowly so that we’ll be ready when the time comes to produce something sweet and lasting.

### **Discussion Questions: Fruit Trees and Patience**

1. Why does it take so long for fruit trees to produce fruit?
2. What does pruning teach us about growing stronger?
3. How does each season help the tree grow?
4. What’s something in your life that you think God is growing slowly?
5. How can you trust that fruit will come—even if it takes a while?

### **Bible Story Connection: Joseph in Prison**

**Read Genesis 39:19–23 and 41:14–16, 39–43 together.**

Joseph had a dream when he was young—that he would one day be a leader. But his life took a hard turn: he was betrayed by his brothers, sold as a slave, and thrown into prison for something he didn’t do. He spent years waiting—serving faithfully, even in prison—while it seemed like nothing was changing.

But God hadn’t forgotten. At just the right time, Joseph was called out of prison to interpret Pharaoh’s dream, and he was given a position of great honor. His patience through pain prepared him to lead with wisdom.

### **Discussion Questions: Joseph**

1. What do you think Joseph felt while he was in prison?

2. Why do you think God allowed him to wait so long?
3. How did Joseph use his time while he waited?
4. What happened when the waiting was finally over?
5. What does this story teach us about trusting God's timing?

**Journal Prompts:**

1. Write about a time you were growing but didn't realize it until later.
2. What part of your life feels like a "pruning season" right now?
3. How can you serve faithfully while you wait—like Joseph did?
4. What kind of fruit do you want your life to produce one day?
5. Write a prayer asking God to help you wait with faith and purpose.

**Activity Suggestions by Age Group****Elementary:**

- Draw a fruit tree with empty branches and then draw fruit that appears over time.
- Pretend to plant a seed and act out how it slowly becomes a fruit tree.
- Make a "Patience Tree" craft—write ways to wait well on each fruit.

**Middle School:**

- Keep a "Fruit Journal" for the week—track how you're practicing patience each day.
- Write a letter from Joseph's perspective in prison: what he might have been thinking, praying, or learning.
- Create a mini-poster titled "Good Fruit Takes Time" with one Bible verse and a drawing.

**High School:**

- Reflect in writing: "What kind of fruit is God growing in me right now?"
- Research how fruit trees are cultivated and connect that process to personal growth.
- Do a random act of service that takes time or effort—journal what it taught you about slow growth and long-term impact.

### **Week 3: Seasons and the Story of Hannah**

Not all waiting is easy—and some waiting comes with tears. This week, we’re learning from the seasons in nature and from the story of Hannah, a woman who longed for a child and waited patiently through deep sorrow.

Patience doesn’t always mean smiling while we wait. Sometimes it means bringing our pain to God, trusting that He hears, and believing that He will answer at the right time.

#### **Nature Study: The Seasons**

Spring, summer, fall, winter—each season looks and feels different. Some bring new life and color. Others bring rest, stillness, or change. But no matter what, each one is needed. Trees don’t grow fruit all year long. Fields don’t stay green forever. Even the earth needs time to pause and wait.

God designed seasons for a reason. In the same way, our lives have seasons too—times to grow, times to rest, times to grieve, and times to rejoice. Patience means learning to trust Him through each one.

#### **Discussion Questions: Seasons and Patience**

1. What’s your favorite season and why?
2. Why do you think God made the earth to change slowly and in patterns?
3. What does winter teach us about resting and trusting?
4. How is your life like a season right now—growing, waiting, resting, or blooming?
5. How can you be more patient in the season you’re in?

#### **Bible Story Connection: Hannah’s Long Wait**

**Read 1 Samuel 1:1–20 together.**

Hannah wanted to be a mother more than anything, but she couldn’t have children. Year after year, she waited and cried out to God. People didn’t always understand her sadness, and it seemed like nothing was changing. But Hannah didn’t give up—she kept praying.

One day, while she poured out her heart in the temple, God heard her prayer. He answered, and she gave birth to a son named Samuel. But even before she had her answer, Hannah trusted God with her whole heart.

#### **Discussion Questions: Hannah**

1. Why was Hannah so sad?
2. What did she do with her pain instead of giving up?
3. How did God respond to her prayer?
4. What can we learn from how Hannah waited?
5. When you feel discouraged, how can you follow Hannah’s example?

## **Journal Prompts:**

1. Write about a “season” in your life that felt long or hard.
2. How do you feel when you’re waiting for something big?
3. What kind of prayer would you bring to God, like Hannah did?
4. Which season best describes your heart right now—and why?
5. Write a prayer asking God to help you trust Him in the waiting.

## **Activity Suggestions by Age Group**

### **Elementary:**

- Create a paper plate "Season Wheel" with drawings of all four seasons.
- Color a tree in all four seasons—label how each one helps it grow.
- Make a “Hannah Heart” craft—draw a heart and write a prayer inside.

### **Middle School:**

- Write a short story titled “When My Season Changed.”
- Reflect in a journal: “How do I act in waiting seasons—and how do I want to grow?”
- Act out Hannah’s story with simple narration and scenes.

### **High School:**

- Write a devotional comparing the seasons to spiritual growth in your life.
- Research how seasonal changes affect agriculture—and how it relates to growth in our lives.
- Journal about a current area of life where you feel stuck—and ask God to help you embrace the season.

## **Week 4: The Caterpillar’s Transformation and the Story of Simeon**

Patience often feels slow—but God is always doing something in the waiting. This week, we’ll learn from the caterpillar, who quietly goes through an unseen transformation before becoming something beautiful. We’ll also meet Simeon, a man who waited his whole life to see the Savior—and never gave up hope.

God doesn’t forget our waiting. When the time is right, He makes all things beautiful.

### **Animal Study: The Caterpillar**

Caterpillars don’t become butterflies overnight. After spending time eating and growing, they wrap themselves in a chrysalis and wait. Inside that covering, a quiet miracle happens. No one can see it—but slowly, the caterpillar is being transformed.

When it’s ready, the butterfly emerges. Its wings are colorful, delicate, and free. But none of it could happen without the quiet, hidden time of waiting. That’s what patience does—it prepares us for what’s coming next.

### **Discussion Questions: The Caterpillar and Patience**

1. What happens inside the chrysalis that we can’t see?
2. Why do you think butterflies need time to grow before they can fly?
3. How is waiting like being in a chrysalis?
4. What’s something in your life that God might be changing quietly?
5. How can we trust God, even when we don’t see the outcome yet?

### **Bible Story Connection: Simeon Waits for the Savior**

**Read Luke 2:25–32 together.**

Simeon was a righteous, faithful man who had been waiting for a long time. God had promised him that he would see the Messiah before he died. Year after year, he kept believing—even as he got older. Then one day, as Mary and Joseph brought baby Jesus into the temple, Simeon knew—this was the One.

He held the baby in his arms and praised God with joy. His patience had been rewarded. Simeon reminds us that God always keeps His promises—no matter how long it takes.

### **Discussion Questions: Simeon**

1. What promise did God make to Simeon?
2. How do you think Simeon felt as the years went by?
3. What did Simeon do when he finally saw Jesus?
4. Why do you think God asks us to wait sometimes?
5. What’s one promise from God that you’re still holding on to?

**Journal Prompts:**

1. Write about a time something amazing came after a long wait.
2. What kind of “butterfly” are you hoping God is creating in you?
3. How do you feel about waiting for things you can’t control?
4. What does Simeon’s story teach you about trusting God for a lifetime?
5. Write a prayer thanking God for working—even in the waiting.

**Activity Suggestions by Age Group****Elementary:**

- Create a “Chrysalis Craft” using tissue paper and yarn to show the transformation.
- Draw a before-and-after picture of a caterpillar and butterfly—label it “God is Changing Me.”
- Act out Simeon’s story and celebrate when Jesus is revealed.

**Middle School:**

- Write a short story or comic about a caterpillar learning to wait patiently.
- Reflect on what kind of transformation God might be doing in your life right now.
- Make a “Patience Journal” page with these columns: What I’m Waiting For / What God Is Doing / How I Can Grow.

**High School:**

- Research the science behind metamorphosis and write a devotional comparing it to spiritual growth.
- Write a reflective letter from Simeon’s perspective—how it felt to wait and finally see the Messiah.
- Choose a personal dream or promise you’re believing for—and create a vision board with scriptures and prayer notes as you wait.