

While We Wait

BIBLE PASSAGE: 2 Peter 3:1-13

MAIN POINT: Peter wrote that Jesus will come back soon.

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How do we live while waiting for Jesus to come back? We follow Jesus and tell everyone about Him.

**TEACH
THE STORY**
(15–20 MINUTES)
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**EXPERIENCE
THE STORY**
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**REVIEW
THE STORY**
(10+ MINUTES)
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Peter's story of faith began when Jesus said, "Follow Me." (Matt. 4:18) Peter and his brother Andrew—two fishermen from Galilee—left their nets and followed Jesus. As one of Jesus' twelve disciples, Peter witnessed firsthand Jesus' miracles and teachings. He saw Jesus heal his mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14) and raise a little girl from the dead (Luke 8:49-55). He saw Jesus walk on water, and Peter walked on water too. (Matt. 14:25-29)

Peter believed that Jesus is the Messiah (Matt. 16:16),

and he was understandably upset when Jesus predicted that Peter would deny Him (Matt. 26:34-35). Peter fell asleep as Jesus prayed in the garden, and he drew his sword to defend Jesus when He was arrested. (Matt. 26:40; John 18:10) Peter denied Jesus three times, but after the resurrection Jesus appeared to Peter and the other disciples. Then Jesus restored Peter to ministry at the sea of Galilee. (John 21:15-19)

The first 12 chapters in the Book of Acts record the Holy Spirit's work through Peter after Pentecost. God revealed to Peter that the gospel is for everyone—Jews and Gentiles. Peter was arrested and imprisoned for sharing the gospel, but an angel of the Lord rescued him. (Acts 12:1-8)

When Peter wrote his second letter, he was in prison again. Peter was aware that death was imminent. (2 Pet. 1:13-15) Like Jude, Peter warned against false teachers. Some people thought the believers were foolish for thinking Jesus is coming again. Peter explained that God is patient, and He wants everyone to trust in Jesus. Soon afterward, Peter was killed in Rome as Jesus had predicted. (John 21:18-19)

Peter's letter was written nearly two thousand years ago to believers who were not far removed from Jesus' life on earth. We still wait eagerly for Jesus' return, but God calls us to use our time on earth as an opportunity to better know and love Him, and to tell others about Him.



Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit <http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/the-gospel-project>.

The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Wait for it:** Bring a small wrapped prize for each child. Explain that if children wait patiently until the end of the Bible story, they will get a gift.
- **Draw it:** Before the session, draw Earth and other heavenly bodies with bright, shining colors. Place a piece of paper over your illustration, covering it completely. During the story, draw a globe with duller colors on the paper. Add dirty looking splotches as you name some of the lies, and add a cross as you explain God's desire for everyone to trust Jesus. At the end, rip down your paper and crumple it up, exposing the new earth drawing.

While We Wait

2 Peter 3:1-13

Peter, one of Jesus' friends, was an old man and a leader in the church. **Peter wrote a letter to tell the believers to read God's Word and watch out for teachers who said things that weren't true.** God's Word helps us know how to live. Peter told the believers how to live the way Jesus wants them to live.

Peter also wrote about the day when Jesus will come back. Some of the false teachers said that Jesus will never come back. This is not true! Peter was with Jesus when He promised He would come back. So **Peter told the believers to be ready.**

Peter wrote, "Dear friends, the prophets said this would happen. They said people would make fun of you for believing that Jesus will come back. But God is not being slow to keep His promise. God is being patient. He wants everyone to know Jesus. He wants everyone to turn away from their sin and turn to Him!"

No one knows exactly when Jesus will come, so we must always be ready. Peter told the believers to live in a way that makes God happy. When Jesus comes, He will make the new heavens and a new earth.

Christ Connection: Some people thought the believers were foolish for thinking Jesus is coming again, but it is true! Peter said that God is patient. He wants everyone to trust in Jesus. At just the right time, Jesus will come again. We look forward to that day when Jesus will make the new heavens and a new earth.

Teach THE STORY

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Welcome and worship with song

- “Children of the Kingdom” song
- “I Have Hope” song

Greet preschoolers with a smile. As preschoolers arrive, sing an action song such as “Children of the Kingdom” to engage them and help them feel welcomed. Begin worship by leading preschoolers in “I Have Hope.”

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Bible
- “While We Wait” video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

Share how many days it is until your birthday. Discuss how hard it is to wait. Allow children to tell what they are most looking forward to about their birthday.

SAY • It is exciting to think about something happy like a birthday, but sometimes it is really hard to wait. Sometimes it even feels like it will never happen! In today’s Bible story we will hear about something really exciting that Peter and other believers were waiting for. Here’s a hint, I am waiting for it too!

Open your Bible to 2 Peter 3. Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

- Bible
- Key Passage Poster
- Bible marker or ribbon
- “All Scripture” song

Practice the key passage and a Bible skill

Place a Bible marker or ribbon at 2 Timothy 3:16. Invite a few volunteers to come up one at a time and open your

Bible to the key passage.

SAY • Our key passage reminds us that everything in the Bible is inspired from God, so we can trust it. We can trust that Jesus will come back someday just like our Bible story said He will.

Sing the key passage song “All Scripture” together.

Learn the big picture question and answer

SAY • Let’s practice our big picture question. *How do we live while waiting for Jesus to come back? We follow Jesus and tell everyone about Him.* That’s right. While we wait, we can live in a way that makes Jesus happy and we can tell others about Him.

• Big Picture Question Poster

Respond through song and prayer

SAY • Peter wrote that Jesus will come back soon.

Some people thought the believers were foolish for thinking Jesus is coming again, but it is true! Peter said that God is patient. He wants everyone to trust in Jesus. At just the right time, Jesus will come again. We look forward to that day when Jesus will make the new heavens and a new earth.

Sing “I Have Hope” and “I Will Stand” as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing “One.” You may also collect an offering.

SAY • Jesus, we are so excited that one day You will come back. Lord, we do not know if that day is soon or far away. We ask You to help us to be strong in following You and bold in telling others about You. Amen.

• Main Point Poster
• “I Have Hope” song
• “I Will Stand” song
• “One” song
• offering basket

Transition to experience the story

• countdown video (optional)

Experience THE STORY

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Play very slow charades

Leaders will play out people, actions, or things using exaggerated movements as if in slow motion. Invite children to guess what you are showing them.

SAY • How did it feel to watch [*leader*] move so slow? The believers were tempted to think that God was being slow to keep His promise, but Peter said that God is patient. He wants everyone to trust in Jesus. **Peter wrote that Jesus will come back soon.** At just the right time, Jesus will come again. We look forward to that day!



Play “Jumping John, Laughing Lucy”

Invite children to stand in a circle. One by one, give each child an action with the same letter as their first name to perform.

SAY • We had to be patient in that game for everyone to participate, but wasn't it fun that no one was left out? **Peter wrote that Jesus will come back soon.** He told believers to be patient because God wanted everyone to have the opportunity to hear about Jesus. God doesn't want to leave anyone out!

Happy and sad faces

Invite preschoolers to make a happy face on one side of a paper plate and a sad face on the other side. As children create, invite them to talk to you about situations that make them happy and sad.

- paper plates
- crayons and markers
- googly eyes (optional)

SAY • *How do we live while waiting for Jesus to come back? We follow Jesus and tell everyone about Him.*

That will make Jesus very happy!

Build with 30 blocks

Build a tower and/or a train with 30 blocks, counting out each one. As you build discuss how long 30 years feels.

- blocks

SAY • **Peter wrote that Jesus would come back soon.** He wanted to encourage believers who had been waiting 30 years for Jesus to come back. That is a long time. Peter said God is patient because He wants everyone to trust in Him!

Play with a parachute

Invite preschoolers to hold the edges of a parachute or large sheet. Invite preschoolers to move the parachute as music plays. Stop the music periodically and explain to preschoolers that they must wait for the music to begin again before they can move the parachute.

- parachute
- large sheet (optional)
- "I Have Hope" song (optional)
- "All Scripture" song (optional)

SAY • Was it hard to wait to move to the parachute? The believers in our Bible story were having a hard time waiting for Jesus to come back. **Peter wrote that Jesus would come back soon.** God is patient because He wants everyone to trust in Him!

Transition to review the story

- countdown video (optional)

Review THE STORY

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Review

Point to the giant timeline or big story circle as you review today's Bible story. Ask the following review questions:

- Bible
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle
- Main Point Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Key Passage Poster
- "I Have Hope" song
- "All Scripture" song

1. Who wrote the letter in today's Bible story? (*Peter*)
2. What did Peter tell believers? (**Peter wrote that Jesus will come back soon.**)
3. Why is God patient in sending Jesus back for us? (*He wants everyone to hear about Jesus.*)
4. False teachers were saying Jesus will not return. Is that true? (*no*)
5. Does any person know exactly when Jesus will come back? (*No, only God the Father knows.*)
6. ***How do we live while waiting for Jesus to come back? We follow Jesus and tell everyone about Him.***

SAY • Sometimes it can feel like a long wait to see Jesus, but we should be patient like God. God is patient and wants everyone to hear about Jesus. Jesus will return at just the right time.

Sing the unit theme song or key passage song.

Pray

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have.

SAY • Jesus, we are so excited that You are coming back soon. Help us, Lord, while we wait for You to be brave in telling everyone we know all about You. Amen.

Missions story

If your preschool ministry is planning a missions activity, discuss the activity, the reasons for it, and your group's progress. If you are not participating in a missions activity, talk about how we can tell others about Jesus while we wait for His return. You may also show the "Meet Daniel" video.

- "Meet Daniel" video
- "Missions Prayer Cards" printable, 1 per child

SAY • Daniel Bird left his home in America to go and tell the Roma people about Jesus. Let's remember to pray for Daniel and all the men and woman teaching the Roma people about Jesus. We can pray that many people will come to believe in Jesus.

Play "Red Light, Green Light"

Invite preschoolers to stand shoulder to shoulder on a wall across from you. Explain that you will turn away from the children and say "green light." Children will be able to move toward you when the light is green. When you say "red light," children must freeze in place. For older preschoolers, invite children who move during red light to go back to the starting point.

SAY • It can be hard to be patient. We just want to hurry up and get to the other side of the room, right? Peter wrote to believers who felt impatient about Jesus' return. Peter told them not to lose hope and to be patient. **Peter wrote that Jesus will come back soon.**