

Patience Activities

Ghost in the Graveyard

Long a staple of neighborhood play, Ghost in the Graveyard is a fun way to develop patience in the form of waiting quietly with friends and family.

Game play is simple: One person (the “ghost”) hides within a pre-determined range (this can be your own yard, neighborhood, or in your home) while the other players count.

This can be done in one of two ways:

1. Count to 50 and then yell, “Ready or not, here we come.”
2. Chant: “One o’clock, two o’clock, three o’clock, rock. Four o’clock, five o’clock, six o’clock, rock. Seven o’clock, eight o’clock, nine o’clock, rock. Ten o’clock, eleven o’clock, twelve o’clock, rock.” And then yell, “MIDNIGHT.”

At that point, everyone goes to look for the “ghost,” who stays very still and very quiet.

When the ghost is found, the finder yells “Ghost in the Graveyard” and everyone runs back to base—or “ghoul.” If the ghost tags someone before they get to base, that person becomes the ghost. If no one is tagged, the ghost gets to practice his or her patience again.

Breathe Deep

The benefits of stilling our bodies and taking deep breaths are lauded in lots of circles—from medical communities to spiritual communities, from nursing homes to preschools. People who practice deep breathing know it makes us worry less and feel better.

And it can also help us practice patience. Why? Because it takes patience to sit and “do nothing.”

So, why not try some deep breathing exercises as a family?

To do this, choose a time when everyone has 5 free minutes—yes, only 5 minutes to start! Turn on some relaxing instrumental music (this can be whatever your family likes—but choose something people won’t sing along with in their minds!).

Have everyone sit criss-cross applesauce on the floor (if able, if not, firm chairs will do).

Have everyone set their arms on their legs and turn palms upward. With backs straight (but not stiff), have everyone take a deep breath in (count to 5) and then out (count to 5). Repeat. After a few times, say the word *patience* as you breathe in (you’re breathing in patience!) and then *impatience* or *anxiety* or *hurriedness* as you breathe out.

It’s a wonderful image and practice of how we live into the spiritual gifts and practice of patience.

Rainbow Layered Gelatin Dessert

One of the benefits—and detriments—of modern life is that most of us have access to food nearly *whenever* we want it. Unlike people of long ago, we don't need to wait hours and days to enjoy or food. And we tend to become impatient about our meals because of this!

A great way to remedy this is to create a special treat that takes great patience. While there are many delicious foods that take a long time to prepare, rainbow gelatin desserts are easy—if time-consuming—and have the added benefit of ending with a rainbow to remind us of God's promise to us and love for all.

You'll need:

- 9x13-in glass cake pan
- 6 small packages of flavored gelatin (family's choice on flavor—just try to get a rainbow-eque mix of colors)
- Boiling water

Follow the package instructions for making the gelatin for one flavor. Pour it into the cake pan. Refrigerate for until fully set.

While that layer is setting up, make the second flavor. Allow it to cool on the counter.

When first layer is set up and second flavor is room temperature, pour over first layer.

Repeat until all the layers are made.

This will take hours. But when the gelatin is ready, celebrate the benefit of waiting by eating together (dollops of whipped cream help!).

Pray for Patience

We joke that we should never pray for patience—as God will surely give us something to wait for! While this is *sometimes* true that God answers prayers by simply teaching us to wait (read: *making* us wait), being patient people is a sign of Christ’s work in us. Practicing patience when the rest of the world shuffles and shoves and hurries on is one way we can show love to our busy neighbors and shine Christ’s love in this world.

So, praying for patience seems like a good idea! As your family talks about patience this month, make it a point to pray for opportunities to show patience in our frantic world.

Consider praying:

Dear God:

Make us people of patience. Where others run, let us walk. Where others push their way to the front, let us be happy bringing up the rear. Where others shout “me first,” let us willingly go last. And let us do this because this is what Jesus modeled for us and because it’s a way to share your love and grace.

Amen

But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life.
1 Timothy 1:16