



## GROUP DISCUSSION

- ❑ **CONFIDENTIALITY** | What's said in the group stays in the group.
- ❑ **NO CROSS-TALK** | Be considerate of others as they share. Refrain from side conversations and texting during group time.
- ❑ **NO FIXING** | We are not in the group to fix each other. Jesus does that part.
- ❑ **SHARING** | Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Don't talk too much or too little. Every person brings something valuable to the group.



## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

# WAITING IN FAITH

How much of your life is spent waiting? Think about it. You wait at the doctor's office. You wait for what seems like hours for the mechanic to make that minor repair. You wait for class to end so you can go to lunch. Life is filled with waiting, and waiting can be hard in a "you can have it now" world of smartphones and next-day delivery.

A life of faith includes periods of waiting on God. God wants to grow your faith and character through those periods. He wants to show you that He is always faithful, and there are times when you need to walk and wait in faith.

**Q:** *What's a good thing you had to wait a long time for?*



## DEEPER DIVE

Select 2–3 questions to discuss as a group.

# DESPERATE TIMES

We’ve seen Abraham at his best and his worst. He’s shown incredible faith, but he’s also buckled under the pressure and made terrible decisions. Like us, Abraham is living through the ebb and flow that is a life of faith. Sometimes he gets it. Other times he doesn’t. It’s been 10 years since he entered the land of Canaan, and he still doesn’t have an heir. He and his wife are getting up there in age, and Sarah thinks, “Well, desperate times call for desperate measures.”

🗣️: *Have one to two volunteers read Genesis 16:1–6, then have another person retell the story in their own words.*

🗣️: *How does Abraham show poor leadership in this story?*

🗣️: *What are some differences between an impatient person and a patient person?*



## REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

Select 2–3 questions from this section to answer.

# CAUSE AND EFFECT

Our impatience always has causes and effects. We see that in Abraham and Sarah’s marriage, and we see it in our lives as well. Let’s look at three causes of impatience and some of the consequences.

Causes of Impatience:

- *God’s delay.* Abraham was growing desperate because God’s promise hadn’t been fulfilled. We might not like to admit it but sometimes we don’t think we have time to wait on God, which is why we buy things before we have the money or get too physical in a relationship before we put a ring on it and make a real commitment.

- *Our desires.* Sarah wanted a child. Her desire wasn't wrong. What was wrong was what she did to fulfill that desire. Many of our desires are good but they can become all-consuming and make us think with just our emotions, which can be dangerous and costly.
- *The world's demands.* Sarah's way might have been culturally acceptable but it wasn't God's way. You can't meet spiritual ends with ungodly means.

We see the consequences of Abraham and Sarah's impatience in the tension it brought into their marriage. Years later there would also be tension between Ishmael, Hagar's son, and Isaac, Sarah's son, and that tension is still there in the Middle East between their descendants.

♀: *How does patience help build your character?*

♀: *What are practical ways to keep your desires under control?*

## LEARNING PATIENCE

The first step to learning patience in a life of faith is to *confess your impatience*. Speak honestly with God about areas where it's hard to wait on Him. Give Him the desires of your heart and ask Him to reveal any sinful ways you're trying to satisfy those desires. The second step is to *ask the Spirit for help*. God's blessing is always based on His promise, not your effort. So, submit yourself to the Spirit and ask to get on His agenda and timetable for your life.

♀: *Name one to two areas in your life where you need more patience. What can you do this week to practice patience in that [those] area(s)?*



PRAY

Follow the steps of learning patience in the above section in your prayer. Finish by having someone read Romans 8:5–11.