



Children's Christmas Resources 2017

Week One – Simeon's Advent

Introduction to the Children's Resources

This year's Christmas resources follow the *Searching for God* theme where we will explore:

Week One - Simeon's Advent

Introducing Simeon, a man who waited patiently for the coming of the Messiah. God wants us to have patience and we will discover how to cultivate patience in our lives.

Week Two - The Shape of Christmas

Each one of us has a God-shaped-hole in our lives. Jesus is this missing piece and only He can fill the God shaped hole if we choose God and allow Him to fill our hearts.

Week Three – Trusting God

We can trust God during unexpected change and challenges. Learn how God is with us in every situation.

Week Four – Responding to God

God reveals Jesus to us in different ways. We have a choice to either worship Jesus or reject Him.

Where to use the resources

Below you will find interactive messages, activities and *Home and Beyond* activities that correspond with the resources provided for Corps to use during the Advent season. The interactive messages have been written with the intention of being used in either Kid's Church, Kid's Club, at an outdoor Carol's event, mid-week programs or as interactive messages in corporate worship.

How to use the resources

We have provided four interactive messages (one each week) four activities (one each week) as well as weekly Home and Beyond activities to help resource families to continue the Advent conversation at home. **The resources are yours to choose from and fit into your space.**

Home and Beyond cards can be used each week to give to families as an extension to what has been explored during the messages or activities. You are encouraged to give these out to all families connected with your Corps to equip them to engage in conversation and activities around the Advent theme during their week.

God bless you as you prepare.



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Week One - Children's Message – Simeon's Advent

For this message you will need:

- * Laptop or iPad/tablet
- * Table
- * A sack (pillow case will be sufficient)
- * A Christmas tree ornament
- * A Christmas photo from previous years
- * A list of family and friends names
- * A toy
- * An ingredient for a Christmas Cake – packet of flour or dried fruit mix
- * Packet of Christmas biscuits
- * Candle
- * An alarm clock
- * The word **PATIENT** printed on paper in large print

The key words in this message are '**PATIENT, PATIENTLY and WAITING.**'

[SAY] 'Well Christmas is just around the corner and I am wondering if there is anyone here who would like to help me plan my Christmas? I have a sack here to help me but I need someone to type up my list for me so that I don't forget to do something. So I need someone who can type.'

(Choose an older child to come out and type up the list on the laptop/tablet as you dictate. Ask the child to just type the words that are in **CAPITALS AND IN RED**. Pull out the item from the sack that is related to the list. As the child is typing explain the details that are in *Italics*.)

(Pull out the Christmas tree decoration) CHRISTMAS TREE

*'The first thing I need to do is buy a Christmas tree, then find my ornaments in the cupboard and finally plan a time to decorate the tree. When the time comes I will then watch **PATIENTLY** as my family decorate the tree – usually not the way I would choose it to be decorated!!' **(Pull a face or roll your eyes in frustration)** But I will be patient and let them enjoy the decorating. I had better sort out my Christmas music and have that playing in the background.'*

(Pull out a previous year's Christmas photo) SANTA PHOTO

*'Ok, I need to find out which shopping centre Santa is appearing at, sort out what I am going to wear in the photo, go and get my haircut and wait **PATIENTLY** in the long line to have my photo taken with Santa. Imagine if you had to wait half an hour in line, and when it was your turn, Santa needed to take a coffee break. How frustrating that would be to have to wait for Santa to come back from his coffee break. I really hope that doesn't happen. But if it does I will try and be **PATIENT.**'*

(Pull out a piece of paper with names on it) PRESENT LIST

*'I need to write a list of all my family and friends that I would like to buy a gift for. Oooh, I wonder if any of your names will make the list this year! I need to walk around the shops searching **PATIENTLY** for just the right gift for each person. I really hope my Auntie Gertrude likes the gift this year. Last year she complained about the tea towel that I gave her because it had Australian Native*



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Wildflowers on it! She said she was allergic to those flowers and that I would have to return the tea towel to the shop. So this year she is getting another tea towel – and some Zyrtec! (Or replace the Auntie Gertrude story with one of your own experiences.)

(Pull out a toy) MY GIFT LIST

*'I need to write MY Christmas wish list of all the toys that I would like for Christmas this year. Now let's see, there is that new game that I want called Pie Face. Has anyone played that game before? I've heard its heaps of fun. Well I will put it on my list and wait **PATIENTLY** to see if I receive it. Now I feel a bit disorganised this year because normally I make this list in July but I've been so busy this year that I'm a bit late making my list. Has anyone made their list yet?'*

(Pull out a packet of flour or dried fruit) CHRISTMAS CAKE

*'I need to make the World Famous (your name) Christmas Fruit Cake. First I need to find that recipe, buy the ingredients, then actually make the cake. I will need to wait **PATIENTLY** for the cake to cook and cool down before I can decorate it. Last year I heard a story about someone who had left their cake on the bench to cool down and when they turned their back, their dog jumped up and took a bite out of the cake. They had to make the cake all over again. Poor Daisy dog had such a tummy ache the next day!*

(Pull out a packet of Christmas biscuits) SANTA'S SNACKS AND DRINK

*'Right I need to choose something yummy to leave out for Santa on Christmas Eve. I can't give him these biscuits because they are out of date and I would hate to make Santa sick. I will need to go shopping with my family and be very **PATIENT** as sometimes my family argue over what sort of food Santa likes.' What sort of food do you leave out for Santa?*

(Pull out a candle) CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT/CAROLS IN THE DOMAIN

*'Every year I watch Carols on the TV but this year I would like to go to go myself. I am really hoping that the TV cameras find me in the audience so that I could be on TV! I've always wanted to be famous. But buying tickets is really hard because so many people want to go. I will have to wait **PATIENTLY** on the phone when I ring up to buy tickets. Sometimes it can take sooooo long. Oh I do hope I get some tickets.'*

(Pull out an alarm clock) GO TO BED EARLY ON CHRISTMAS EVE

*'Now I need to go to bed as soon as I get home from the Carols. Once Hi 5/The Wiggles and Santa appear at the Carols I will rush home and go to bed. I will need to be **PATIENT** as I fall asleep as I will be rather excited. Oh I do hope I can get to sleep. I better set my alarm so I don't sleep in!'*

(Pull out the typed word PATIENT) The last thing on my list is a BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR JESUS

'I need to decide what I am going to give Jesus for His birthday this year. Every year I give him something as a present to say thank you for everything He has done for me. For example, one year I promised Jesus that I would tell my friends about Him and even invite my friends to come to our carol service with me. I think Jesus would have been happy would that birthday present. This year I am thinking about giving Jesus a promise that I will be more patient when waiting for Jesus to answer my prayers. Do you think He will like that?' 'Now waiting for Christmas morning is going to be the



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longest wait ever. I will need to wait **PATIENTLY** for Christmas morning to arrive as this is my favourite part of Christmas, giving Jesus His gift on Christmas Day.'

'Okay well that's quite a list, and it's a lot of planning and it's a lot of waiting **PATIENTLY** isn't it.'

'I wonder if you have ever waited **PATIENTLY** for something or someone. Maybe you have waited for your birthday or maybe you have waited for a holiday. Maybe you have waited for a new puppy or kitten.'

'I know sometimes I wait for my family in the mornings to get ready for school and I get impatient with them when they seem to take so long putting on their shoes or packing their school bags.'

'Being patient can sometimes be hard when you are waiting for something for so long.'

'There was a man in the Bible, his name was Simeon and he waited patiently for so many years for the arrival of Jesus. He waited for a very long time and finally after a long time of waiting very patiently Simeon finally met Jesus.'

'I wonder what made Simeon so **PATIENT** while he was waiting for the arrival of Jesus.'

'I wonder when you pray to God, you have had to wait a long time for God to answer your prayer.'

'Well we are going to explore Simeon more a little bit later on and find out how he was so **PATIENT**.'

'This week, I hope you remember to be **PATIENT** with one another. It asks us in the Bible to be patient. It says in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 2, 'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. So this week remember to be patient.'



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Children's Activity

For this activity you will need:

- * A pass the parcel with heaps of layers
- * Packet of lollies or a treat to share inside the parcel
- * Bible
- * Watermelon with pips if possible (enough for a piece for each child)
- * Oranges (enough for a piece for each child)
- * Slips of coloured paper
- * Textas
- * Stapler

Let's Get Started

Play 'Pass the Parcel'

The goal is when you play this version of 'Pass the Parcel' to make it as long as possible with many layers. The children have to display **PATIENCE** in opening each layer. Please don't be tempted to place an item in between each layer. The idea is that they have to be patient to receive the end product (a bag of lolly snakes or similar to share amongst the group).

Tell the children that there is something really good inside this parcel for all of them to share. They need to be **PATIENT** and unwrap one layer at a time. Play Christmas music during the game.

God's Big Idea

Read the story of Simeon meeting Jesus in Luke 2:25-35 (ICB)

*A man named Simeon lived in Jerusalem. He was a good man and very religious. He was **waiting** for the time when God would help Israel. The Holy Spirit was in him. The Holy Spirit told Simeon that he would not die before he saw the Christ promised by the Lord. The Spirit led Simeon to the Temple. Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to the Temple to do what the law said they must do. Then Simeon took the baby in his arms and thanked God:*

"Now, Lord, you can let me, your servant; die in peace as you said. I have seen your Salvation with my own eyes. You prepared him before all people. He is a light for the non-Jewish people to see. He will bring honor to your people, the Israelites."

Jesus' father and mother were amazed at what Simeon had said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, "Many in Israel will fall and many will rise because of this child. He will be a sign from God that many people will not accept. The things they think in secret will be made known. And the things that will happen will make your heart sad, too."



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*'Wow, I wonder what made Simeon so **PATIENT** all those years waiting for Jesus to be born. The Bible says Simeon was a good man. In some versions Simeon is described as a righteous man. This means he had a heart that wanted to please God and obey God's word.'*

'The Bible also says that he was devout (very religious) which means he lived his life in a way that was aware of God's presence. He knew that God was with him. He also kept the law strictly.'

It says that Simeon was waiting. In the Old Testament in Numbers 8:24-25 it suggests that he was over 50 years old. Imagine being so old – 50!! So he had been waiting a long time.

- *Ask the children if they think there is anyone here over 50 years old? (No didn't think so!)*

Go through some of the kid's ages – 8, 9, 10 etc.

- *Is there anything that you have been waiting for, for a long time? (Wait for answers – Christmas, Birthdays etc.)*

Some of you have been waiting for quite some time. Imagine Simeon waiting over 50 years. Imagine how patient he was. He had prayed all those years ago and was still waiting for God to answer his prayer.

- *I wonder what things Simeon may have done to help him be patient. Remember it says that Simeon was a righteous and devout man. (He kept his eyes on God and kept up a friendship with God. He was busy pleasing God and obeying God.)*

What's the point?

'When we pray and ask for something it is important to remember that God isn't a fairy god mother. He just doesn't grant us our wishes. He knows what we need and He will sometimes answer our prayers in ways that we don't expect. Sometimes when we pray we think that God is taking His time in answering our prayers. We become impatient and want the answer straight away.'

The important thing to remember is that we are patient while waiting for God to answer our prayers and that like Simeon we keep our friendship with God and we obey God.

Ask the children if they are a patient person. (Some will say yes and some will say no.)

- *I wonder if anyone here who gets impatient with their brother or sister.*
- *I wonder if you ever get impatient with your friends.*
- *I wonder if you ever get impatient with your parents.*
- *I wonder if you ever get impatient with a TV show or video game.*

We all get impatient at times but it says in the Bible to 'Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.' Ephesians 4:2 (NLT)

What are some ways that can help us when we need to be patient? (Wait for answers)



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- * Sometimes it helps to count to 10 slowly and breathe deeply.
- * Sometimes it helps to stop and pray and ask Jesus to help us to be patient.
- * Sometimes it can help to remember a special verse from the Bible that talks about being patient.

Remember this!

The Fruit of the Spirit

'There is a verse in the Bible that says, 'But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.' Galatians 5:22-23.'

Tell the children Paul in these verses is not talking about normal fruit, but talking about characteristics of our lives that the holy spirit grows in us. BUT if we were to match up a fruit with this verse, what fruit would match the word PATIENT'.

Encourage answers but then settle on watermelon because when you eat it, you want to pick out all the pips first or an orange because you usually want to peel it first before eating it and this can take a while.

Enjoy a feast of oranges and watermelon together while talking about the verse. Be aware of any allergies.

Encourage the kids to memorise the verse together.

Chat with God

Make a paper chain with prayers on it. Give each child a slip of coloured paper and marker.

Encourage them to write on the paper something that they need to show patience in this week. Join the slips together to make a chain and hang around the room.

Finish by praying together asking that God will help them become a more patient person and to be able to wait for answered prayer.



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Home and Beyond

Print out the following 'Home and Beyond' cards for each child to take home and do with their family.

Home and Beyond Cards

This week show patience with a brother, sister or family member

With your family enjoy eating a watermelon or an orange this week. Explain to your family the reason why watermelon and oranges can remind us to be patient. Can you remember? (The pips and peel)

Think of a gift that you could give Jesus this year to help celebrate His birthday on Christmas Day. Write it in a card and place it under the Christmas tree. On Christmas morning, open the card and tell Jesus His gift.

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