

ALLEY Rundown – April 20-21, 2024

Today's Bible Story: I Keep Forgettin' (Golden Calf) • *Exodus 32:1-35*

Today's Key Question: What can you think about when it's hard to wait?

Today's Bottom Line: When you have to wait, remember what's true.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Wait for the LORD. Be strong and don't lose hope. Wait for the LORD.* Psalm 27:14 (NIRV)

LG Supplies: One large bag of Skittles per campus. 5 blindfolds per campus.

PRE-SERVICE VIDEO: *Dude Perfect*

SLIDE: *Theme*

Welcome to the Alley! This is the very best place to be on this particular day. It is full of great people, fun and, most importantly, candy.

We'll tackle the candy in a minute.

Anyone like to cook out? Grill burgers, hotdogs, maybe even some foil packs with those delicious vegetables? *(Pause)* Me too! You can never go wrong with food on the grill and hanging with friends. However, one thing to watch out for while at any cookout are the suspicious side dishes. You know exactly what I'm talking about, don't you?

Macaroni salad. Green bean casserole. Some orange thing with JELL-O and nuts on it. And *always* be wary of a dish called pink fluff. If you get this wrong, let's just say it can have . . . explosive consequences . . . later in the day.

I'm here to help you sniff out any suspicious side dishes! I'll test and train your taste-testing senses. It's critical for each of you to distinguish between the subtle differences in flavors, spices, and staleness. Let's get some volunteers! You can **ONLY** volunteer if you have no food allergies, especially to food dyes.

*Select five kids **with no allergies** and bring them to the stage. Once they're up there, hand out blindfolds to each one.*

Oh, sorry, did I mention the blindfolds? *(pause)* Oops. Anyway, thanks so much for joining me on stage! We're playing a game called 'Guess That Flavor'!

SLIDE: "Guess That Flavor"

It's pretty simple and straightforward. In each round, blindfolded volunteers will be handed the same flavor of Skittle. It's your job to quickly identify the flavor *and* color. When you think you've got it, raise your hand. First one up gets called on, and if you get it right, you get 50 points.

After five rounds, the person with the most points wins! Any questions? *(pause)* Great! Let's do it!

AUDIO: *Upbeat Game Music*

Play the game. Kids should be directed to eat the candy at the same time. Use the 5 flavors of skittle in the bag: orange, lemon, lime, grape and strawberry.

After all rounds, count the points and declare a winner, then applaud all volunteers.

That was an incredible display of tasting skills. Each of you should be proud of your efforts. I know I am proud to have helped prepare your taste buds!

How many of you have had to wait for something you really wanted?? Let's be honest in that moment—waiting is the worst. In life, though, you'll have to wait for stuff. It's inevitable.

When our family goes to an amusement park, we have to wait sometimes for hours before getting on a ride. We wait for food to heat up in the microwave. We even wait for our video to load on YouTube.

Without responding, just think of times you have to wait. Think of times when you want something now, but you can't have it yet. At school, on the playground, with family, getting food, downloading things, logging on . . . you can probably think of a long list!

Regardless of how long the waiting takes, your reaction is important. There are good and bad responses to these situations. How do we make sure we respond well?

Great question! And when we have great questions, we need great answers. And the best place to start is this book right here—the Bible! Remember, the Bible is a collection of books, letters, poems, and prophecies written by real people who had real experiences with God. And God inspired them to write all these things down so people like us could experience God for ourselves all these years later! Let's dive into our story for today.

VIDEO: *The So and So Show* (14:09)

This is such a wild story, isn't it? Even after seeing miracles, the Israelites still wanted a new god because they didn't want to wait.

The Israelites could offer no excuses for their poor choices. When the Israelites had been freed from slavery, they had witnessed signs and the power of our God over and over! But at the foot of Mount Sinai, they grew impatient while waiting for Moses to return from the mountaintop. They forgot that God was with them and they could trust God to lead them.

Instead of turning to God, they created a false god made of gold. Their impatience came with consequences that could have been prevented. But still, even when the people turned away, over and over, God remained faithful and continued to provide for them on their journey in the wilderness.

It's no different with us. I'm sure at some point in your lives there have been great things that have happened. Maybe even things that you can't explain other than by God's favor.

Then why, after these great things that have happened, why are we still impatient, trying to figure things out on our own, forgetting all about God and not asking for help?

When we follow Jesus, God gives us the Holy Spirit to help us in times like these. In fact, in the New Testament of the Bible, we read that patience is an actual gift that comes from God's Spirit and is evidence that the Spirit is working in our lives. This doesn't mean we'll be patient in every situation. But it *does* mean we can choose patience as we follow Jesus. For us, it's important we work on becoming more patient. Every day, people end up in places or situations they never dreamed they would be in! They got there by focusing on what they didn't have instead of thinking about what is true and what they did have . . . which is God!

When you find yourself waiting, take time to focus on what's true. Think of the ways God has helped you in the past. Remember what you know to be true about God—like how God loves you no matter what and never abandons you."

The moments in life when we will have to wait are coming. Many of these situations will be hard. I want you to consider a question today as we get ready to head to our Small Groups.

SLIDE: Key Question

What can you think about when it's hard to wait? Each of our minds can begin to wonder in those seasons when we have to wait. When we start to feel that happening, we need to pause and think. If you're not quite sure how to answer that, don't worry! You're about to spend some time with Small Group Leaders who can help you navigate that. Before we head to groups, let's pray together and thank God for being with us during the times we have to wait.

SLIDE: Theme Background

LG Leader leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard..

OFFERING

Last week we told you about the ministry we are raising money for with our offering. Does anyone remember what it is? Yep...Morning Star Mission. It's a mission right here in Joliet, IL that helps people who are struggling financially. If you brought your offering, go ahead and put it in the container. Let's take a look at this video of a family of 6 who lost their home and needed help.

VIDEO: Family of 6 live in car

SLIDE: Theme

What a great mission to support. Morning Star changes lives! See what you can do this week to raise some money for this awesome mission.