

## Children's Message

### July 1, 2018 | Long Fuse 4<sup>th</sup> of July

This week is a holiday that is often celebrated with fireworks, flags of red, white and blue, and firecrackers. Can anyone tell me what that holiday is? Yes! The 4th of July is the day that we celebrate our country's independence.

Today, I brought something with me that looks like a firework. If you were a firecracker and someone lit your fuse, what would happen when the fuse had burned all the way down? That's correct – a loud "Bang!"

You know a firecracker is sort of like an angry person. When we say that someone has a "short fuse" it means they get angry easily and can blow up with angry words. Can an angry person be loud or dangerous, just like a firecracker? Yes, they can hurt others if they haven't learned to control themselves. We all get angry sometimes. If a brother or sister grabs a toy that we're playing with, we might yell or hit them. Sometimes when we get mad, it feels like a firecracker going off; we just want to explode. Do you think it's a good thing to get angry so quickly? Is it good to have a short fuse?

Do you think God has a short fuse? No, our God is very patient. In the Bible, it says that love is patient and kind. God is love and he is very patient. And this is what Nehemiah 9:17 says, "You are a God of forgiveness, gracious and merciful, slow to become angry, and full of unfailing love and mercy". God is slow to anger. God has a very long fuse.

I'd like to use this pretend firecracker to demonstrate God's patience. Could I have a volunteer pull out the fuse and see how long it is? (*Pull the 20 feet until the string is all out of the firecracker.*)

God is very patient with us, and he wants us to be like him: loving and patient and slow to anger. The next time you feel yourself getting angry, remember God's long fuse. Remember to be patient and loving and don't explode.

*Thank you, God, for your patience. Help us to have a long fuse and to be patient like you. Amen*

