

F9. Thanksgiving

Matthew 6:25-34, 1 Timothy 6:17, and 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Learning Objectives

1. The children will explore things that God has done for them in their lives.
2. The children will recognize the importance of thanking our Heavenly Father no matter what happens.

Memory Verse: *“Give thanks no matter what happens.” --1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIRV)*

Getting Started

Choose One

All Ages

A Thankful Celebration

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade school → Activities → “A Thankful Celebration”

This activity will allow the children to participate in a group celebration. You will need to print the activity handout before class. You will also need scissors, pencils, streamers, tape, balloons, cookies or small cupcakes, napkins or small plates, and any additional party decorations for this activity. The children will be able to recognize that choosing thankfulness helps to increase our love for God and others. Please see the above website for detailed instructions and the application discussion.

Grades K-2

“Be Grateful for what God gives you” Object Talk

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Preschool → Object Talks → “Be Grateful for What God Gives You”

You will need to have the following for this activity: a box, a bag, and little objects (house, toy car, bed, food, clothes, CD, cross, little people for parents, siblings, grandparents, friends, etc.). Please see the above website for detailed instructions. This activity will lead the children in an exercise about being thankful to God each day. Continue with the lesson.

Grades 3-5

“Do Not Worry” Puzzle:

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → grade school → puzzles → “Do not worry”

Word Search is based on Matthew 6:25-34. You will need to print one copy of the worksheet for each child.

“Be Grateful” Object Talk:

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → grade school → object talks → “Be Grateful”

You will need a pair of socks and a toy for this object talk. Please see the above website for detailed instructions and guidance for the discussion.

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions

Message: *In all things give thanks!*

Introduction: (Tell the children the following.)

"I want you to pretend that you were living in the United States about 350 years ago. You may have been living with a group of people known as the Pilgrims. It is getting cold outside. Your family is worried because winter is coming, and food during the winter is hard to find. Your mom cannot just go to the grocery store. And you cannot just open the refrigerator door, because, well, there are no refrigerators. They have not been invented yet.

But you and your family have faith in God. That night, you decide to open your Bible to see what God says about how He will help you during this difficult time."

Read Matthew 6:25-34 ~ Do Not Worry

"I tell you, do not worry. Don't worry about your life and what you will eat or drink. And don't worry about what you will wear. Isn't there more to life than eating? Aren't there more important things than clothes?"

"Look at the birds of the air. They don't plant or gather crops. They don't put away crops in storerooms. But your Father who is in heaven feeds them. Aren't you worth much more than they are?"

"Can you add even one hour to your life by worrying? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the wildflowers grow. They don't work or make clothing. But here is what I tell you. Not even Solomon in all of his glory was dressed like one of those flowers.

"If that is how God dresses the wild grass, won't He dress you even better? After all, the grass is here only today. Tomorrow it is thrown into the fire. Your faith is so small!"

"So don't worry. Don't say, 'What will we eat?' Or, 'What will we drink?' Or, 'What will we wear?' People who are ungodly run after all of those things. Your Father who is in heaven knows that you need them.

"But put God's kingdom first. Do what He wants you to do. Then all of those things will also be given to you. "So don't worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will worry about itself."

1. What things does the Bible tell us not to worry about? (*Having something to eat, drink, clothes to wear, etc.*)
2. What does Jesus say that we should worry about? (*Putting God's kingdom first. This means that the most important thing in our life includes trying to become more like Jesus, loving our neighbor, and reading and following God's Word.*)
3. How can we be sure God will provide what we need to live? (*Because we are valuable to Him, and He says He will take care of us. We need to have faith in our prayers and in His word.*)

Read 1 Timothy 6:17 (NIRV)

"Command the people who are rich in this world not to be proud. Tell them not to put their hope in riches. Wealth is so uncertain. Command those who are rich to put their hope in God. He richly provides us with everything to enjoy."

1. What is wrong with putting your hope in wealth or money? (*It is uncertain, or temporary. Only God can give us everything we need.*)
2. Is there anything wrong with having wealth or money? (*There is nothing wrong with having wealth or money. It is only NOT good if it becomes more important to us than our relationship with God, and therefore it becomes an idol in our lives.*)
3. Why do you think God wants to give us the things we need? (*Answers will vary...Discuss together.*)

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – Continued

Read 1 Thessalonians 5: 18 (NIRV)

“Give thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank Him because you believe in Christ Jesus.”

1. What kinds of things can you be thankful for? (*Discuss – allow the children to either make their own list or make one together. Encourage the children to also focus on non-material things on their list too, such as health, family, etc.*)
2. What kind of circumstances may make it difficult to be thankful? (*Think about the Pilgrims, and all they had to endure, for example.*)
3. If you didn't have enough food to eat or clean clothes to wear or a new backpack for school or shoes that didn't have holes in them, do you think you would still be thankful in your heart for what you had? Why or why not? (*Discuss this together. Help the children understand that there are a lot of children in our cities and in the world that are just like what was described, and yet many of them are still thankful and have joy.*)
4. What does this verse tell us about when we should be thankful? (*We should always be thankful to God, in any circumstance or situation because it is God's will for us.*)
5. Is it easy to be thankful to God when things are going well for us? What about when things are hard and not going so well? (*Discuss together. Help the children understand that we are thankful to God for everything, even difficulties, because they help us to grow and become more like Jesus.*)
6. What could YOU do to help those children who do not have enough food or clothes or shoes? (*Discuss together. If possible, make a list on your white board/easel so that the children can see how they can make a difference, including praying for those children and that God would show them how they can help in their community.*)

Application to Real Life

All Ages

Show the children the picture of the pilgrims (see attached at the end of the lesson) and discuss together what happened to them after you read the following:

A long time ago the pilgrims set aside a day to remember what God had done for them, and to thank Him. When one reads about the pilgrims it does not seem like they had much to be thankful for that first year. More than half of them died of starvation before the first spring. They had to leave their friends and family, everything they knew, and most of the things they owned behind to travel to a place that they did not know much about.

But the pilgrims trusted God and thanked Him for the things He had done for them and did not focus on the bad things. The pilgrim's thanked God for making it possible for them to come to the new world where they could worship him freely. They thanked God for providing an Indian named Squanto who could speak English to teach them how to plant their crops and how to cook them. Squanto showed them how to find food in the forest, and how to catch fish in their new land.

The Pilgrims thanked God for keeping them alive during the long, cold winter, and providing for all their needs. They thanked God for helping them to find their new home and protecting them from the Indians who did not like them. But most of all they were thankful that they could worship God the way they wanted to.

Application to Real Life – Continued

(Continue with the discussion)

The pilgrims must have been so thankful that God kept them fed and warm in the cold winters a very long time ago. They had lots of things going on that could have made them be angry with God. It was so cold outside. Maybe they did not have enough food. But they were still thankful and took time to “give thanks” to God no matter what was happening around them. God today is still the same God. He wants us to be happy and He gives us many things to enjoy each day.

There are 4 ways we can show God whether or not we are truly thankful for what He has provided for us:

1. How we look (on our faces).
2. The way we act.
3. What we say to others.
4. The way we feel in our hearts.

Talk with the children about both scenarios – being thankful AND not being thankful. Talk about and practice the “how we look” and “what we say to others” for each scenario. Talk about “how we act” in both scenarios. (When we are thankful, are we kind and helpful and giving to others?) Who can see how we feel in our hearts? (Discuss together).

Review the memory verse and message statement together.

Memory Work Fun

1. Recite the memory verse. Then explain what it means in your own words.
2. Practice finding the memory verse in the Bible. (Old or New Testament?)
3. Ask a volunteer to lead the class in a short prayer of thanksgiving. Remember to thank God for all He WILL do for you too!

Activity Ideas

Choose One

All Ages

Bible Turkey Hunt

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Games → “Bible Turkey Hunt”

You will need large envelopes, glue sticks and Bibles for this activity. You will also need to print and cut out the turkey puzzle pieces onto card stock before class. Be sure to make a sample of a completed turkey as well. Please see the above website for detailed instructions. Pair older children with younger children and encourage them to help each other and work together.

To begin this game, give each child an envelope with one of the puzzle pieces inside. The children will open their envelopes and look up the verse on the back of the puzzle piece inside. As the children read their verse and have a short discussion, the piece will be glued into place. Have a large sheet of paper or poster board 11" x 14" to paste the pieces to complete a finished turkey to look like the picture above. Extra pieces if needed can be glued on as well to complete the picture.

Sticky Note Thankfulness

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Activities → “Sticky Note Thankfulness”

During this activity, the children will identify times when it is easy or hard to show thankfulness. You will need a white board or easel, markers, and sticky notes for this activity. Please see the above website for detailed instructions and the application discussion.

“Be Thankful” Craft

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Crafts → “Be Thankful”

You will need: light green cardstock, tempera paint (assorted colors), paper plates, sponges (see link above for sponge shapes), word pages (see link above), smocks or old shorts, crayons/colored markers, glue sticks, and scissors (optional) for this activity. Before class, print enough Word Pages with the phrase "Don't worry, be thankful," and the Bible verse so each child will have one copy of each. Cut sponges into petal shapes, and a circle for the center of the flower. Prepare a place for painting, using drop cloths, towels for cleanup, etc. Please see the above website for detailed instructions.

Remember to keep the conversation going during the craft time. You can refer to Matthew 6:25-34 from today's lesson. God takes care of us in such wonderful ways. We sometimes forget about all the beauty and majesty that He has prepared for us. Take time to see all that God has given us for our enjoyment. We have a God who cares for the little things. We need to remember that He cares about us and that He will take care of our every need.

Grades K-2**Thankful Treasures**

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Activities → “Thankful Treasures”

The children will find treat bags and practice showing thankfulness. You will need items to make the treat bags (small toys, candy, games, etc.) and you should prepare and hide them throughout the room before class. Please see the above website for detailed instructions and the application discussion.

Thankful Wheels

For each child, you will need a sturdy orange or yellow paper plate, and a fine-tipped permanent marker. Draw six pie-piece sections on the plate using a fine-tipped permanent marker. Write one thing to be thankful for in each pie section, such as church, Jesus, family, friends, food, and the Bible. Below the words, draw simple (or paste) illustrations depicting each word. Talk with the children about being thankful for everything on the wheel, and then take turns closing your eyes and pointing to a section on the wheel. Say something you are grateful for that relates to the corresponding item. (See attached for sample pictures.) *Adapted from: www.childrensministry.com*

Make Mini Pumpkin Pies

For a tasty way to celebrate Thanksgiving this year, have your students make mini-pumpkin pies. Allow each child to make two pies: one for them to eat, and one for them to “cheerfully” give to someone else in the congregation. You will need premade custard crusts (available in grocery stores), spoons, bowls, and the following ingredients for each “pie.”

- 2 tablespoons canned pumpkin pie mix
- 2 tablespoons marshmallow crème
- 1 tablespoon whipped cream

Help the children to mix their ingredients in a small bowl and then spoon the mixture into a custard crust. Allow the pies to sit for 15 minutes. (You may need extra hands for this activity – so find those awesome volunteers!)

Grades 3-5**Give Praise Where Praise Is Due**

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Activities → Give Praise Where Praise Is Due

You will need a whiteboard or easel and the appropriate markers for this discussion activity. The children will explore giving God praise and thanks in ALL things. Please see the above website for detailed instructions.

I Can Show Thankfulness

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Activities → “I can show thankfulness”

This activity will help the children identify thankfulness in their lives. You will need to print out and copy the activity pages and provide pencils for the activity. Please see the above website for detailed instructions and the application discussion.

Thankfulness Pictionary

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Activities → “Thankfulness Pictionary”

The children will guess the pictures being drawn and discover different ways to show thankfulness. You will need to print the handout from the above website before class. You will also need a white board or easel and markers for this activity. Please see the above website for detailed instructions and the application discussions.

“Thanksgiving Basket” Craft

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → grade school → crafts → “Thanksgiving Basket”

You will need: one paper plate for each child, colored construction paper (8X11), basket instructions (see website above), stapler, scotch tape, and food pictures (see website above or cut out your own from magazines).

Before class gather all the supplies needed so each child can make their own basket and print out several copies of the instructions. Next, print out one copy for each child of the food pictures. Using medium card stock will work well. Please see the above website for detailed instructions. Remember to keep the conversation going, use the activity discussion suggestions as a guide.

God’s Many Blessings

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → grade school → object talks → “God’s Many Blessings”

For this activity, you will need a water glass (about 2 1/2” in diameter), a pitcher of water, a spoon, some cheerios®, and 10 to 20 marbles or large coins for blessings.

You will need to practice this a few times before the class. Please see the above website for detailed instruction and guidance for the discussion.



Grades K-2

Who is the one person that you are most thankful for in your life? Draw a picture and write about why you are thankful for them.

Grades 3-5 (Choose One)

Write a thank you letter to God. Tell Him about all the things that you are thankful for in your heart. Write about it.

Do you think it is important to have a thankful heart? Why or why not? Write about it.

Who is the one person you are most thankful for in your life? Write about why you are thankful for them.

Homework Ideas

- Read at home with a grown up the lesson titled: **“Balaam and the Donkey”** (Numbers 22:21-35).
- Learn the memory verse for next week: *“The Lord will guide you always.” --Isaiah 58:11*
- Work on memorizing commandment # ____.
- Complete the **Balaam and the Donkey** coloring sheet and return it to class for a sticker.
- Look up the word “guide” in the dictionary and write down the definition. Who do you think should guide us? Make a list. Bring it to class to share.

Other Resources

www.daniellesplace.com → Login to the Resource Room → Search “Thanksgiving” and click on “Pilgrims”
www.kidssundayschool.com → Topical Index → “T” → “Thanksgiving”



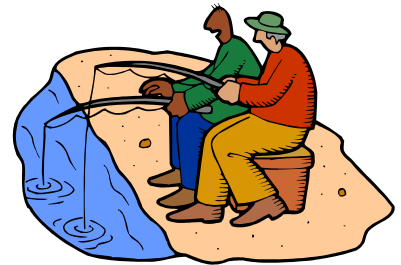
Grades K-2 Activity: Thankful Wheels



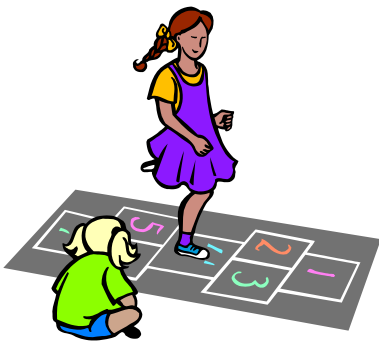
Church



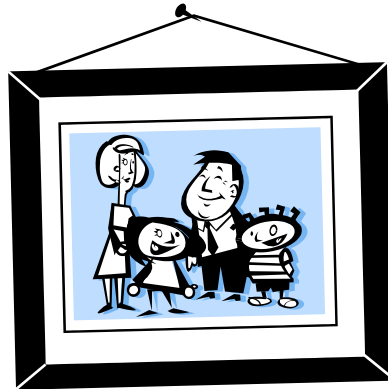
Jesus



Friends (boy)



Friends (girl)



Family

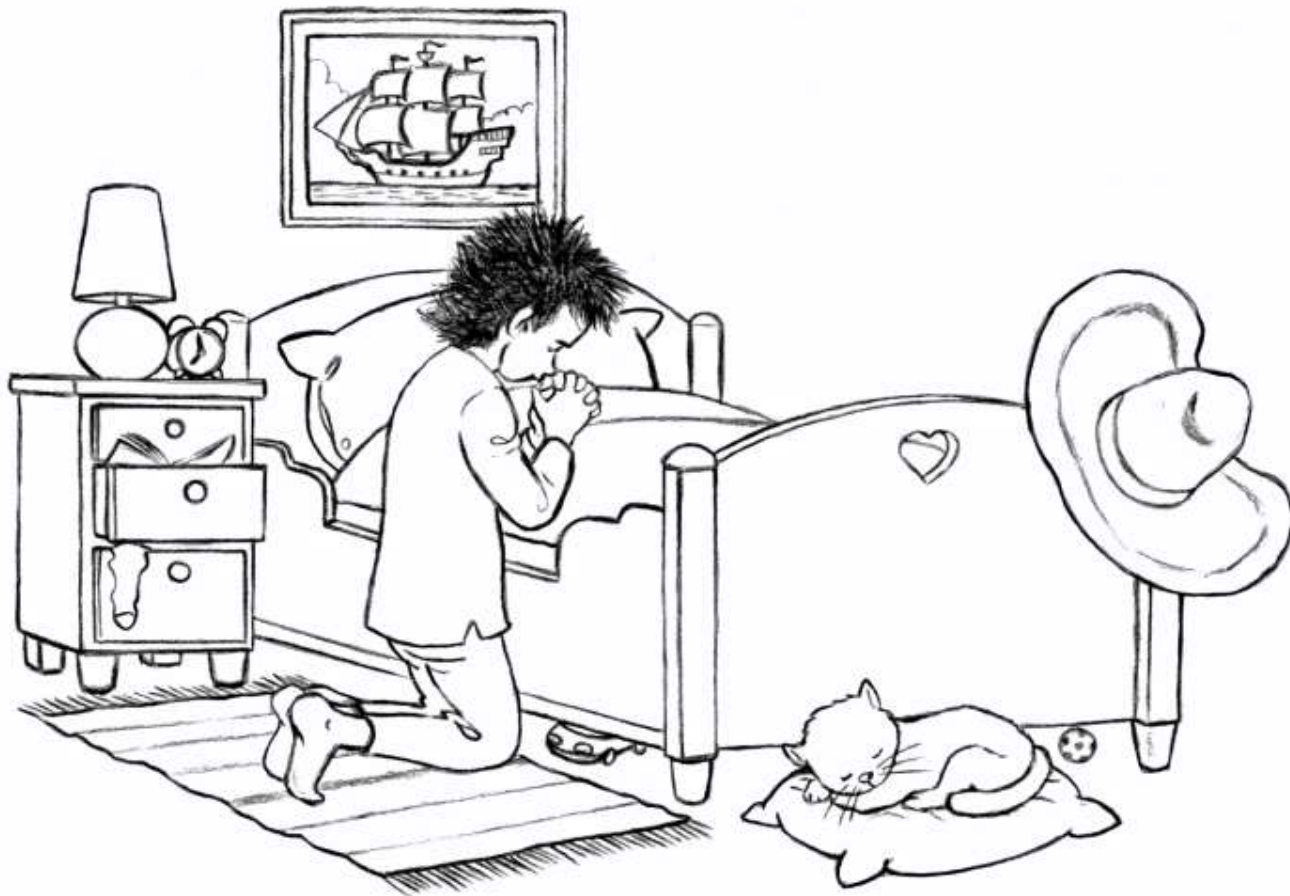


Food



Name: _____

Prayer



"But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you,
and pray to your Father in private."

--Matthew 6:6 (NLT)

Take Home Page: F9. Thanksgiving

Today I learned...

Today your child learned that we should **in all things give thanks** to God. The children explored things that God has done for them in their own lives. They also talked about the importance of thanking our Heavenly Father no matter what happens.

Help me learn my memory verse...

"Give thanks no matter what happens" --1 Thessalonians 5:18

Ask me...

1. What things does the Bible tell us to not worry about?
2. Why do you think God wants to give us the things that we need?
3. When is it hard to be thankful?

Live Your Faith...

When our hearts are thankful, we thank God for all He provides for us. We can also make a habit of thanking others for their help, for food they give us, or even for their kindness. As a family, encourage and challenge each other this week to not only have a thankful heart, but to verbally thank others for everything possible this week. Each day take a few minutes to share who you thanked and why.

