



DEVELOPING THE FUTURE

Children's Lesson Helps

2015 Thank Offering for the World Evangelism Fund

"Future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord." Psalm 22:30b, NLT

Introduction for Leaders

There are both good and bad examples throughout scripture of people being thankful. We can learn from these examples how to be thankful for what God has done in the past, present, and will do in the future. Psalm 22:30b says, “future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord.” Passing on a spirit of thankfulness to the future generations is crucial. We must ask what it means to be thankful, look at examples of thankfulness throughout scripture, and participate in the mission God has called us to, a mission that extends into the future. This four-week curriculum focuses on thankfulness and how to respond with thanks to the great gift of God’s grace. Our response must move us to action to make a difference right where we are living and around the world. May we be a thankful people, spreading the love of God to all we come to know.

Each week is broken up into the following outline, feel free to adapt the flow to your context.

Opening Activity (5-10 min)

Introduction of Story (5 min)

Worship (10 min)

*Suggestions: “Give Thanks,” “I love You, Lord,” “You are my All in All,”
“Doxology,” “Forever Reign”*

Main Verse Activity (5 min)

Sermon (10 min)

Wondering Time (5 min)

Offering (5 min)

Small Group Activities (15 min)

Closing Review and Prayer (5 min)

WEEK 1 – What Does It Mean to Be Thankful?
Story: Jesus and the ten lepers (Luke 17:12-19)

Opening Activity	As the children come in, hand each child a chair and see how many children say, "thank you." For FUN and to keep the children's curiosity up for a while, you can have a little score board on the chalkboard. Every time someone says, "thank you," have someone add a mark to keep track of how many "Thank you"s you receive. You can also hand out other things, such as supplies or a treat, and keep track of the "Thank you"s.
Introduction of Story	Say something like: Our activity was all about seeing how many of you said, "thank you." Today we are going to learn why it is important to be thankful. Being thankful is something that we should do, but we are not always good at doing. Maybe your mom or dad has told you to say, "thank you" to people when they give or say something nice to you. We are supposed to say, "thank you," but sometimes we forget. Our story today is about being thankful. One person remembers while all of the others forget. Before we hear our story for the day, let's spend some time worshipping through song.
Worship	Sing songs about being thankful.
Main Verse Activity	Say something like: Our verse for the next 4 weeks is Psalm 22:30b, which says, "future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord." We are going to work on memorizing our main verse through all sorts of activities. This verse is important because it is good for us to be thankful AND to share our thankfulness by giving back so that people in the future can be thankful too. We are going to learn more about why we should be so thankful and how we can spread that thankfulness around the world. Our activity for today is like the game, "hot and cold." I have one sheet of paper for every word of our memory

	<p>verse. One of you will leave the room while another one will hide one of the papers. Once the paper is hidden, we will ask the first person to come back into the room. Everyone else's job is to help that person find the hidden paper by clapping faster when he or she is getting closer and slower when the person is farther away from the paper.</p> <p>Play as many rounds as necessary until all of the words of the verse are found.</p> <p>Have the kids who found the words stand in the correct order for everyone to see. Read over the verse together to begin memorizing it.</p>
Sermon	<p>Say something like:</p> <p>One day Jesus was walking into a village, and on the very edge of the village there were ten men who had leprosy. Leprosy was a disease that made people very sick, and people were afraid that if lepers touched them they could get sick too. So, people with leprosy lived a sad life away from their friends and family. As Jesus was walking by, the group of lepers yelled out to Jesus saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"</p> <p>Jesus looked over at them and told them to go and show themselves to the priests in their village. They listened to Jesus, and a miracle happened. As they were going to see the priests, they were all healed of their leprosy!</p> <p>One of the ten men ran back to Jesus and said, "Praise God!" He even fell down at Jesus' feet because he was so thankful for being healed.</p> <p>Jesus looked around and said, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine?" Only one of the ten men came back to thank Jesus. Jesus said to the one man, "Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you."</p>

	<p>This is a great story to remind us to be thankful. Only one of the ten men came back to thank Jesus for the amazing miracle of being healed. Jesus seemed a little surprised that only one of the ten came back to thank Him. Maybe sometimes we are like the nine others and forget to be thankful for what Jesus has done in our lives. Let's do our best to be like the one and remember that it is important to be thankful for what Jesus has done in our lives.</p>
Wondering Time	<p>I wonder what it would be like to be sick without a cure.</p> <p>How excited would you feel to be cured?</p> <p>I wonder if I would be so excited to be healed, that I would forget to be thankful.</p> <p>I wonder what other people thought when the lepers said they were healed.</p>
Offering	<p>Say something like:</p> <p>We want to be thankful in all that we do, and one way for us to give thanks is by giving an offering. God calls us to be stewards. That means we are supposed to care for people, the earth, and the things that God has given us. So in all we do, we want to give thanks and give back to God.</p> <p>Maybe you are good at a sport- you can use that for God.</p> <p>Maybe you are a good artist- you can give that to God.</p> <p>Maybe you are good at music- you can give that to God.</p> <p>Maybe you are good at cheering up other people- you can give that to God.</p> <p>Maybe you will get some spending money- you can</p>

	<p>give some of that to God.</p> <p>You don't need money to give an offering to God. You can give Him time and what you are good at. God can use all that we give to Him.</p> <p>As we receive the offering today, maybe you have some money to put in. If you do, that's great. If you don't, that's okay too. Think about what you can give to God. Pray about what you can give to God and tell Him what you will give Him during this offering time. Think of what you can be thankful for and give back to God.</p>
Small Group Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write thank you cards for family, friends, teachers, pastors, etc. 2. Have kids do acts of kindness for one another and respond with, "thank you."
Closing Review and Prayer	<p>Say something like:</p> <p>It is important for us to be thankful, not just because it is the polite thing to do, but because we see examples of being thankful in the Bible. We know that we have a lot to be thankful for because of what Jesus has done in our lives. Let's do our best to be like the one man who came back to thank Jesus. Let's thank Jesus for all He does in our lives. Let's also be thankful to others for all that they do.</p> <p>Pray something like:</p> <p>Lord, help us to be thankful in all that we do. May we be like the leper that came back to You to say, "thank you." We do not want to forget what You have done for us and how we should be thankful. We love You so much and are so thankful for Your grace in our lives. Help us as we go from this place today to be thankful in all that we do. Amen.</p>

WEEK 2 – Good and Bad Examples of Being Thankful
Story: The Israelites praise God after crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-2) and the Israelites complain about not having any food (Exodus 16:1-3)

Opening Activity	<u>Alphabet Thanks</u> Go around the group and have kids share something they are thankful for that corresponds to the letters in the alphabet. If necessary go around to all the kids again until you reach the end of the alphabet.
Introduction of Story	Say something like: There are examples in the Old Testament of the Israelites being thankful for what God did in their lives, but also examples of the Israelites complaining and grumbling against God. We are going to look at two stories today that give us a good example of being thankful and a bad example of being thankful. Before we dive into our stories for the day, let's open our time together with worship in song.
Worship	Sing songs about being thankful.
Main Verse Activity	<u>Bible Pass</u> Have one Bible for the group. Only the person holding the Bible can speak. The person holding the Bible should say one word of the memory verse and pass the Bible to the next person. Go until everyone has had a chance to participate, working together to say the verse.
Sermon	Say something like: Today we are going to learn about the people of Israel in the Old Testament book of Exodus. The people of Israel lived in Egypt under the rule of Pharaoh. They worked for Pharaoh as slaves, building huge statues and buildings for him. They cried out to God, and God heard their cry. God sent a man named Moses to talk to Pharaoh and say, "Let my people go." Pharaoh was stubborn and would not let the people go. It took ten plagues for

	<p>Pharaoh to finally let the Israelites leave Egypt.</p> <p>As the Israelites left Egypt, they came to the Red Sea. Meanwhile, Pharaoh decided that he was sorry he had let the Israelites go. Pharaoh and his army chased the Israelites all the way to the Red Sea.</p> <p>God did something amazing through Moses at the Red Sea. Moses stretched his hand out over the sea and the waters parted right down the middle! Two giant walls of water were on either side, and the people of Israel were able to walk through the sea on dry ground!</p> <p>Pharaoh and his army were closing in on the Israelites, but as they reached the other side of the Red Sea, the waters collapsed back into place, drowning Pharaoh and his army. God had delivered and saved the Israelites from Pharaoh. They were so excited and happy, that they could not help but thank God and praise Him for all He had done. In Exodus 15 the Israelites sang a song of thanks and praise to God. The first two verses say,</p> <p><i>“Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord:</i></p> <p><i>‘I will sing to the Lord,</i></p> <p><i>for he is highly exalted.</i></p> <p><i>Both horse and driver</i></p> <p><i>he has hurled into the sea.</i></p> <p><i>‘The Lord is my strength and my defense;</i></p> <p><i>he has become my salvation.</i></p> <p><i>He is my God, and I will praise him,</i></p> <p><i>my father’s God, and I will exalt him.” (NIV)</i></p> <p>This is a great example of being thankful! God delivered the people of Israel and saved them from Pharaoh. It only makes sense that they would tell God</p>
--	--

	<p>just how thankful they were.</p> <p>What is crazy is that in the very next chapter the Israelites started to grumble and complain. You see, they were wandering in the desert and were worried that they would not have any food. God had just delivered the Israelites from Egypt and saved them from Pharaoh, and they were worried that He would not take care of them! They complain to Moses, saying they wished they would have died rather than be hungry in the desert. God heard their cries and provided them with food in a really cool way. He sent food called manna down from the sky like rain. God provided for the Israelites, even in their grumbings and complaining. This is not a good example of trusting God and being thankful.</p> <p>We can learn from both of these examples. We should be thankful for what God has done, is doing, and will do in our lives. God loves us and cares for us, so we don't want to grumble and complain. We should be thankful to God, instead.</p> <p>We can't forget the love God has for us. Just as He delivered the Israelites from Egypt, He has made a way for all people to be in relationship with Him. We'll talk more on that next week.</p>
Wondering Time	<p>I wonder what it would have been like to walk across on the dry ground of the Red Sea.</p> <p>I wonder what manna tasted like.</p> <p>I wonder if we ever forget to be thankful.</p> <p>I wonder if we ever forget what God has done for us.</p>
Offering	See Week 1

Small Group Activities	<p>1. Walk through chairs that are set up in two rows, like the parted Red Sea. Have the kids say, "I will praise God" as they walk through. At the end, discuss the importance of thanking God for the big and little things in life.</p> <p>2. Gathering Manna Relay- Divide the kids into two teams. Have cotton balls or pieces of paper all over the ground. Explain that the kids can only grab two pieces of manna at a time. Have them line up and race to see which team can get every person to gather two pieces of manna the fastest. At the end, talk about the importance of being faithful and how God loves us no matter what.</p>
Closing Review and Prayer	<p>Say something like: The Israelites gave us a good example and a bad example of being thankful. When we start to rely on ourselves and don't remember all that God has done for us, we forget to be thankful and we complain. We must remember what God did for us in the past and remember to be thankful.</p> <p>Pray something like: Lord, help us to remember what you have done for us throughout history. We are thankful for how you care for us every day. May we never forget or take for granted your love for us. Amen.</p>

WEEK 3 – Thankful for Christ
Story: The life of Christ (Philippians 2:6-11)

Opening Activity	<u>Thankful Seat</u> Have a child sit in the “thankful seat.” Then have the other children share one or two things about the child in the “thankful seat that are thankful for.” Go until every child has had a chance to sit in the “thankful seat.”
Introduction of Story	Say something like: Last time we looked at stories about thankfulness from the people of Israel in the Old Testament. We looked at a good example and bad example of being thankful. The New Testament is also full of stories of thankfulness. In our first week, we talked about Jesus and the lepers and how the one leper came back to thank Jesus. We can each be thankful for what Jesus has done in our lives. We are going to look at the life of Jesus today and see that we have a great deal to be thankful for because Jesus was born, lived, died, and rose from the dead.
Worship	Sing songs about being thankful.
Main Verse Activity	<u>Check Out</u> Write the verse on a chalkboard or white board, inserting an incorrect word between every two words of the verse. Children take turns “checking out” an incorrect word. When all have been “checked out,” let children read the verse together. Erase. Let each child quote the verse.
Sermon	Say something like: Philippians 2:6-11 talks about the life of Jesus and what Jesus did for each and every one of us. Listen to the passage about Jesus. “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing

	<p>by taking the very nature[b] of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!</p> <p>Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (NIV)</p> <p>The writer of the book of Philippians is a man named Paul, and some say this was a song that people in the very first churches would sing about Jesus. They would sing this song to remind themselves of all that Jesus had done for them. We need to be reminded of that as well.</p> <p>The story of Jesus is amazing. God sent His one and only Son, not as a great, big, strong warrior, but as a baby. Jesus was born into the world, and we celebrate that every year at Christmas when we remember that Jesus came as a baby to Earth.</p> <p>As Jesus grew up and became an adult, we see that He lived a life that was the perfect example of following God. Jesus followed what God called Him to do, even when He was scared and it was hard. Jesus’ life is the best example ever of a holy and humble life, and we are supposed to learn from Jesus and live like Him.</p> <p>What makes the story of Jesus even more amazing is that He didn’t just come to the earth to be a good example of how to live. He came to make it possible for us to be His forever friend. Jesus made it possible</p>
--	--

	<p>for us to ask for forgiveness of our sins and be in relationship with Him forever!</p> <p>At Easter we celebrate Jesus rising from the dead, and because Jesus died and rose again, we are able to receive His grace and be His friend FOREVER. That is an amazing gift! Actually, it is the best gift EVER. We don't deserve the gift that God gave to us, but He gave it anyway. This is the very best reason to be thankful. We have a lot to be thankful for because of Jesus. We should be thankful that He came to earth in the form of a baby, lived the best example of a holy and humble life, died, and rose again. God did all of this because of His great love for us. I can't think of anything more important to be thankful for.</p>
Wondering Time	<p>I wonder if baby Jesus ever cried.</p> <p>I wonder if Jesus ever thanked His parents.</p> <p>We know that Jesus gave thanks for the food before multiplying it. I wonder if we should be thankful for all the little things and big things in life just like Jesus showed us.</p>
Offering	See Week 1
Small Group Activities	<p>1. <u>Role Playing</u> Present children with a series of scenarios where they can be choose to be boastful or humble, such as winning a game, getting an A on a test, or giving someone a gift. Have children give a boastful response and a humble response to the scenario. Talk about how everyone involved would feel for each scenario to emphasize why choosing to be humble is the better option.</p> <p>2. <u>I Can Be Humble Today By...</u> Use an old calendar or print a blank calendar page and write at the top of it "I can be humble today by..." Help children fill in each day of the month with an example of humility. Examples of humility may include helping</p>

	someone learn something new, holding open a door for someone, or saying "thank you."
Closing Review and Prayer	<p>Say something like: Jesus is the best example of how to live a holy and humble life. It is because of Jesus that we can know God and be in relationship with Him. Jesus, His life, death, and coming back to life, is the greatest gift of all time. We should be thankful each and every day for what Jesus has done for us.</p> <p>Pray something like: Jesus, thank You so much for your life, death, and resurrection. We do not deserve the amazing gift of grace that You have given to us. We are nothing without You. Thank You for the way You love us. Help us to go from this place and share Your love to everyone we know and meet. Amen.</p>

WEEK 4 – Our Part in the Story

Story: Jesus taken into Heaven and the command to be His witnesses (Acts 1:6-8)

Opening Activity	<p>Have two children stand at the front and introduce them to the group. Tell the other children to look at them for about 10 seconds. Then send the children to a place where they won't be seen.</p> <p>Have the other children tell you as many things about them as they can; write them down. Then bring the other children back and see how well you did.</p> <p>Say something like: We had a lot of words to talk about these two people. Now, if you left this room and someone said, "Tell me about (child's name)," you could talk about them because you have looked at them closely. Today we are going to hear how Jesus asked His friends to talk about Him.</p>
Introduction of Story	<p>Say something like: Over the last three lessons we have learned about what it means to be thankful: good examples and bad examples of being thankful, and the best reason for us to be thankful—Jesus. Today we are going to talk about the fact that we are supposed to do something with our thankfulness. We need to share Jesus, the best reason to be thankful, with the whole world.</p>
Worship	Sing songs about being thankful.
Main Verse Activity	<p><u>Envelope Race</u></p> <p>Write each word of the verse on two index cards. Place the cards in two envelopes. Divide the group into teams and give an envelope to each team. The first team to arrange the verse in the proper order wins.</p>
Sermon	<p>Say something like: In the last lesson, we heard about how Jesus was born, lived, died, and came back to life. Today we are going</p>

	<p>to look at what happened after Jesus came back to life. Jesus spent time with His disciples after He came back to life.</p> <p>In the book of Acts, Jesus talks to His disciples right before He goes to be with the Father. The disciples ask Jesus about the future, and this is what Jesus says to them:</p> <p>“He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’” (NIV)</p> <p>Jesus tells the disciples not to worry about the future and that it is not for the disciples to know the details of the future. Jesus goes on to say that, instead of worrying about the future, the disciples will be His witnesses all over the world. The cool thing about this is that we are Jesus’ disciples, too! We are supposed to tell the whole world about Him! That way everyone will know about Jesus and the greatest reason to be thankful. Our job is to tell the story of Jesus and love people around the world like Jesus loves us.</p> <p>Let’s do our part and share the love of Jesus with the people on our street, in our city, and around the whole world. We should be thankful for what Jesus has done for us and tell others about the best reason to be thankful in the whole world.</p>
Wondering Time	<p>I wonder what the disciples were thinking when Jesus told them not to worry about the future?</p> <p>I wonder if the disciples wanted to go with Jesus right then and there.</p> <p>I wonder: how can we share the story of Jesus in our</p>

	city or town?
Offering	See Week 1
Small Group Activities	<p>1. <u>Jesus Says</u> Every time you give a command say, “Jesus says...” For example, “Jesus says love your neighbor,” and have the children hug their neighbor. If you do not say “Jesus says” before a command, the children that follow the command must sit down and are out of the game. Play until one or two kids are still in the game. This activity is to emphasize that we do what Jesus asks us to do.</p> <p>2. <u>I Spy</u> Look around the room and say, “I spy something...” have the kids try and guess what you see. For example, “I Spy something round,” could refer to a clock or window in your room. After the activity, talk about what it means to be a witness. We know Jesus and have seen how He changes lives. Now we need to tell others about Him!</p>
Closing Review and Prayer	<p>Say something like: Jesus reminds us to not worry about the exact details of the future, but He also calls us to make a difference so that people now and in the future will know of His great love.</p> <p>Let’s not forget to spread His love around the world and share the greatest reason ever to be thankful.</p> <p>Pray something like: Jesus, thank You for the job You have given us to share Your love with the world. We are so thankful for You and that You would think of us to make a difference in the world. Use us to tell others of Your great love and the best reason ever to be thankful! Amen.</p>