

Alley SG - November 4 & 5, 2017

Bible Truth: Keep Psalm and be Thankful (A Psalm of Thanksgiving) • *Psalm 100:1-5*

Bottom Line: Celebrate what God has done.

Key Question: What are you grateful for?

Memory Verse: "Give thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank him because you believe in Christ Jesus." *1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV*

CONNECT TIME: Photo-Booth

(ALL Leaders participate, at the beginning of service time (5-7 minutes))

NOTE: You'll need a cell phone that takes pictures that can be viewed immediately, and a photographer.

"We are kicking off a brand-new month in the greatest church environment this town . . . NAE . . . this state . . . NAE . . . this *country* has EVER SEEN! (*Allow for overwhelming response.*) We call this place "*The Alley*". And to commemorate this moment in time, I feel like taking a few pictures. Is everybody ok with us taking a few photos? (*Allow response.*) Good!"

"But I want these pictures to be different from the 'duck face pose' picture I see all over Instagram. (*do a 'duck face'.*) Those may be great for a normal day, but today we want to refocus our images and make them a little more special."

"This is how our photo session will go . . . we need everyone to circle up with his or her small group. We will give the room a three-second countdown, and a theme will appear on the screens. Your job is to assume the said pose as quickly as you can with your entire small group. If your group is the last group to collectively get into the pose, your group will be eliminated from our photo session. Our esteemed photographer will be looking through the lens, taking the pictures, and letting me know who was the last group to freeze for the camera. Make sense? (*Allow response.*) Excellent. Then please give a warm and rowdy *ALLEY* welcome to our photographer!"

Photographer comes on stage. Leader with a phone to take pictures.

"Everybody ready? Let the commemorating begin! Here we go – one, two, three . . ."

Leader gives a three-second countdown between each of the poses. When the pose appears on the screens, the small groups assume their positions as quickly as possible. Leader will need to help watch for the last small group to get into a frozen pose. When the last group to pose has been identified, they should sit out the rest of the game.

CG: Game Slide 1: Soaring Eagle Pose

CG: Game Slide 2: Stealth Ninja Pose

CG: Game Slide 3: Creepy Clown Pose

CG: Game Slide 4: Pyramid Pose

CG: Game Slide 5: Football Pose

"Wow! That was fantastic! Some of you have a real knack for posing for pictures! Congrats to our winning small group! You know where to look and know how to pose . . . quickly! It's a talent . . . not sure how it will pay off in life but, hey, a talent *is* a talent. How about we all stand up and have one more pose before I get off this stage? Ready? One – two – three . . ."

CG: Game Slide 6: Singing Diva Pose

"You are all naturals! Great job Alley! Let's get started with Large Group today!"

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1. Ice-Breaker Question

- **Ask:** Would you rather sing, dance, or give a speech in front of a big group of strangers? Why?

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Lined paper or lined index cards, pens, hard surface for writing (table, floor, clipboards), timer

What You Do:

- **Pass out** the lined paper or lined index cards and pencils/pens. Everyone can start with one of each.
- **Place** the extras where everyone can reach them or be ready to hand out more if needed.
- **Challenge** kids to think of all the things they are grateful for in their lives.
- **Tell** them that their goal is to write down as many of those things as they can in 3 minutes.
 - *After one minute*, encourage them to stop and rest their hands. They can compare quickly with a nearby friend, which will help them think of new things to write.
 - *After two more minutes*, give them a breather and have them look at another person's answers for ideas.
- **Tell** them to go back and count how many things they came up with during the three minutes of writing time.
- **Ask** them to write that number at the top of their pages
- **Give** them a chance to be spotlighted by asking everyone to stand up if they wrote down 20 things—call out other numbers and students should start sitting down until you have one person left—the person who wrote down the most things.
- **Ask** that person what his or her secret was to writing down so many things—did they just write really fast? Or did they have a lot of things they're grateful for? Or maybe a combination of both things?
- **Follow up** by asking the group if they think they could come up with more things if you gave them more time.
- **Dare** them to circle something they are thankful for that they don't think anyone else thought of. Go around the group, letting students share that one thing.

3. Discussion Questions

- What's your favorite way or place to celebrate and worship God?
- What happens to us when we can't find or see things to be grateful for in our lives?
- Would you rather be around someone who is thankful and glad or someone who doesn't think there's a lot to be thankful for? Why? What are they like? How does that make you feel?

4. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: A chair, sticky notes, pens

What You Do:

- **Share** Psalm 150:6 by reading out loud, “Let **everything** (emphasized) that has breath praise the Lord.” (NirV)
- **Pass out** the sticky notes and pens. Put extras nearby in case they need more.
- **Place** the chair up front or in the middle of the group. Ask them to imagine that God is sitting in the chair.
- **Explain** that you’re going to take a minute to celebrate God—to praise and thank Him.
- To get kids started, **ask** them to think about some of the Bible stories that detail how God came through for His people; stories like David and Goliath, Moses and the parting of the Red Sea, saving humanity through Noah and the ark, etc.
- **Model** how to write something on a sticky note like, “God, you are . . . (fill in the blank),” or “God, I thank you because . . .”
- **Instruct** students to write something on their sticky note, thanking God for what He has done for people throughout history, for them personally, and praising Him for who He is.
 - **If you have any kids who are new to church, make sure to ask kids to pair up so the new students aren’t put on the spot.**
- **Remind** them that there are no right or wrong answers if they come from their hearts.
- **Tell** them that once they have something written, they can say it out loud and put it somewhere on the chair or they can silently put it on the chair for others to read on their own.
- **Challenge** them to cover the chair in what we are celebrating about God today.

5. God Time Take Home Sheets

What You Need: “God Time” Sheets (one per child), pens (one per child)

NOTE: The God Time sheets are intended to be a closing time activity each week in The Alley. Children will begin working on their sheets, as well as be encouraged to bring their sheets back the following week for **\$3 in Alley Cash**. Children cannot turn in their sheets the same week. The goal is to keep the lesson on their minds and in front of them throughout the following week.

Before they leave, ask them to close their eyes so you can pray and send them out.

Dear Jesus, we want to be thankful people. You say in the Bible many times that we are supposed to praise you and to give thanks. Help us to do that today and all this week. Help make us aware of what’s going on around us and to be more sensitive than ever for what’s good. As we become more thankful, help it change us from the inside out so that we would, in turn, try to do good for others because we know we have so much to share. In Your name we pray, Amen.