

ALLEY SG – November 4-6, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Give Thanks (Give Thanks No Matter What Happens) • 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Today's Key Question: What are you grateful for?

Today's Bottom Line: You always have something to be grateful for.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good. His faithful love continues forever.* Psalm 136:1 (NIV)

1. Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

What You Need: Large Piece of Butcher Paper (one per group), Sticky notes (10 per kid), pens and markers

What You Do:

- Say, "Sometimes, we might have situations in our life that feel difficult. You might feel lonely, sad, or frustrated. You might have a day when it feels like almost everything is going wrong. But even when you have challenging times, you always have something to be grateful for."
- Place the large piece of butcher paper in the middle of your group. Write "Gratitude Wall" in the middle of the page with a marker.
- Give each kid a few sticky notes.
- Place the pens and markers in the center.
- Invite the kids to write or draw something they're grateful for.
- Invite them to add their sticky note to the butcher paper.
- Allow the kids to create and add as many sticky notes as they'd like.
- Let the kids share what they were grateful for with the group.
- Give the butcher paper to your coach or coordinator to hand on the wall in the Alley.
- Ask the group:
 - How does gratitude change our perspective when things don't go the way we'd like?
 - Name something you can do when you feel ungrateful that will help get your attitude back where it should be.
 - When is it most hard for you to show gratitude?
 - Why do you think God wants us to be thankful in good times and bad?

2. Verses to Take with You

Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: Bibles

What You Do:

- Give each kid a Bible
- Ask kids to find Psalm 136:1.
- Have someone read the verse aloud.
- Ask:
 - How does knowing God's love is forever give you reason for thanks?
 - How has God shown you goodness?
 - People often think that God being good means nothing bad will happen. What do we know about God that helps you understand why people face hard situations?
- Invite the kids to name situations that can steal away their gratitude.
- Say the first part of the verse, and, one at a time, insert the situations the kids came up with in the verse.

- For example: "Give thanks to the Lord when _____ because He is good. His faithful love continues forever."
- Remind the kids that wrong attitudes steal our gratitude.
- Share how if they feel disappointed or life seems unfair, they can always talk to God for help to focus on the good things God has done for them that day. In all times, whether good times, bad times, or just everyday life, they can always find something to be grateful for.

3. Discussion Questions

- What words would you use to describe an ungrateful person? How would you describe a grateful person?
- Why do you think it's so hard for many of us to be grateful?
- In what ways does your trust in God impact the way you feel about the situations you go through?
- We can be grateful even when we don't feel happy. Do you agree or disagree? Explain why or why not.
- What's the best way to change an ungrateful attitude to a grateful one?

4. Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

What You Need: "Attitude of Gratitude" Activity Page (a couple per bin)

What You Do:

- Divide your group into pairs.
- One by one, read the scenarios from the "Attitude of Gratitude" Activity Page out loud to the group.
- Instruct the kids to discuss the scenario with their partner and come up with a way to show gratitude in that situation.
- Ask kids for some things someone in that situation could be grateful for.
- Invite each pair to share their ideas with the rest of the group.
- Say, "When things go wrong, it can feel challenging to find something to be grateful for. Some of these scenarios were a little harder than others to find a reason to be thankful, but you all did a great job of seeing something good between the challenges."
- Invite kids to share about times when life took twists and turns that were not easy for them.
- Ask: "Even on your worst days, what could you still be thankful for?"
- Say: "Sometimes we have to dig deep to find something to be grateful for, but when we do, we'll always discover ways God is with us and cares for us."

5. Pray

- "Dear God, we need Your help because gratitude doesn't come easy to us, especially when we're having a bad day. Remind us that Your plans are always good. Help us guard our gratitude instead of complaining about what isn't going our way. Help us choose to be grateful for all that is good. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

PARENT PICK UP POINT: As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to show their parent the Gratitude Wall what they were thankful for.