

KIDS of
INTEGRITY

Gratitude



Feed a greedy water creature, make prayer journals filled with thanksgiving, eat a meal of manna and learn about a king who saw disaster coming and prepared by praising God!

Choose from these activities and more to help kids:

- notice and be grateful for all the ways God cares for them
- be thankful even when they're disappointed
- trust God to provide their needs.

You'll also find this lesson helpful for kids who complain a lot, who take their blessings for granted, or who have trouble accepting limits on treats or pleasurable pursuits.

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Scripture verses in this lesson are quoted from the English Standard Version.

Parents' prayer

This section will help you prepare for this lesson by talking to God about your own need to become more grateful.

If you prefer to personalize your prayer, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Generous Father, You are the Creator of all things and in You I live and move and have my being (Colossians 1:16, Acts 17:28) Thank you for generously supplying all I need for life and health. Not only am I indebted to You for everything I am and all I have physically, You also give me life spiritually. Because of Your Son Jesus and His death and resurrection, I never need to be thirsty or hungry in a spiritual sense (John 6:35-36) Love unending, undeserved, forgiveness, grace immeasurable, sweet salvation, the joy of Your presence – what incredible gifts! Thank you!

Please forgive me for allowing our culture to fool me into chasing after satisfaction in the form of worldly pleasures at times. It seems that because we have so much, we just assume we are entitled to it. Instead of being grateful for the comforts that surround me, I find things to complain about. Please give me godly wisdom to know when to say "no" and "enough is enough" when I am parenting alongside those who delight in buying every toy, treat and entertainment available. I want to raise children who are truly grateful for having the basic necessities in life. As a parent, I don't want to be conformed to a pattern of self-absorbed consumerism. Please transform me by renewing my mind so that I can know Your will for my life (Romans 12:2). I want to have David's heart attitude, as expressed in Psalm 73:25-26, "Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides You."

My children are growing up surrounded by social pressure to "get more." Please speak to _____ and _____ of Your great goodness so they are not tempted to be ungrateful in regards to the many blessings that they have in their life. I ask that You would inspire _____ and _____

to pursue joy and fulfillment in You, rather than seeking soul-satisfaction in empty pleasures. When life seems difficult or unfair, please remind _____ and _____ that they can still have an attitude of praise, because you will not desert them (Hebrews 13:5). Please give _____ and _____ the faith to believe that enduring trials will build positive character in them – a blessing from You in the form of spiritual growth (James 1:2-12). May they know You for who You are: gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love (Psalm 145:8). As _____ and _____ recognize Your presence and goodness in their life, may their response be one of joyful thanksgiving.

For our family, my request is that we would have truly grateful hearts so we can be sincere in showing our appreciation to You, to one another and to others. Even in undesirable circumstances, may we celebrate Your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of Your righteousness (Psalm 145:7). We want it to become natural for us to give You the continuous praise You deserve. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking God for all the ways He meets your needs physically and spiritually.

2 Chronicles 7:1-3 | Psalm 34:8-10 | Psalm 136:1-3,23-26
| Romans 10:12-13 | Revelation 7:11-12

Heart search

Acknowledge the ways in which you are ungrateful.

Deuteronomy 8:10-14,17-18 | Isaiah 57:17-18 |
Hebrews 13:5 | Luke 12:13-15 | Luke 17:13-18

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen gratitude exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your children have truly grateful hearts.

Psalm 103:1-5 | Psalm 145:3-7 | John 10:10-13 |
Colossians 3:15-17 | 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Kids talk with God

These sample prayers all begin with “Dear God,” but you may use any other names of God your children are comfortable with, (i.e. Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, etc.)

If your children are ready to pray original prayers, you may wish to use the Bible verses provided under “Scripture-guided prayer for children.”

Sample prayers

Dear God, I give You thanks because You are good. Thank you for _____. Amen.

Dear God, thank you for making animals. I just love _____ (name a favourite animal). Amen.

Dear God, there are so many amazing things in nature. Thank you for _____ (name something in nature and what you like about it). Amen.

Dear God, thank you for a warm house, good food to eat, for my family and my pets. Amen.

Dear God, thank you for loving me. Thank you that my sins are forgiven and that I can be Your child. Amen.

Dear God, thank you that I am a child of Yours. Amen.

Dear God, life seems unfair right now. Please help me to see things that I can be thankful for. Amen.

Dear God, I am tempted to complain about _____ (name any area of dissatisfaction). Please help me to find a way to praise You even when I am not feeling thankful. Amen.

Dear God, please help me to be joyful always and to remember to give You thanks for all things (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking God for taking care of you.
Psalm 100:5 | Psalm 118:29 | John 10:11

Heart search

Tell God about the times you are tempted to complain instead of being thankful.
Deuteronomy 8:17-18 | Isaiah 57:17-18 | Luke 12:15

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen your family express their thankfulness.

Family requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and your parents to remember to be thankful for everything.
Psalm 145:6-7 | Colossians 3:17 | 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Speak a blessing

Encourage your children throughout your lesson by supporting them when they are facing hard things. Simple statements like these mean a lot to your child.

- That was kind of you to say “thank you.”
 - You are a boy/girl who is thankful in everything.
 - A thankful heart is a happy heart! I see that your heart has a smile.
 - I am thankful that you did not complain or whine when _____ (name the situation).
 - I noticed that you said “thank you.” It makes me happy when you are thankful. God likes to hear you say thanks too.
 - What an awesome attitude of gratitude you have!
 - Thank you for _____ (name the situation so you can model gratitude yourself).
-

Memory verses

Memorizing Scripture with your children helps God’s Spirit bring about lasting change. Choose a verse that your children can learn in a pre-determined period of time and aim to review the verse at least once every day.

1 Chronicles 16:8 “Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!”

Psalm 34:8 “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!”

Psalm 100:4 “Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him; bless His name!”

Psalm 100:5 “For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations.”

Psalm 107:1 “Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!”

Psalm 107:8-9 “Let them thank the Lord for His steadfast love, for His wondrous works to the children of man! For He satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul He fills with good things.”

Psalm 118:28 “You are my God, and I will give thanks to You; You are my God; I will extol You.”

Psalm 145:9 “The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made.”

Psalm 147:1 “Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting.”

Isaiah 12:5 “Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth.”

Philippians 4:6-7 “. . . do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Colossians 3:15 “And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.”

Colossians 3:17 “And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Kick-off craft

Plan to do this kick-off craft early in your lesson on gratitude. As your lesson progresses, let your kids add to their placemats.

Praise placemats

Directions

You will need the following supplies:

- 11 x 17" sheets of paper or cardstock
- 2 x 3" or 4 x 6" paper cards
- glue
- decorative letters or felt-tip markers
- laminating plastic
- stickers (optional).

Here's how to make your placemats:

- 1 Help each child write “Thank you Jesus” on their placemat.
- 2 Include your memory verse on each placemat too.
- 3 On the smaller 4 x 6" paper cards, have your kids draw pictures of things they are thankful for. (The cards will prevent one picture filling up the whole placemat)
- 4 Spread the work over a number of days so your children can think of new items or situations to

thank God for each day. For avid artists, have them select their favourites for use on their placemat, or let them make more than one placemat. (And affirm their thankful heart!)

- 5 When you use your placemats at mealtimes, review the memory verse and the things you are thankful for.

Bible stories

Choose one or more Bible stories that are appropriate for your children.

Note: The first three Bible stories presented here also appear in the **Thanksgiving** lesson.

Bitter water, bad attitudes

Prepare ahead (optional): Make some “bitter water” for your children to sample during your Bible story. Add three tablespoons of lemon juice to one cup of water.

Set the scene for this Bible story by reading this brief summary of the preceding events:

God helped the Israelites escape from Egypt, where they had spent 430 years working as slaves for the Egyptians. Pharaoh, the ruler of the Egyptians, finally agreed to set the Israelites free and let them leave the country. This sounds like good news, but shortly after Pharaoh let the Israelites go, he changed his mind! He wanted his Israelite slaves back!

The Egyptian army came chasing after the Israelites as they fled through the desert. The Israelites were travelling on foot, with their wives and children, and carrying everything they owned. But the Egyptian army had horses and chariots, and they caught up fast. Soon the Israelites found they had nowhere to run: they were trapped by the Red Sea! But God preformed a miracle by piling up the water of the Red Sea to the left and right, so the Israelites could safely cross by walking on the ocean floor. When the Egyptian army tried to follow them, God closed the water back over top of the army. It was simply amazing!

Read **Exodus 15:22-24**.

Questions for discussion

1. What is a desert like?
2. What were the Israelites complaining about when they were in the desert?
3. Would you like to try some bitter water? (*Offer each child a cup of lemon water.*)
4. Would you complain if you were in a desert and this was all you had to drink?

Add a tablespoon of sugar, honey or agave nectar to each child's cup and let them sip it while you continue telling the story

Read **Exodus 15:25-27**.

5. What do you think the Israelites said after they tasted the sweet water?
6. Do you think God would have let the Israelites die of thirst in the desert?
7. When the Israelites complained to Moses, who were they really grumbling against?
8. When you complain about something, who else hears you?
9. What did God promise the Israelites?
10. What was it like at Elim – the place that the Israelites came to next?
11. What can you do when you are worried about not getting something you think you need?

Key concepts

God knew the Israelites needed water and He provided it. There was so much water and so many trees at Elim, we know that God provided more than enough water for the Israelites. At the end of this story, God promised the Israelites that if they listened carefully to His voice, paid attention to His commands and did what was right, that He would not let the diseases that He gave the Egyptians make them sick. God said, **“I am the Lord, your healer”** (Exodus 15:26). This was another way that God

reminded the Israelites of His ability to care for them. You could say that God was even going to be their “doctor in the desert.”

This story helps us understand that God knows what we need and He will provide it. When we are tempted to worry or complain about not having something, we need to remember that God cares for us and will provide what we need (Philippians 4:6-7). If we grumble and complain like the Israelites did, it shows that we are not trusting God. Instead of whining when we think we need something, we should pray and trust God to give us the things we need.

Relevant Scripture

Philippians 4:6-7 **“... do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”**

Whining about Wheaties

Prepare ahead (optional): Bake some homemade “manna” using the recipe presented in the hands-on option “manna meal” and let your children snack on the manna while you read the story. Or, if you prefer, make your manna together after the Bible story.

Short on time? Purchase a slightly sweetened whole grain breakfast cereal to serve as your manna. Some good options are Life, Shreddies, Corn Bran, Kashi's Honey Sunshine cereal or Weetabix.

Set up a make-believe campfire by placing a flashlight under red and yellow tissue or cloth, then cozy up together beside your “fire” in sleeping bags or favourite blankets while you enjoy this Bible story.

Read **Exodus 16:1-16**.

Questions for discussion

1. Do you enjoy camping?
2. Where is your favourite place to camp?
3. What do you think it would be like to camp in a giant field of sand?

4. In today's Bible story, what were the Israelites complaining about?
5. What did God do to provide food for the Israelites?
6. When we whine and complain, who are we really complaining against?
7. What do you think God thought when the Israelites whined and complained?
8. How can you remember to have a grateful attitude, even when you feel like complaining?

Key concepts

In our last Bible story, the Israelites were in the Desert of Shur, where God showed them that they didn't need to worry about water: He provided them with all the water they needed. But right after that, when they reached the Desert of Sin, the Israelites began to worry and complain about not having any food. (They sure complained in the Desert of Shur, and sure enough, they sinned in the Desert of Sin!)

So God provided the Israelites with quail to eat in the evening, and in the morning He sent a very special food, called "manna," that covered the ground in flakes. When the people first saw the manna they said, "What is it?" They called it manna, because "manna" in their language means "what is it?" That would be like us calling our breakfast cereal "whatisit."

The Bible says the manna was white like coriander seed and tasted like it was sweetened with honey and baked with olive oil (Exodus 16:31, Numbers 11:7-8). God sent the manna for the Israelites to eat for forty years – the entire time they were in the desert (Exodus 16:35).

Even though God provides food, water and shelter for us every day, when things get hard we can be tempted to doubt God's ability to care for us. In Genesis 22 there's another story about how God provided. This time, God provided Abraham with a lamb to sacrifice. Overjoyed, Abraham called the place "The Lord Will Provide" and he called

God by the special name "Jehovah Jireh," which means "God is the God who provides." When we feel worried or begin to doubt if God is going to take care of us, we can pray and call God by the name "Jehovah Jireh" to remind us that we can trust God to take care of all our needs.

In closing, make a list of the things you require to live (i.e., a home for shelter, food, water, clothing and a family or friends to love). Pray and thank God for providing everything you need.

Relevant Scripture

Genesis 22:14 "So Abraham called the name of that place 'The Lord Will Provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.'"

1 Timothy 6:17 "As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy."

Whining about water . . . again!

This is not a stand-alone story. Only use this Bible story if you have already completed the Bible stories "Bitter water, bad attitudes" and "Whining about Wheaties" that are also included in this lesson.

Read Exodus 17:1-7.

Questions for discussion

1. Are you tired of hearing stories about the Israelites grumbling and complaining?
2. Do you think God ever gets tired of hearing you complain?
3. What were the Israelites whining and complaining about in this story?
4. Who were the Israelites demanding water from?
5. Do you think Moses had any water for the Israelites?
6. Who should the Israelites have been asking for water?
7. How did God provide water?

8. Why do you think God chose to make water come out of a rock?
9. What do you need in order to live?
10. What is the difference between wanting something and needing it?
11. Do you believe God can give you the things you need?
12. What can you do to remind yourself not to complain about eating _____? (List some foods that your child prefers not to eat.)

Key concepts

You would think that after seeing all the previous miracles (the journey through the Red Sea, bitter water being made sweet and food from heaven) that the Israelites would have learned to trust God. Unfortunately, they continued to doubt God's ability to provide for them.

It's easy for us to make the same mistake the Israelites did. Instead of appreciating and thanking God for all that we have, we demand more and more. In Isaiah, God explains that even the wild animals honour Him because He provides water for them in the desert. God also says that He will provide water for His people so that they will praise Him. God wants to hear us praise Him for taking care of us (Isaiah 43:19-21), and He certainly deserves it!

*Note: To add some fun to this lesson, pair it with the M&M game from the **hands-on options** section of this lesson.*

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 107:8-9 "Let them thank the Lord for His steadfast love, for His wondrous works to the children of man! For He satisfies the longing soul and the hungry soul He fills with good things."

Isaiah 43:19-21 "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild beasts will honor Me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to My chosen people, the

people whom I formed for Myself that they might declare My praise."

Isaiah 63:7 "I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has done for us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that He has granted them according to His compassion, according to the abundance of His steadfast love."

Don't forget God's goodness

Before you begin, give your children a piece of fabric and some sandpaper each. As you read the Bible story, have your children rub the cloth with the sandpaper. (Be sure to cover your work surface first so they don't sand your tabletop or countertop.) Afterwards, observe how the constant friction has begun to wear out the cloth. You can also show your children some old clothing that has holes worn in it.

Read Deuteronomy 8:1-16.

Questions for discussion

1. How did God care for the Israelites?
2. If you wore the same clothes every day for 40 years, how do you think they would look?
3. What did God warn the Israelites about?
4. Do you know what it means to be arrogant?
5. What good things could cause someone to forget about God?
6. Who deserves honour for giving us our home, food, toys and clothing?
7. How can we honour God for giving us good things?

Key concepts

God cared for the Israelites by bringing them out of Egypt and safely across the Red Sea. He cared for them in the desert by providing manna to eat and water to drink. Even while they travelled in hot conditions their feet did not swell and their clothing did not wear out. He even kept them safe from snake and scorpion bites.

God told the Israelites that when they got to the Promised Land, life would be wonderful. He warned them that when they had large flocks, lots of gold and silver and fine houses and many good things to eat, that it would be easy to forget Him. He said their hearts could become proud and they would start to think that it was their own hands that brought them so much wealth.

To be proud or arrogant means that we honour ourselves instead of giving honour to God for everything we have. The Bible also includes a verse in the New Testament that talks about the same thing: that we should not trust in our wealth, but in God who is the One who provides us with everything we need for our enjoyment (1 Timothy 6:17). We can honour God for giving us good things by remembering to thank Him for the material things we have and by being willing to share them with others.

Relevant Scripture

1 Timothy 6:17 “As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.”

Psalm 106:24-25 “Then they despised the pleasant land, having no faith in His promise. They murmured in their tents, and did not obey the voice of the Lord.”

Praising God at a strange time

Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-26.

Questions for discussion

1. What would you do if you were playing outside and saw a group of older kids coming down the street who looked like they were planning to cause trouble?
2. What was the first thing King Jehoshaphat did when he heard there was a huge army coming against him and his people?
3. How did God answer their prayers?
4. What did they do the next day as they went out to battle?

5. Is it easier to praise God when things are going your way or when you are disappointed?
6. Why do you think we should praise God even when life is difficult?
7. Is there anything hard in your life?
8. Do you want to thank God for this challenge?

Key concepts

When King Jehoshaphat heard that a huge army was approaching, he had very good reason to be afraid. Two of the strongest armies in the region were marching to fight his people.

The first thing Jehoshaphat did was to call together all the people to pray. Just as a child will go to their parent for help when there is a problem, Jehoshaphat went to God. God answered Jehoshaphat through a man named Jahaziel. The message from God was “Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God’s.” (2 Chronicles 20:15). The next day, when Jehoshaphat and the people went out to war, they went singing a song that said, “Give thanks to the Lord, for His steadfast love endures forever” (2 Chronicles 20:21).

The Bible tells us that as they began to sing, praising God, God caused the approaching armies to fight against each other so Jehoshaphat and his people didn’t even need to fight. Afterwards Jehoshaphat gathered the people together to praise God again.

It can be hard, but God wants us to thank Him for everything, because hard times help us learn to trust Him more and to grow stronger in our character. If we face difficult or scary times, we can remember what Jehoshaphat did when he had a big problem. He thanked God for His love, even though the Israelites were in a discouraging and seemingly hopeless situation. And after God came to their rescue, Jehoshaphat remembered to have all of the people praise and thank God for caring for them.

Relevant Scripture

Romans 5:3-5 “More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces

endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

James 1:2-4 "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

Thanking God all day long

This story describes what Nehemiah did during the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem to show gratitude to God. To help your children understand why Nehemiah had so much to be thankful for, begin by reading them this summary of the events leading up to the building of the wall around Jerusalem:

The Israelites were proud and stubborn and refused to listen to God. Over and over again, to get their attention, God allowed their enemies to cause them to suffer. Then they would cry out to God and He would make things better for them. But as soon as the Israelites were comfortable again, they would start sinning again (Nehemiah 9:6-18, 26-31).

After being patient for a very long time, God decided to allow their enemies to come and capture the Israelites and take them away from the Promised Land and into their enemies' countries (2 Kings 17:6; 2 Kings 18:10-11, 13, 2 Chronicles 36:5-7; Daniel 1:1-7, 2 Kings 24:10-17, 2 Kings 25:1-12).

Then, after 70 years had passed, God allowed some of the Israelites to return to their land and begin rebuilding their temple. Nehemiah was living in a foreign country when he found out that some of God's people were back in the Promised Land and that they were rebuilding God's temple in the city of Jerusalem. He also heard that there was no wall to protect the city and to protect the people rebuilding the temple.

Nehemiah told God that he was willing to go back and help. God answered Nehemiah's prayer by softening the heart of the Persian king, Artaxerxes. The King not only gave permission for Nehemiah to go, he also gave him supplies to be used for rebuilding the wall around

Jerusalem. Despite many trials, Nehemiah encouraged the people to persevere and to continue trusting in God for help. Eventually the walls were restored and more Israelites began to move back to Jerusalem.

Read Nehemiah 12:27-29, 31, 38-43.

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever seen a parade or a marching band?
2. What was your favourite part of the parade?
3. Do you hear a parade first, or see it first?
4. Which are your favourite instruments in a marching band?
5. Why did Nehemiah call the people together?
6. What did they do to praise God??
7. Who came to the celebration to praise God?
8. How loud do you think their praises were?
9. What is your favourite way to make joyful noises to praise God?

Key concepts

Nehemiah called the people together to dedicate the walls of Jerusalem to God and to praise and thank Him for allowing the walls to be rebuilt. They praised God through singing and playing musical instruments like cymbals, harps and lyres. Nehemiah also organized two large choirs to sing songs of thanksgiving and to march on the city walls during the dedication ceremony. The Bible tells us that even the women and children rejoiced and that the sound of their praises could be heard far away. We can make joyful noises to praise God, too (Psalm 100:1-3). Like the Israelites did, we can shout, sing and play musical instruments.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 100:1-3 "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing! Know that the Lord, He

is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.”

Creative discipline

Here are some suggestions to help you encourage a spirit of gratitude in your children.

Biblical basis

The story of Job helps us put complaining in perspective. First, most of Job’s possessions (oxen, donkeys, sheep, camels and servants) were destroyed or stolen. Then all his sons and daughters were killed in a windstorm. And this happened all on the same day (Job 1:13-20)! From a human point of view, it may seem as though Job had a pretty good reason to complain or whine, but God didn’t think so (Job 40:1-9).

Job 40:1-9 “And the Lord said to Job: ‘Shall a faultfinder contend with the almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer it.’ Then Job answered the Lord and said: ‘Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further.’ Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: ‘Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to Me. Will you even put Me in the wrong? Will you condemn Me that you may be in the right? Have you an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like His?’ ”

Suggested disciplinary action

Enforce a zero tolerance policy for complaining or having an ungrateful, *It’s not fair!* attitude. Each time one of your children whines or complains, come up with a logical disciplinary consequence. For example:

- If your child complains about loading dishes into the dishwasher, have your child wash the dishes by hand. Afterwards, have him or her thank God for dishwashers.
- If your child moans about having to pick up their toys, confiscate the toys and keep them aside for a day or two. Have your child spend time thanking God for all the toys he or she has been blessed with.
- If your child whines because a sibling received

a bigger piece of cake, remove his or her dessert as a reminder to be grateful for what he or she has been given.

Affirmation

Explain to your child that complaining is indirectly telling God that you don’t believe He is good. Whining is the same as questioning God’s choices for your life situation. God did not like it when Job questioned His justice (Job 19:6-7, 27:2, 40:1-9). Job realized this and humbly apologized (Job 42:1-3). God is good and the Bible tells us to thank Him for His goodness.

Pray with your child, thanking God for His love and goodness. Encourage your child to ask God to forgive their ungratefulness and help them have a thankful heart.

Relevant Scripture

1 Chronicles 16:34 “Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever!”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Hands-on options

These fun ideas require very little preparation, making it easy for you to share some simple but memorable lessons with your kids. Choose just one or two ideas that will appeal to your children.

*Note: The seasonal lesson on **Thanksgiving** has a number of hands-on options that would also be appropriate for this lesson on gratitude.*

If you feed it, it will grow

science with a twist

Feed a grow-in-water creature with sugar water to teach kids that overindulging in all kinds of treats can make us ungrateful.

You will need a grow-in-water creature (often available in dollar stores), a large clear bowl, a jug that can hold 8 cups of water, a cup, a teaspoon and up to two cups of sugar.

- 1 First, put your grow-in-water toy in the bowl.
- 2 Add 8 cups of water to your jug.
- 3 Have your children gather food from your cupboards that might contain sugar.
- 4 Examine the food labels on the food you've gathered. For each food item, determine how many grams of sugar are in an individual serving.
- 5 For each food item, have your children take turns adding sugar to the jug of water in direct proportion to the sugar found in the food. (Since one teaspoon of sugar weighs four grams, divide the weight of sugar given on the food label by four to determine how many teaspoons of sugar to add to your jug of water.) Here are some examples to help:

- one chocolate chip cookie has 12 grams of sugar (according to the label) and $12 \div 4 = 3$, so add 3 teaspoons of sugar to your jug of water
- one 355 ml can of Coca-Cola has 39 grams of sugar (according to the label) and $39 \div 4 = 9.7$, so add 10 teaspoons of sugar to your jug of water.

- 6 After preparing your sugar water, allow your kids to "feed" the expandable creature by pouring 2 to 3 cups of the sugar water into the bowl.
- 7 Once or twice a day, revisit the expandable creature and observe its growth. Continue to add sugar water as needed. Most will be fully grown in 24 to 48 hours.
- 8 Once the creature has expanded to full size, remove it from the water and watch to see what happens over time.

Questions for discussion

1. If you could eat any one food all day, every day, what would it be?
2. Would your body be healthy then?

3. What happened to our toy creature when we fed it sugar water?
4. What happened when we stopped feeding it sugar water?
5. Besides taking away our appetite for healthy foods, what does too much sugar do to a person?
6. How can our appetite be like the toy creature?
7. Can you think of any other appetites or habits that like to grow and grow, but are unhelpful?

Key concepts

Practicing moderation in a culture that is very pleasure-oriented can be challenging. We love treats, and it can be hard to stop ourselves from having more than we should. The problem is that when we continuously indulge in all kinds of things – such as sweet food or junk food, for example – having a lot of these things becomes the expected norm, eventually causing a lack of appreciation for the treats. This kind of overindulgence breeds ungratefulness.

Some other potentially harmful things we can overindulge in include watching television, playing digital games or buying clothing, toys and gadgets. None of these activities are wrong in and of themselves, but a constant "diet of pleasure" can cause a person to lose their appreciation for things that are meant to be "treats" that we enjoy just a little of.

It's always a good idea to stop and think about the choices we are making. Some good questions to ask might be:

- *Do I really need this, or do I just want it?*
- *Can I do without this?*
- *Will I regret making this choice (or purchase) later?*
- *Is this a healthy choice, or am I just eating it because I want to?*

- *Is there a better way for us to use this money than buying _____.*

Note: End your lesson by praying as a family, asking God to help you be careful with the money you spend on extras.

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 25:16 “If you have found honey, eat only enough for you, lest you have your fill of it and vomit it.”

Luke 12:14-15 “But He said to him, ‘Man, who made Me a judge or arbitrator over you?’ And He said to them, ‘Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.’”

A marvellous medicine bottle

creative crafts

Create a medicine bottle for a variety of complaints by stuffing a jar full of Bible verses from the **memory verses** section of this lesson.

Every time someone in your family complains, have them pick a verse out of the medicine bottle to read aloud.

After reading the verse, pray that God will teach your family to be grateful for all He has given you.

To add a touch of humour, decorate your medicine jar with a grumpy face, and put a red prohibition sign over their face. Add the slogan “Praising all day keeps the grumpies away!”

Impress on your children the amazing truth that when we praise or thank God for something, our attitudes do become more positive.

Manna meal

fun with food

For one meal, eat only one unsweetened, carbohydrate-based food to help your children practice contentment and appreciate the variety of food available to them.

Your choice of food for this meal could be brown rice, whole grain bread, potatoes, popcorn, crackers or oatmeal. Or alternatively, you might want to make

the manna recipe included here to simulate the wafers the Israelites ate in the desert.

Eat your food without any salt, seasoning or added extras like butter, ketchup, sauces or spreads.

During your meal, read Numbers 11:4-35 or consult the “mad about manna” Bible story from the **Thanksgiving** lesson.

As you eat together, talk about how the Israelites must have felt eating manna day after day for so long. You may also wish to discuss what it might be like to live in underprivileged countries, where people have only one simple meal (or less) to eat each day.

Review your choice of the Scripture verses to help your children understand what the Bible says about contentment.

Finally, practice being thankful for everything – even your “boring” meal – with this thankfulness prayer based on Philippians 4:12:

Dear God, please teach us the secret of being content in any and every situation. Help us to remember to thank You, whether we are well fed or hungry; whether we have lots of things or very little. Thank you. Amen.

Manna wafers

3 ¼ cups whole wheat flour

1 tsp. baking soda

½ tsp. salt

½ tsp. coriander (optional)

⅛ cup butter, melted, or olive oil

½ cup honey

1 tsp. vanilla

½ cup unsweetened applesauce (equals one 111 g container of Mott’s brand)

1 egg

sugar to sprinkle on top (optional)

1 Preheat oven to 375 °F.

2 Use a hand mixer to blend the butter, honey, vanilla, applesauce and egg together.

3 Sift in just one cup of the whole wheat flour, 1 tsp. baking soda and ½ tsp. powdered coriander

(optional – note that the Bible says manna was like coriander in looks, not necessarily taste).

- 4 Mix the dough until it is uniformly blended. Continue adding flour until the dough is stiff enough to roll out.
- 5 Roll the dough as thin as possible. The thinner you roll it, the more authentic it will be, as manna was described as being flaky.
- 6 If you want to sweeten the wafers slightly, sprinkle the surface of the rolled-out dough with white or brown sugar. Gently roll over the sugared surface to adhere the sugar to the dough.
- 7 Cut the “manna” into squares or use cookie cutters to punch out a variety of shapes.
- 8 Place the wafers on a non-stick cookie sheet and bake in the oven at 375 °F for 8-10 minutes. The manna wafers are done when they are lightly browned and spring back when pressed lightly with a fingertip.

Relevant Scripture

Philippians 4:11b “. . . I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.”

Philippians 4:12b “. . . I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.”

1 Timothy 6:8 “But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.”

M&M game

Share with your kids the Bible story in Exodus 17:1-7 where the Israelites quarrelled with Moses so much that Moses called the place “Massah and Meribah.” “Massah” means “testing” and “Meribah” means “quarrelling” (Exodus 17:2,7). The Israelite’s complaining tested God’s patience too.

Note: This activity pairs nicely with the Bible story “whining about water . . . again!”

Now you’re ready to play the M&M game. Every time anyone complains, the rest of the family gently says “M and M” or “mmmm,” reminding everyone of the words “Massah and Meribah.” This is a polite way of saying that you don’t want your home to be full of quarrelling, or a place where you test God’s patience.

As a penalty for complaining, the person who whined needs to think of three things to thank God for instead. Here’s an example of how an episode might play out:

Parent: “Please pick up those toys before supper.”

Child: “I don’t want to. Get my brother to do it. He played with them too.”

Parent: “M and M.”

Child: “But I don’t want to clean up.”

Parent: “Oops! I just heard you complain again. Can you think of three things to thank God for? I can help you get started. Which toy on the floor is your favourite?”

Child: “I like this giraffe best.”

Parent: “Great. Let’s see if you can put it in the toy box before I can say, ‘Thank You, God, for the giraffe.’ Can you think of two more things you are thankful for?”

Child: “Blankie and Bunny.”

Parent: “Thank You, God, for Blankie, Bunny and Giraffe. Thank You too for _____ (insert all your children’s names here). Please give us thankful hearts. Amen.”

To add a fun twist to the game, also give out a few M&M candies each time a child expresses appreciation or thanks unprompted. Don’t tell your kids why you are handing out candy, and see how long it takes them to figure it out.

When someone whines or complains, you can also use your choice of the verses below to remind your children of the importance of praising God instead. Pray with your children, thanking God for His love and goodness. Encourage your kids to ask God to forgive

their ungratefulness. Thank God specifically for the good things He provides and then close by asking God to give each person in your family a grateful heart.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 95:6-9 “Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers put Me to the test and put Me to the proof, though they had seen My work.”

Isaiah 63:7 “I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has done for us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that He has granted them according to His compassion, according to the abundance of His steadfast love.”

Irritants and blessings

drive time/any time

Clothing tags can be uncomfortably itchy. Use this idea to impress on your children how irritating it is to have to listen to someone who is constantly complaining.

Begin by attaching a small piece of hook-and-loop tape fastener inside each child’s shirt collar. Have everyone wear their “itchy tag” for 10 minutes or so.

During your 10 minutes, talk about how someone’s whining and complaining can be really annoying and draining for others around them. If you wish, read Judges 16:16 aloud and explain how Delilah’s whining irritated Samson, ultimately leading Samson to make a very bad decision.

Invite your children to suggest scenarios where the stress of listening to whining could lead someone to make a mistake. (For example, driving in a car with a whining child could distract the driver. Or trying to make dinner while dealing with a whiny child might lead to the supper being burned.)

Next, remove your itchy tags and instead let everyone wear a soft scarf or fleecy sweater instead. Leave your soft clothing on as long as you like.

Share Ephesians 4:29 and impress on your children how nice it is to be around people who notice the good things in their lives and who express thanks to others and to God. These kinds of people are like soft fleecy clothing or cuddly blankets: they bring joy to others and are “comfortable” to be around!

As you continue your lesson on gratitude, whenever one of your children lapses into complaining, gently ask them if they are being like an itchy tag or a soft scarf.

Relevant Scripture

Judges 16:16 “And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death.”

Proverbs 16:24 “Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.”

Ephesians 4:29 “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

Illustrated prayer journal

creative crafts

Help your children each make a colourful prayer journal that will remind them to include elements of adoration, confession and thanksgiving in their prayers.

For each child’s journal you will need a three-ring binder, a hole punch, pages to insert, a glue stick, pictures, decorative lettering and embellishments of your choice.

Work together to decorate the cover of your journals.

Your first page will be dedicated to pictures that represent adoration and worship. Ask your children, *Which pictures can we put on this page to remind us that God is wonderful?* (For example, you might choose a picture of a rainbow to represent God’s faithfulness, or a heart to represent God’s love.) Spend some time praising God in prayer.

The second page is for confession. Ask, *Can you think of some things we do that make God sad?* Add pictures

to this page of soap and cleaning products, to illustrate that God washes away any sin we confess. Talk about confession as a positive time, because it is refreshing to ask God to clean the sin out of our lives. Now spend some time confessing.

The third page is for thanksgiving. Have your children choose pictures to represent things they want to thank God for.

For the final page, let each child select pictures that represent things they want to pray about.

As prayers are answered and new prayer ideas come up, record them in your prayer journals, inserting additional pages as needed.

Relevant Scripture

John 16:23-24 “In that day you will ask nothing of Me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”

James 4:1-3 “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.”

The boy who complained about everything

drive time / any time

Entertain your kids by telling them this fable about a child who complained too much. Add your own creative ideas to the story if you wish.

Thomas and his disappearing day

One day Thomas woke up in a grumpy mood. The first thing he said was, “I don’t want to brush my teeth.” And suddenly, right before his eyes, his toothbrush disappeared! Thomas thought that was very strange, but he was happy he wouldn’t have to brush his teeth.

At breakfast Thomas whined about his porridge being cold and sticky. Suddenly Thomas’ porridge vanished too!

Thomas didn’t mind that his breakfast was gone. He simply got down from the table and went outside to play. Thomas’ friend Gordon came out to play too – but Gordon wanted to play fishing instead of tag, so Thomas groaned about his friend. “Gordon, you never want to play what I want to play,” he said. As quickly as you can blink, Gordon was gone. Thomas just shrugged his shoulders and chased a butterfly around the yard instead.

By lunchtime Thomas was hungry and a little bit bored with playing butterfly tag. He went inside and said to his mother in a whiny voice, “I have nothing to do. And I am so hungry! A good mother would have my lunch made already, wouldn’t she?” Then in a flash, Thomas’ mother was gone too.

Finally Thomas was starting to get upset. If you remember, his porridge had disappeared, so he hadn’t had any breakfast, and he was now very hungry. Thomas searched the kitchen to see if he could find anything to eat. When he couldn’t reach the shelves in the pantry, he grumbled that the food had been stored too high up. Then Thomas looked in the fridge and muttered to himself that the fridge had no fun food in it. Suddenly the cupboards and fridge were empty of everything!

By now Thomas was thirsty as well as hungry, so he tried to get a drink. But before he could stop himself, he complained about how hard it was to reach the faucet. Suddenly the faucet was gone too and he couldn’t turn the water on at all.

“Oh no!” said Thomas. “All there’s left for me to do is play with my toys, but they are all so old and boring.” And as soon as he said that, all Thomas’ toys floated up and away out the window.

Then Thomas heard the house creaking and echoing. It seemed to say, “You should stop complaining.”

Feeling sorry for himself, Thomas said in his saddest voice, “Even the house is bothering me.” And before he could take back what he had said, the house was gone too.

Thomas found himself sitting on the lawn and began to cry. Soon his pet cat, Morris, came and rubbed up against him. “Silly cat,” said Thomas. “You want me to pet you? How selfish can you be? I have all these problems and you want attention. If only I could have a sensible pet instead.”

And what do you think happened next? That’s right. Thomas’ cat disappeared too.

When Thomas’ father came home for supper, he found a very lonely, hungry, thirsty, and uncomfortable little boy sitting in an empty yard.

“Thomas,” said his father, “where is our house, where is your mother, where is your cat and where is your friend Gordon? Mrs. Bates is looking for him.”

“Daddy,” said Thomas, “I’m so sorry for all my whining. All day whenever I complained, things just disappeared. From now on, I will try my best to be thankful for all I have instead of complaining.”

Then just as quickly as everything had gone, it reappeared. Thomas’ mother, his friend, his house, and his cat were all back again.

Never before had his home, family and friends looked so good to Thomas. And from that day on, Thomas hardly ever whined at all.

Rose-coloured water

science with a twist

In this demonstration, you’ll add food colouring until a jar of water is murky, and discuss with how greed can cloud our perspective so we forget to be grateful.

You will need a large, clear jar filled with fresh water, food colouring in blue, red, green and yellow, and a toy catalogue.

- 1 To begin, have your children take turns looking through the jar of clear water to observe the room around them. Invite them to name some of the things they can see.
- 2 Now share a brief story about a child who wanted *everything*. Bring out the toy catalogue and let your children choose items from the catalogue they think the greedy child might want.

- 3 With each item your children select, add a couple of drops of food colouring to the water in the jar, based on the colour of the object selected. For example, add blue food colouring for a blue bicycle or yellow for a yellow construction toy.
- 4 To make the water even cloudier, tell your kids that the greedy child demanded an ice cream at every snack time too, then add some milk or ice cream to your jar of water as well.
- 5 Keep the toy ideas flowing and keep adding colouring until the water is brown and murky.
- 6 Now invite your children to look through the jar again and name the things they can see in the room.
- 7 Explain to your children that just as the clear water grew cloudy and hard to see through, wanting more and more things “clouds” our perspective and makes it hard for us to see all the good things we already have.
- 8 Point out that you started out with something really valuable, but that people often take for granted or fail to appreciate. Ask your kids to guess what that might be. (*Having clean water to drink and use.*)
- 9 Explain that when we’re obsessed with the things we want, we often fail to appreciate that we’ve already been given some of the best things of all – the things we really need for life, like clean water and food.
- 10 Now place your jar of murky water in the sink. Run some fresh water into the jar until the jar begins to overflow, and observe how the dirty water starts to become clearer.
- 11 Explain to your kids that the fresh water is like God’s Holy Spirit. He can wash the gimmies out of our hearts and give us an attitude of gratefulness instead.
- 12 Encourage your kids to list some of the good things they enjoy, that they can thank God for. Encourage them to confess too – sharing something they often want or desire, or the times when they get the

gimmies. As each child shares an idea, open the tap and add another jet of fresh water into your jar.

13 Continue adding water until the cloudy water has all been replaced with clear water.

14 Close by praying a prayer like this one:

Dear God, You give us so many good things, yet we are still tempted to want more and more than we need. Please send Your Holy Spirit to give us fresh and pure hearts that are just like the clean water, so we are grateful that we have what we need. Help us to care about the poor people who have so much less than we do and who have no clean water to drink at all. We want to be more concerned about giving things to others than we are about getting more things for ourselves. Amen.

Relevant Scripture

Isaiah 43:20-21 “The wild beasts will honor Me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to My chosen people, the people whom I formed for Myself that they might declare My praise.”

Ecclesiastes 2:11 “Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.”

1 John 3:17 “But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?”

Lessons in the sand

science with a twist

Set up a demonstration using two sand buckets to impress on your kids that ingratitude gets in the way of appreciating God’s blessings in our lives. Here’s what you need to do:

1 Prepare in advance by gathering your two sand buckets. Take one of the buckets and cover the opening of the bucket with strong, clear plastic. Firmly secure the plastic in place with strong tape.

2 Gather your kids and visit a park where there is a sandbox. (Or alternatively you can stay indoors and use rice or cornmeal instead of sand.)

3 Once you reach the sandbox, place the two buckets side by side in the sand. The **open bucket** represents a thankful person who appreciates their blessings. The **“closed” bucket** represents a person who finds faults with their blessings or is ungrateful.

4 You go first to show your children how this works. Think of something you are thankful for. “Children” might be a good first example. As you pour a scoop of sand into the open bucket say, *I’m thinking of a gift from God: I’m thankful for my children.*

5 As you try to pour a scoop of sand into the closed bucket add, *But some days I’m tempted to complain about all the work I have to do to take care of my children. For more drama you could add, I have to change diapers, make meals, pick up toys, do piles of dishes, wash the floor and bathe kids too!*

6 Now invite your children to think of things they are grateful for, and ways they can be ungrateful for the very same thing. For example, a child might pour sand into the **open bucket** saying, *I’m grateful for food*, then pour sand into the **closed bucket** saying, *But I don’t like soup.*

7 Once the open bucket is full, compare the two buckets. Explain that, like the full-of-sand bucket, a person who notices and appreciates their blessings will feel like their life is full and comfortable. On the other hand, the empty bucket is like an ungrateful person who doesn’t notice all the wonderful things he or she has in life. They will feel like their life is empty and that they are missing out, even though they experience many blessings from God.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 145:5 “On the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works, I will meditate.”

Psalm 145:6 “They shall speak of the might of Your awesome deeds, and I will declare Your greatness.”

Psalm 145:7 “They shall pour forth the fame of Your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.”

The joy of a gift

drama/role play

For this activity, you'll use your children's stuffed animals or dolls to act out both polite and impolite ways to respond when you receive a gift.

In preparation, gift wrap a selection of items – some delightful and some not so appealing. The items we're using here as examples include a banana, a toy car, a mini chocolate bar, a dirty sock, a roll of toilet paper, a toothbrush and a package of batteries.

Use the questions for discussion as a lead-in to this activity.

Questions for discussion

1. What are you supposed to say when someone gives you a gift?
2. Why is it important to say "Thank you" when you are given a gift?
3. Have you ever given a gift to someone who did not seem to appreciate it?
4. How did that make you feel?
5. How do you say "Thank you" for something you don't want or need?
6. What if someone comes to your party and forgets to bring a gift? What could you say to them?

Now it's time to pretend your children's stuffed animals are at a party where a number of the stuffies will receive a gift.

As the parent, you will play the role of each stuffie. Using the scenarios below, have each stuffie respond incorrectly when opening their gift.

Then invite your children to suggest a more grateful response, and re-play the scenario, demonstrating a more grateful response.

Scene one: A stuffie opens the gift of a banana

Take one: "Banana's aren't my favourite fruit. Can I trade this for an apple?"

Take two: "How nice of you to bring me a gift."

Scene two: A stuffie opens the gift of toilet paper

Take one: "Yuck! That's disgusting! What were you thinking when you bought me this?"

Take two: "How kind of you! I often run out of toilet paper, so this is just what I need. Thank you."

Scene three: A stuffie opens the gift of a dirty sock

Take one: "This is the smelliest gift I've ever gotten! Is this some kind of joke?"

Take two: "What an interesting gift. Thank you for thinking of me."

Scene four: A stuffie opens the gift of the chocolate bar

Take one: "Thanks. Did you forget that I'm on a diet?"

Take two: "Oh how delightful. Thank you. I really enjoy chocolate."

Scene five: A stuffie opens the gift of the batteries

Take one: "These aren't going to be any fun."

Take two: "Thank you. I often need batteries for my toys and my flashlight. What a handy gift!"

Scene six: A stuffie opens the gift of the toothbrush

Take one: "I only just got a new toothbrush. Can I exchange it for something else?"

Take two: "Thank you for bringing me such a thoughtful gift. I like to keep my teeth sparkly clean."

Key concepts

We say "thank you" to let others know that we appreciate the gifts they give us. If you are given a gift that you don't need or want, the best thing to say is "Thank you. It was very kind of you to think of

me.” This lets the person know that you appreciate the fact that they care enough about you to give you a gift. Even if you are not excited about the gift you received, it’s best to think of a reason to be grateful anyway.

Relevant Scripture

Luke 6:45 “The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

Colossians 3:15 “And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Recommended resources

For a list of children’s stories that reinforce the theme of this lesson, consult the home page for the **gratitude** lesson at Kidsofintegrity.com.

