

Always Something There to Remind Me (Give Thanks No Matter What Happens)—November 2020, Week 1

Today's Bible Story: Always Something There to Remind Me (Give Thanks No Matter What Happens) • 1 Thessalonians 5:18

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 (NirV)

Monthly Life App: Gratitude—Letting others know you see how they've helped you

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (15 minutes)

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Start by talking to God about a few things you're grateful for. Then, pray that God would help you lead your few whose families are struggling right now. Pray for God to give you wisdom as you help share the message that even in hard times, there's always something to be grateful for. Pray also for the kids who aren't in hard situations. Ask God to help those kids be thankful for the regular, everyday stuff of life.

1. Early Arriver

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

What You Need: "Megaphone" Activity Page, scissors

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive. Let them know you're grateful they are there!
- Give kids a "Megaphone" Activity Page and scissors.
- Instruct kids to cut out the megaphones.
- Allow kids to cut out as many megaphones as time allows. Explain that the group will be using the megaphones throughout the month.
- As kids cut, ask:
 - Have you ever used a megaphone? Have you ever heard someone use a megaphone? If so, when? What was it like?
 - When are times that people shout? What if your friend isn't paying attention to where they're going, and they're about to run into a pole? Or what if it's your best friend's surprise birthday party, and it's time for everyone to jump out and surprise them?

2. Opening Activity

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

What You Need: Paper and pen

What You Do:

- Tell the kids that you're going to play a game.

- You'll shout out a letter of the alphabet, and they'll shout back an object that starts with that letter.
- The first kid who names an object gets a point.
- After playing several times, the kid with the most points wins.
- Shout out a letter of the alphabet.
- Award a point to the first kid to shout out an object that starts with that letter. Keep track of points on your paper.
- Play several rounds.
- After several rounds, declare the kid with the most points the winner.

What You Say:

“Sometimes, it’s fun to shout! And it can be fun to shout out silly and random words. **[Transition] Did you know there’s something worth shouting about all the time? Let’s hear about it.**”

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

1. Give Thanks

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Create: an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving

What You Need: ball of yarn, scissors, and Bibles

What You Do:

- Prepare a ball of yarn by cutting it into 24-inch pieces; one for each kid.
- Set out prepared yarn pieces.
- Tell kids to take a piece of yarn.
- Encourage kids to use the yarn to make a shape or outline of something they are grateful for.
- Challenge the kids to guess what each kid has “drawn.”
- Give kids a Bible.
- Look up 1 Thessalonians 5:18 and read it out loud.

What You Say:

“You came up with a lot to be grateful for! No matter what, you can give thanks to God for the things He gave you to enjoy, for the skills or talents He has given you, and for the people in your life. But most importantly, you can give thanks to God for sending Jesus so you can have a relationship with Him now and forever. He is with you, no matter what you’re going through. When you have Jesus in your life, **[Bottom Line] you always have something to be grateful for.**”

***2. Ups and Downs**

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

What You Need: “Game Board,” “Shout-Out Tiles,” “Arrow Tiles,” “Start/End Game Tiles,” “UP Cards,” and “Down Cards” Activity Pages, and die

What You Do:

- Lay out the printed “Tiles” and blank cardstock on the floor as shown in the “Game Board” Activity Page.
- Line kids up at the “Start Tile.” Depending on the size of your group, kids can pair up to play the game.
- Instruct kids to take turns rolling the die and moving the corresponding number of spaces on the Game Board.
- If kids land on a space with:
 - A megaphone—Shout-out one thing they're grateful for.
 - An UP arrow—Draw and read an “UP Card.” An “UP Card” contains a scenario where things are going well. All “UP Cards” instruct kids to move ahead two spaces.
 - A DOWN arrow—Draw a “DOWN Card.” A “DOWN Card” contains a scenario where things aren't going well. All “DOWN Cards” instruct kids to move back two spaces.
- The first kid to reach the “Finish Tile” wins.

NOTE: All the “UP Cards” and “DOWN Cards” move kids to a “megaphone” space. Therefore, every time a card is drawn, kids will end up shouting out something they're grateful for.

What You Say:

“Life is filled with ups and downs. There are times when things are going well, and times when things are not going well. It's easier to give thanks when everything is going well—when you and your friends are getting along, when you're getting good grades, or when everyone in your family is happy and healthy. It can be hard to remember to be grateful when things aren't so good—when there is drama with your friends, you're struggling at school, or when you are lonely or sad. But God wants you to remember **[Bottom Line] you always have something to be grateful for.** No matter what happens around you, no matter what ups and downs you experience, God loves you and He is always with you, through the good times and the tough times.”

[Make it Personal] (Share about a time when things weren't going well and what you were grateful for during that time. How did finding something to be grateful for help you get through that hard time?)

3. Shout it Out

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Bibles, “Psalm 136:1 Cards,” masking tape, scissors

What You Do:

- Give kids a Bible.
- Using the navigation tips below, help kids find Psalm 136:1 and read it out loud.
- Give each kid a set of “Psalm 136:1 Cards” and a pair of scissors.
- Tell kids to cut apart the cards by cutting along the dashed lines.
- Collect all of the “Psalm 136:1 Cards.”
- Create a starting line with masking tape.
- Shuffle the “Psalm 136:1 Cards” (there will be several sets mixed up).
- Place them on the opposite side of the environment from the starting line.
- Line kids up on the starting line.

- Kids will run (or select a different way for kids to move like hop, skip, or roll) to the cards, select one card, and return to the starting line.
- Kids place the card on the starting line and race back to get another card.
- The first kid to collect one of each of the four cards, place them in the correct order, and shout out the verse, wins.

Finding verses with 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders: Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (*Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.*) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Psalms in the list under “Old Testament.” When the kids find Psalms, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Psalms. Help the kids find the page. When they find Psalms, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 136. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 1 in chapter 136.

What You Say:

“Things are always changing around us. The weather is always changing—you’re ready to go outside to play then it starts to rain. Maybe you’re going to fly a kite and the wind dies down. Relationships can change—you hung out with your best friend all the time until they moved to a different town. Maybe the kids you hung out with in kindergarten are not the same kids you hang out with now. But even when things change around you, **[Bottom Line] you always have something to be grateful for.** God doesn’t change! He is always good. He always loves us. And that is something **[Bottom Line] you always have something to be grateful for.**”

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect: An activity that creates space for personal processing and application

What You Need: Megaphones from “Early Arriver,” butcher paper, tape, scissors, and markers

What You Do:

- Make a sign on the butcher paper that reads “GRATITUDE SHOUT-OUTS.” Tape it to the wall to use for the rest of the month.
 - Set out the megaphones kids cut out during “Early Arriver.”
 - If you didn’t have time to cut out the “megaphones” earlier, give each kid a pair of scissors and instruct them to cut out a few now.
 - Set out the markers.
 - Encourage kids to write a “SHOUT-OUT” to God thanking Him for who He is on their megaphones.
 - Prompt kids to finish the sentence “Thank You God for being . . .”
 - Encourage kids to share their “SHOUT-OUTS” with the group.
 - Tell kids to tape their “SHOUT-OUTS” on the “GRATITUDE SHOUT-OUTS” sign.
- NOTE: If you use the K5 version of live Large Group, and if it makes sense in your environment, add the shout-outs to the display from Large Group.*
- Challenge kids to notice ways people have helped them this coming week and encourage kids to thank those people for their help.
 - Close with prayer.

What You Say:

[Bottom Line] “**You always have something to be grateful for.** God loves you all the time, and it’s important to give thanks to God for His love and who He is. We’ll continue to be grateful all month. Each week, you’ll get an opportunity to add “SHOUT-OUTS” to our wall, so be on the look out for something you can be grateful for. Let’s pray by giving God a “SHOUT-OUT.”

“God, You are amazing! Thank You for never changing! Thank You for always being good and always being faithful. Thank You for loving us. Most importantly, thank You for Jesus. Amen!”

As adults arrive to pick up, ask kids to tell them something they are grateful for.

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

- Hand out this week’s GodTime devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Studio252.tv** and the **Parent Cue app**.