



Faith in Action

"I'm Thankful For..."

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good" I Chronicles 16:34a

Lesson: The word "thanks" has become a fairly routine part of our daily vocabulary. We say it when somebody blesses our sneezes, holds a door open for us, points us in the right direction, and/or puts gas in our car tanks. Why, the use of thanks has become so commonplace that sometimes we can easily use it without thinking! (Just trying counting them up in one day to see what I mean!) Which may make the biblical meaning of thankfulness or thanksgiving seem a little bit surprising. The Hebrew word for thanks, or *yadah*, actually means much more than just expressing our gratitude. Instead, *yadah* is an acknowledgment of "what is right about God in praise and thanksgiving" (I Chronicles 16:34). In other words, thanksgiving isn't tied to just our feelings of gratitude for something we have been given (or a casual word of thanks), instead it's connected to *who* God really is and what God has *done* – a steadfast and loving God, that is, worthy of our praise and *yadah*.

This week, put faith in action by...

An Attitude of Gratitude

Gratitude takes attitude. That's what helps to make it a lifestyle! When we have our eyes focused on the goodness of God that is happening all around us, it's hard to be distracted by life's too many diversions that get in the way of our shouting out praises for God's generosity.

This week, you can help your child start walking the walk and talking the talk of gratitude with this simple exercise. Before going to bed, invite your child to name 3 things they are grateful to God for and then share 3 things that you feel especially grateful to have been given. Categorizing your gratitude (i.e. 3 people, talents, experiences, etc.) will help your child (and you) dig deeper into all of the reasons and ways that God is good ALL of the time!

Thankful to Have a Place at the Table

Covid-19 may change the way Thanksgiving looks this year, but that doesn't mean that you can't give thanks without those familiar faces around the table that your family is most grateful to God for!

To get a jumpstart on the holiday, help your child compose an email this week to all of your family members who would normally be present at your Thanksgiving table, but are unable to attend because of the pandemic. In that email, have your child mention that they would be really thankful if the recipient could send them a photo of themselves and explain the reasons.

After all of the photos have been received, download and print. Then, follow this link which provides directions on how to create child-friendly placemats using the pictures of all of your loved ones. Add special stickers, glitter and flat embellishments representative of each family member to add a personal touch. You may even want to share a few of *your* family's photo placemats to special blessings, like Grandmothers and Grandfathers who will also be missing your blessed faces at the table this year!

<https://meaningfulmama.com/day-324-thankfulness-collage-placemat.html>

I Went to a "Grateful" Garden Party

If you and your child are looking for a garden without weeds, you've come to the right place! Only gratitude grows in the *Grateful Garden*! SPOILER ALERT: But before you get to the Grateful Garden, you'll have to get through some of those obstacles that block us all from feeling gratitude, like the *Mad Mountain* and *Sad Swamp*. Fortunately, Thankfulness Tree is there to help your child see their way through.

This is a really fun, two-part activity with a great message at the end of the journey. If you're feeling ambitious and creative, you could even improvise some of the *enemies of gratitude* used in the concluding sermon series, like the worry wilderness or the greedy garbage dump where all of our disposable wants inevitably wind-up. You could even add some props as visual aids for all of the settings.

All you need to do to start your child's journey is follow this link:
<https://alldonemonkey.com/2012/11/02/journey-to-the-gratitude-garden-activity-for-thanksgiving/>

God is Great. God is Good.

But do we always remember to give thanks for the food that God has given us?

This week – and every week moving forward – make a conscious effort to remember to say a corporate thanks with your family to the Host and Provider of all of your meals.

Further inviting your child to offer grace as they feel comfortable is a great way to show them that, not only are prayers in a book pleasing to God, but that prayers spoken from our hearts are especially joyous to our Divine Creator also! AMEN!

Picture Gratitude

Don't let those special, God-given moments of gratitude become just another one of your family's special memories. Help your child preserve all of your family's thankfulness in photos instead!

The steps of this activity are as easy as saying, "thanks!" First, make a list with your child of all the who, what and where's your family would like to praise God for giving all of you. Second, grab a camera (or phone) and let your child start clicking away throughout the week.

At the end of the week, spend some downtime compiling and uploading all of your child's pictures together. With each photo, talk about what makes the object of that picture such a special gift from God, a blessing, that is, that reminds your family just how good God really is.

Lastly, gather your family's gratitude into a video montage that you can not only revisit throughout the years, but can also electronically share with some of the reasons for thanks that are included. To personalize your family's video, add a favorite family hymn or song to your video as a musical background.

You may even want to consider making this exercise part of your family's yearly thanksgiving tradition so that you can literally watch your family's reasons for gratitude increase by the year!

Flowers that Empower Gratitude

Want to help your child shed some light, as in *sun*, on all the things they have to be grateful for? Then why not give these gratitude suncatchers, made in the shape of flowers a try?!? Each petal offers the perfect place to "plant" all your blessings and then just sit back and watch them blossom! A great way to spend a thankful day with your child!

<https://www.theottoolbox.com/gratitude-craft-counting-blessings-with/>