



NOVEMBER THEME

RE-FOCUS

Know Where to Look

BIBLE STORY

Psalm 100:1-5

Keep Psalm and Be Thankful | A Psalm of Thanksgiving

BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate what God has done

MEMORY VERSE

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV

LIFE APP

Gratitude | Letting others know you see how they’ve helped you

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **GRATITUDE** and God’s character, as shown through God’s big story.

This WEEK: Key Question: What are you grateful for? We kick off a month on gratitude by helping kids and their families to refocus on their own life and discover reasons they can be thankful. We’re so busy with life that we don’t take the time to pause and notice what God has done for us. We hope families take the time throughout the month to ask themselves this question.

We start our look at gratitude with **Psalm 100** where we read, “Shout for joy to the Lord, everyone on earth. Worship the Lord with gladness. Come to Him with songs of joy” (NirV). God has done so much for us through the gift of Jesus, it’s only fitting that we respond with a heart of gratitude.

Bottom Line: Celebrate what God has done. We hope to give kids and families the opportunity to think about all the ways God has shown them love and faithfulness. We want them to get excited and celebrate God’s goodness.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Thank God for what God has done already in the lives of your few. Take a few moments to celebrate the relationships God has given your group and thank God for the opportunity to lead them.

•• EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask your small group what the best celebration ever would include.
- Ask kids if anyone has ever thrown them a celebration. What was it for?

•• THANKSGIVING SILLY STORY

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: “Thanksgiving Silly Story” activity pages, pens

What You Do:



- Explain to kids that they're going to write a fill-in-the-blank silly story that will end in a pretty funny way.
- Pair kids up. Give each pair a pen and a "Thanksgiving Silly Story" activity page.
- Encourage the pair to assign one partner to ask questions and the other to answer them. *(They can switch roles halfway through, if they choose.)*
- The kid who asks the questions can write in the blanks to complete the story.
- Make sure kids understand that the more zany/creative/silly/funny their answers are, the better the final story will be.
- When they finish, allow each pair to share their story with the group.

What You Say: "Wow! You have created some super funny stories! It's fun to talk about all of our favorite things isn't it? **[Transition]**
Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship we'll hear/we heard what the Bible has to say about our favorite things."

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children's Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

•• REASONS TO CELEBRATE [Talk about God | Application Activity]

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Craft sticks, markers, tape, ribbon, scissors

What You Do:

- Pass out a craft stick and some ribbon to each group member.
- Pass out the markers for kids to decorate their sticks.
- Show the children how to tape the ribbon to the tops of their sticks to create a celebration stick they can wave.
- Instruct kids to think about several things they are thankful for.
- Go around the circle and have kids share some of the things they are thankful for.
- Each time someone shares, ask everyone to wave their celebration stick and cheer for God doing good works in the life of their small group friend.

What You Say: "Wow! Your celebration sticks look way cool! God has done so many amazing things and given us so much that we can be grateful for! It was fun to hear about all of the things our small group is grateful for. It gave us a great opportunity to **[Bottom Line]** celebrate what God has done."

•• CELEBRATING GOD...THEN AND NOW [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: Bible, dice, optional: technology to take pictures and movies

What You Do:

- Help your group find Psalm 100.
 - Ask for a couple of volunteers to read the Psalm aloud.
 - Then, pass the dice around the circle.
- If someone rolls an odd number, he/she should tell what he/she thinks it was like to worship God in biblical times.



—If someone rolls an even number, he/she should tell what it's like to worship God today.

- If time permits, you can challenge your group to set up a scene that shows people who love God worshipping and celebrating God, then and now.

—They can set everyone up and freeze in one pose like a picture or they can act something out.

—If you have technology, they can take pictures or record their scenes being acted out.

—They might also choose to interview people. If they are from Bible times, they should talk and respond as if they are from that time. This could also be recorded.

What You Say: Psalm 100 gives us a great picture of what it was like to celebrate God a long time ago. As we talked about during this activity, we can and should celebrate God today as well. We need to remember what God has already done and always be aware of what God is currently doing, so we know that we always have something to be thankful for. **[Make It Personal] (Describe a time when you celebrated what God has done.)** We can always **[Bottom Line] celebrate what God has done.**"

•• **NO MATTER WHAT** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Bible, brightly colored paper, pens

What You Do:

- Help your few look up 1 Thessalonians 5:18 and read it out loud together a few times.

Finding verses with 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 1 Thessalonians in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find 1 Thessalonians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find 1 Thessalonians. Help the kids find the page. When they find 1 Thessalonians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 5. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 18 in chapter 5.

- Hand out one piece of colored paper to each kid.
- Instruct kids to write out the memory verse on their paper.
- Guide them to tear out each word of the verse to create pieces of confetti.
- Ask kids to think about some things that make them have a bad day (*forgot my homework, missed the winning goal, got sick, friend got mad at me, etc.*). Let a couple volunteers share the example they're thinking of.
- Tell the group that this verse instructs us to look for something to be thankful for, even when we're having a bad day or things are just not going well in our lives.
- **[Make It Personal] (Share about what your "go to" things are when you're having a tough time. Do you make a list of the people you love? Do you thank God for physical things? Do you try to remember how God has helped you in the past?)**
- Once your conversation closes, tell kids to throw their pieces of confetti in the air as a reminder to **[Bottom Line] celebrate what God has done**, even during hard times.
- Work together to throw away all of the confetti pieces.

What You Say: "You know, there are times when we're going to have bad days. Things just happen, right? But our memory verse tells us that we can give thanks no matter what happens! When you are down in the dumps and finding it hard to have gratitude, remember this verse and **[Bottom Line] celebrate what God has done.**"



PRAY AND SEND [Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Talk to your few about how often we ask God for things when we pray.
—Sometimes we pray for our dog to get better or maybe that we get that new toy we've been wanting.
—But we can also pray prayers of celebration just thanking God for all that God has done for us!
- Ask everyone to quietly think of something God has given them that they're thankful for. *(If they need help thinking of something, encourage them to think of something they shared about in the "Reasons to Celebrate" activity.)*
- As kids think of what they're thankful for, close the group in prayer.

What You Say: "God, I know I often come to you to ask you for things, but today I just want to pray a prayer of celebration. You have given me so much to be grateful for, and you are such an amazing God! Even when I feel like I'm in need of something, I can always celebrate what you have done. Thank you for loving me and overflowing me with blessings! In Jesus' name. Amen!"

What You Do: As adults arrive to pick up, give each child a **GodTime** card. Prompt kids to share with their adult one thing they are grateful for and how they can use their celebration sticks to **[Bottom Line] celebrate what God has done.**