



# 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>

November 30-December 1, 2013

DATE

Thanksgiving

LESSON TITLE

Leviticus 23:29-43; I Thessalonians 5:16-18

WHERE TO FIND IT

Give Thanks Continually

MAIN POINT

## schedule

**Connect Time (15 minutes):** Five minutes after the service begins, split kids into groups and begin their activity.

**Large Group (30 minutes):** Model what it looks like to be engaged in large group. And don't be afraid to redirect kids who aren't!

**Small Group (15 minutes):** Keep kids in small groups until parents arrive. If you *all* have extra time at the end, you can review the video and songs together.

## tips

As kids come into the room, talk to them about Thanksgiving. There are some potential discussion questions listed in today's Connect Time.

## check-in/out

As kids leave, remind them to explain why they made a tent (and to tell their parents about Sukkot).

## large group heads up

God wants Thanksgiving to be a year-round lifestyle for us. He even set up a week-long festival for his special family hundreds of years ago. Most of us don't celebrate anymore today, but in some ways, it was the first ever Thanksgiving tradition!



## connect time

**GOAL:** *Connect Time is all about engaging kids in an activity that allows them to connect with each other right away while simultaneously piquing their curiosity for Large Group and preparing their minds for what they're going to hear.*

### **THANKFULNESS TABLECLOTHS**

Put a **colored, paper tablecloth** and **markers** on several tables or lay them out on the floor. Use the SAME number of tablecloths as small groups you'll have.\*\* Have kids gather round and draw words or pictures of things they are thankful for. They can sign their names by what they are thankful for, but they don't have to. Encourage them to fill the tablecloths with things they are thankful for!

***\*\*If you know you'll have a lot of latecomers, ask kids to move around, drawing something they are thankful for on each tablecloth, so that all small group areas will be full of drawings. Leave the tablecloths up for small group!***

As they draw, foster discussion with questions like these:

- What are you drawing? Why are you thankful for that?
- What does it mean to "be thankful"?
- When's the last time you told somebody "thank you"? When's the last time you told God "thank you"?
- How do you remember to say "thank you"? Do you have/do anything special to remind you?
- If you could only draw one word/picture today, what would it be? Why?
- What's something little you are thankful for—something others might not even notice? (Give an example like: soap to clean my hands with or shoes to wear so my feet don't get cold)
- Why do you think God wants us to be thankful?

**This is also a time for you to connect with kids: 5 minutes before large group, talk to kids about the best part of their week or even remind them of the expectations you have for Large Group behavior: (1) be kind, (2) listen when somebody speaks, and (3) follow the leader's instructions.**



## instructions

**Goal:** Kids will (1) recognize that we should thank Jesus for everything, always and (2) find ways to remember to be thankful continually.

**Why?** Even though Thanksgiving is over, we want kids to continue to think about ways they can show gratitude to Jesus. After all, Jesus asks us to give thanks *in all things!*

**Tip:** Look over the **sample tent** before you begin today. Make sure you understand how to make it. (If you don't, flag somebody with a radio set and ask!)

## small group

**\*Sit around one of the tablecloths. You'll refer to it during small group.**

### REVIEW THE STORY

1. Tell me your favorite/most surprising part of today's story about the first ever Thanksgiving feast.
2. Why did God want his family to live in tents for seven days?

### TABLECLOTH THANKSGIVING

Last week, you probably sat around a table and said what you were thankful for. Or, maybe you didn't have a big meal, but you had school off and gave thanks for that. Let's look at some of the things we're thankful for.

- Everybody share one word or picture you see in front of you.
- Point out that those all (or most, if that's the case) sound like good things. Let's try to be thankful even for things that don't seem so good.
- Think about the last time you were sick or sad or angry. (Let kids think.)
- Write down one thing you could be thankful for even though you were sick or sad or angry. Share. (Give kids examples: You were sick, but you had some medicine that helped you feel a little better. You were mad but then your friend apologized. Help them find something to give thanks for in the imperfection.)

### MAKE TENTS

Give each kid a **tent-template**. Take one yourself and show them how to make tents by following these instructions:

- Lay the template dotted line side down
- Where there are two small slits cut into the paper, fold back the edges up *toward* you to create "flaps." (See picture below; a sample will be available in your room.)

(continue on the following page)



- On each of the dotted lines, fold down, toward the table (so that the dotted lines will be in the inside of the tent) and create 5 creases. (See picture below; a sample will be available in your room.)
  
- Put **glue** on the two small folded edges (bottom half of the above picture).
- Connect to the diagonal sides.
- You've got a tent!

Then ask kids to think of one of the things they are most thankful for—one way they've really seen God provide for them. Write that inside the tent (share with the group if kids want to). Then kids can take the tent home and put it somewhere they'll see regularly to remind them to be thankful.

**Discuss:** How *else* can we remember to give God thanks continually?

**\*Pray with the kids, asking God to help you give him thanks in ALL things this week.**

*Extra time?*

*Have kids copy today's verse onto a **half sheet of paper** and decorate it. Here's the CEV version we used in large group (or you can use the Bibles in your small group bin): **I Thessalonians 5:16-18: Always be joyful and never stop praying. Whatever happens, keep thanking God because of Jesus Christ. This is what God wants you to do.***

*Or, play a game of "Teacher, May I." But this time, anytime you say "yes" or "no" kids must say, "thank you". If they don't, they should start over! If you don't remember how to play "Teacher, May I," here's a refresher:*

- *Kids line up facing you at a predetermined location (a wall) or a table along the perimeter of your group's "area."*
- *One at a time, kids request to move forward a specific number and type of steps (e.g. 3 baby steps, 2 scissor steps, 1 giant step, 6 jumping jack steps, etc.). Before their request, they must say, "Teacher, may....etc."*
- *You can answer yes or no and they must obey—and say "thank you." If they forget to say "thank you" after either one, they have to go back to the wall.*

## special notes

Today, we want to focus on being thankful always, no matter what. It's a way for kids to make Thanksgiving a lifestyle vs. a holiday.

## presenter tips

You've got a chance to share something personal today. Keep it kid-friendly, but be authentic. Kids will love to hear some of your story!

## script

Hi everybody! Welcome to Kids' Club. It's great to see you here. This past week, we've all probably been celebrating a nationwide holiday called...( Let kids say, "Thanksgiving.") That's right, Thanksgiving. Not everybody eats the same thing on Thanksgiving, but what is maybe the most popular Thanksgiving meat dish? (Let kids say, "Turkey.") Yes, turkey!

This is great holiday for many of US, but not so great for who? (Let kids say, "Turkeys.") That's right, this is probably the WORST time of year for a turkey. So to start today, we're going to watch a little video clip about how a couple of turkeys avoided their end on Thanksgiving.

### **Video: Turkey vs. Farmer**

So what do you think those turkeys were thinking as they ran away? (Let kids respond.) Yep, I bet they were pretty THANKFUL.

### **INTRO: BE THANKFUL ALWAYS**

When do we usually feel thankful? (Let kids say: at thanksgiving, when something good happens, etc.)

Now, it's good to feel thankful when something good happens or when it's Thanksgiving or Christmas or another fun holiday. But do you think it's possible to be thankful on a bad day or during a hard time?

Let's try it out for a minute. Everybody close your eyes and think back to the last time you were sick. (Let kids think. Then you go first.) Hmm, the last time I was sick, I could have been thankful for/that *\*insert personal story*. How about you guys? What could you have been thankful for the last time you were sick? (Let kids say: somebody took care of them, they got to skip school, medicine helped them feel better, etc.)



## script continued

That's right! Even on bad days, there's something to say "thank you" for. The Bible actually tells us to be thankful *all* the time. I Thessalonians 5:16-18 says this:

**SLIDE: I Thessalonians 5:16-18: Always be joyful and never stop praying. Whatever happens, keep thanking God because of Jesus Christ. This is what God wants you to do.**

Wow, so being thankful is important to God. He wants us to act like it's Thanksgiving ALL the time! Even on days when we're sick or sad or angry or upset. Always being joyful doesn't mean we'll always feel *happy*. But it means we'll find ways to thank God for something. And we always have something to be thankful for, because we always have Jesus.

## THE REAL FIRST THANKSGIVING

In fact, being thankful was so important to God that he set up a Thanksgiving feast for his special family, way back hundreds and hundreds of years ago. You might even know somebody who celebrates it, even though lots of God's family doesn't celebrate it anymore. It's called Sukkot (sue-COAT). It's a time for people to just be JOYFUL and THANKFUL!

To understand what Sukkot is, let's review a little of the history of God's family:

1. **(Show picture of Moses leading through Red Sea.)** Remember, God's family was stuck as slaves in Egypt. So God sent Moses to lead them away from Egypt and toward the land he had promised them. God even split the Red Sea in two, so that the people could walk through and escape. When the sea went back to normal...there's no WAY the Egyptians could get through.
2. **(Show picture of desert.)** But THEN, they were stuck in the desert. There was nothing to eat and nothing to drink and nowhere to go. The Israelites were stuck here for *40 years* (linger here). If God hadn't literally sent food called manna and water down from heaven, they would have died. They had to live in tents in the middle of the desert...for 40 years.
3. **(Show picture of the promised land.)** Of course, just like he promised, God eventually brought them out and into the promised land. They could settle there and build homes and plant crops.
4. **(Show picture of booths.)** But God didn't want them to forget how he took care of them—and continues to take care of them. To remember his provision, God told them to spend one week each year living in what is called a booth. Basically, it's like a tent. Living in that reminds them of how he took care of them and how he's taking care of them.

Let's think about that for a second. (Click to show **all 4 pictures**.) What did the Israelites have to be thankful for in the first two pictures? (Let kids respond.) And what did they have to be thankful for in the last two pictures? (Let kids respond.)

## CONCLUSION: GIVE THANKS ALWAYS!

God wants us to remember too that we can always give thanks and find a reason to tell him thank you. He wants us to act like it's Thanksgiving all the time. You guys probably hear this a lot, but as we enter the Christmas season thinking about what we *want*...let's try instead to



**script continued**

keep on saying thank you for what we already have.

**WORSHIP**

Now let's start by standing together to worship God and tell him "thank you" for all he's given us. Let's keep Thanksgiving going!

**Music Video: Radio**

**Song: Brave-A-Ree**

**PRAY**

Ask somebody to come and thank God for today. Or, if you want to try something new, let kids yell out things they're thankful for. Then close the prayer with a big AMEN.



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# PREP needs



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## connect time supplies

markers

FUOe4AodEFoAHg

1 paper tablecloth per small group:

[http://www.shopatdean.com/store/pc/Mimosa-Yellow-54-X-108-Paper-Table-Cover-p3598.htm?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=cse&utm\\_term=CCV54PAPY%5C&gclid=CN2FmfvG1bkC](http://www.shopatdean.com/store/pc/Mimosa-Yellow-54-X-108-Paper-Table-Cover-p3598.htm?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cse&utm_term=CCV54PAPY%5C&gclid=CN2FmfvG1bkC)

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## small group supplies

Bible

Markers

Glue sticks

2 sample tents per room

1 tent template per kid: please print the template provided onto brightly colored computer paper

(different colors) and cut around the edges and on the straight solid lines on the template (for the vision of this craft, click here:

<http://waffleflower.com/2012/06/summer-camp-tent-pattern-pdf-studio-for-joys-life-fun-in-the-sun-blog-hop-giveaways/>)

Half sheets of paper

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## large group supplies

Bible

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## a/v needs

1. Video: Turkey vs. Farmer (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6x66sKK-rQ>; 0:10-1:32 only)
2. SLIDE: I Thessalonians 5:16-18: Always be joyful and never stop praying. Whatever happens, keep thanking God because of Jesus Christ. This is what God wants you to do.

3. Image: Moses Parting Sea
4. Image: Desert
5. Image: Promised Land
6. Image: Booths
7. Images: the 4 images above, all on one slide
8. Music Video: Radio
9. Song: Brave-A-Ree (hand motion version)

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## connect questions

Tell me about Sukkot.

How can we remember to give God our thanks?

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## parent page

Like 3-PK and K-2, we talked about making Thanksgiving a lifestyle instead of just a holiday. Then 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders learned about the thanksgiving celebration God created for his family hundreds of years ago, called Sukkot. Ask your kids about it. Or read about it in Leviticus 23:29-43.