

It's time to make thankful trees! Making thankful trees is so much fun! The colors get prettier and prettier as the trees get bigger and bigger. And, it feels so good to think about and write down what we're thankful for – for an entire month!

This time of year helps us refocus on all the good in our lives. And there is SO much good when it comes to God. Because God is good! Is what we want preschoolers to learn this month. God is good and we have A LOT we can thank Him for.

So, get ready to create those thankful trees and tell God, "Thank you." For all the good things He's made and done! We can't wait to celebrate thankfulness all month long! And in case you didn't know, we are very thankful for you and all that you do to help preschoolers know that God made them, God loves them, and Jesus wants to be their friend forever.

WEEK 1

Story Focus: I can thank God for good things. During week one, we will talk about how every good and perfect gift comes from God. So when our preschoolers see something good, we want them to say "Thank You, God!" Did you see a red bird on a branch? Thank You, God! Did you see a beautiful yellow flower? Thank You, God! Did you see a colorful rainbow after the rain? Thank You, God!

WEEK 2

Story Focus: I can thank God for food. Week two, we will hear the story about Elijah and a widow who only had enough food left for one small meal—that is until God showed up! God gave the widow all the food she needed. So when our preschoolers see food, we want them to say, "Thank You, God!" Mac and cheese... Mmmm... Thank You, God! Vanilla ice cream... thank You, God! Apple slices... Thank You, God!

WEEK 3

Story Focus: I can thank God for family who help me. Week three, we will see Aaron helping his brother, Moses. Moses was tired and couldn't hold his arms up anymore, but Aaron came through and saved the day—or at least saved Moses' arms. We want our preschoolers to look at their families and say, "Thank You, God!" Did big brother help you tie your shoes? Thank You, God! Did Daddy read you a book? Thank You, God! Did Grandma give you a bandage? Thank You, God!

WEEK 4

Story Focus: I can thank God for people who help me. Week four will be filled with blocks and tools as we pretend to help Nehemiah repair the wall. Nehemiah had so many people helping him, and our preschoolers have a lot of people helping them too. We want our preschoolers to see the teachers, doctors, neighbors, coaches, and grocery clerks who help them and say, "Thank You, God!"

WEEK 5

Story Focus: I can praise God because He is good. Grab your shakers for week five, because we are having a praise party! We want to lead our preschoolers in praising God, because God is good! It will be a special time when we read all of the leaves on our Thankful Trees, praise God for all He has done, and remember that God is good.

Today's Suggested Schedule—November 29, 2020, Week 5

Today's Bible Story: I can praise God because He is good.

We Can Praise God • *Psalm 149:1-5*

Memory Verse: "Give thanks to the Lord for he is good." Psalm 107:1, NIV

Key Question: Who is good?

Bottom Line: God is good.

Basic Truth: God made me.

10:30-11:00 SMALL GROUP

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Marching Music

Good Things Matching

Shaker Maker**

11:00-11:10 Clean Up

11:10-11:30 LARGE GROUP

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

"Special" and "Just Wanna Thank You"

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

Bible Story

Memory Verse

11:30-11:50 SMALL GROUP

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Thanks!

Thank-You-God Line Tangle

Parachute Praise

Microphone

Journal and Prayer

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (15 minutes)

Activities that encourage preschoolers to enter the classroom and begin engaging with peers and Small Group Leaders by providing age appropriate and hands on fun while introducing new concepts they will hear in the day's Bible story.

Prepare to offer the following activities as your preschoolers arrive. Let one or two teachers lead activities in different areas of the room while another teacher greets parents and children at the door.

1. Marching Music

What You Need: Preschool-safe musical instruments

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Lay the instruments in the activity area.

During the Activity: Encourage the children to play with the instruments and march around the room as they play. Repeat as desired. Sanitize between uses.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Yay! Let's make some music!"

During the Activity: "Everyone, play together and make some music! We can march as we play!" (*Do activity.*)

After the Activity: "Great job! These instruments are so cool. We can use instruments to praise God! Today in our Bible story, we'll hear ways we can praise God!"

2. Good Things Matching

What You Need: “Good Things Memory Cards” Activity Pages, cardstock, and scissors

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy “Good Things Memory Cards” on cardstock and cut on dotted lines, two sets.

During the Activity: Place each card face down on the floor or table. Ask one child to go first by choosing two cards and turning them over. If they match, remove both cards and set them aside. If they do not match, turn both of the cards back over in the same place. In both cases, allow another child to have a turn. Repeat until all of the matches have been made and every child has had a turn. If all matches are made before everyone has a turn, shuffle and lay them out again.

Social Distancing Option: Have the child point to the cards and the SGL be the only one touching them.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Let’s see if we can find two cards that match. (*Point to the cards on the table.*) I have some pictures of good things God made. There are two of each picture. When it’s your turn, I want you turn over two cards like this (*demonstrate*), and see if they are a match.”

During the Activity: (*Choose one child to be first.*) “Choose two cards to turn over. (*Do activity.*) Awesome! Do those cards match?” (*Continue in the same way, and make sure every child gets a turn.*)

After the Activity: “You did it! You found all the matches. Let’s look at these wonderful things God made. God has given us food. We have so many yummy things to eat that God made. Then there’s our family. Our families are VERY good things God made. And people. Look at how different we are. God made each of us so special. And God made everything in creation—mountains, trees, and rivers. These are all good, good things God made! Let’s head to Large Group and praise God for all the good things He made.”

3. Shaker Maker

What You Need: plastic shakers, craft tape and stickers

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

During the Activity: Encourage children to decorate with crafting tape and/or stickers.

After the Activity: Today, we'll hear a story about someone we can praise.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Friends! Come join me at the table. We're going to make shakers to use later today."

During the Activity: Now, it's ready for you to decorate. *(Pause.)* Fantastic! Give it a little shake. *(Pause.)* They sound great! When you shake your shakers, you're making a joyful noise. Now, freeze your shakers."

After the Activity: "Today, we'll hear about someone we can praise. We can even praise Him with your shakers."

Transition: Move to Worship and Story by shaking the shakers.

11:10-11:30 LARGE GROUP (20 minutes)

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

Play music or dance videos—"Special" and "Just Wanna Thank You"

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

Bible Story

Memory Verse

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

Create a safe place to connect through activities that are written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the Bottom Line that was introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leader.

Offer as many of the following activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow. You may want to lead one activity at a time. Or, offer two activities at once and allow half the children to participate in each. Then switch groups and repeat the activities.

4. Thanks!-Bible Story Review

What You Need: “Four Good Things” Activity Pages, cardstock, and tape

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy of “Four Good Things” on cardstock, one set per small group. Tape one picture in each corner of the room where the children can easily see them.

During the Activity: Play the “Four Corners” game using the “Four Good Things” images. Ask all of the children to stand in the middle of the room. Each time you call out one of the pictures, all of the children must walk quickly to stand under that image.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Everyone come stand with me. I have a fun game for us to play!”

During the Activity: “Look at the pictures on the wall with me. (*Point to the pictures as you talk about them.*) That is a picture of food. We can thank God for food. That is a picture of family. We can thank God for family who helps us. That is a picture of people in our community. We can thank God for people who help us. And that one is some of the good things God made in the world. We can thank God for good things.

“When I say the name of one of these pictures, you walk really fast to stand under that picture and say, **[Bottom Line] ‘GOD IS GOOD!’** Ready? I can thank God for . . . FOOD! (*Give children time to walk to the food picture.*) **[Bottom Line] GOD IS GOOD!** I can thank God for . . . FAMILY who help me! (*Give children time to walk to the family picture.*) **[Bottom Line] GOD IS GOOD!** I can thank God for . . . GOOD THINGS! (*Give children time to walk to the creation picture.*) **[Bottom Line] GOD IS GOOD!** I can thank God for . . . PEOPLE who help me! (*Give children time to walk to the people picture.*) **[Bottom Line] GOD IS GOOD!”** (*Continue calling out different pictures as long as the children are interested in playing.*)

After the Activity: “That was fun! God gives us food, family, people, and a world full of good things because **[Bottom Line] God is good! Who is good? [Bottom Line] God is good!”**

5. Parachute Praise-Activity

What You Need: A parachute and artificial leaves

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Lay a parachute out flat on the floor of your activity area.

During the Activity: Have the children gather around the edge of the parachute. Instruct the children to bend down, grab the edge of the parachute with both hands, then lift to waist height. Encourage the children to slowly move their arms to wave the parachute. Then, add the leaves for the children to bounce along the surface of the parachute.

After the Activity: Have the children lower the parachute to the ground. Collect the leaves and gather the parachute for clean-up.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Will you come stand with me, friends? Let's gather around the parachute."

During the Activity: "Now, everyone bend down and grab the edge with both hands. Is everybody holding on? Now, stand up! Awesome. Let's wave our arms to make the parachute move like this. (*Demonstrate.*) You know, we can say thank you to God for all the good things He's made. Like trees with so many beautiful leaves! (*Add the leaves.*) As you watch the leaves bounce, think about all the good things God has made!"

After the Activity: "Okay friends, hold your arms still. (*Pause.*) Now, let's set the parachute on the floor. That was fun! I'm so thankful to have a praise party with you. God has given us so many good things to enjoy. Why? Because **[Bottom Line] God IS good. Who is good? [Bottom Line] God is good.**"

6. Microphone-craft

What You Need: “Praises” Activity Page, Avery® #5160 labels or equivalent, toilet paper tubes, dark construction paper, silver plastic sphere ornaments, scissors, glue sticks, hot glue gun, and stickers

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy “Praises” on the label paper, one label per child. Cut construction paper down to fit around the tubes, one piece per child. Hot glue one ornament to the end of each tube. Make sure the hanger part of the ornament is inside the tube.

NOTE: The hot glue gun should be used before children arrive and stored out of their reach.

During the Activity: Encourage children to glue the construction paper around the tube and decorate with the “Praises” label and stickers. Sing into the microphones then say the Bottom Line into the microphone together.

After the Activity: Talk about how we can sing praises to God because He is good.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “In our story today, we heard how we can praise God for everything because everything He makes is good. We can praise God in lots of ways. Earlier, we made shakers to make music. Now, we’ll make microphones, so we can sing praises to God.”

During the Activity: “Here is the start of your microphone. Now, you need to glue the paper around the handle like this. (*Demonstrate.*) Add the label and stickers to the handle. (*Pause.*) Good job. Hold up your microphone and sing a song. (*Pause.*) Now say, ‘I can praise God because God is good!’ (*Repeat.*)”

After the Activity: “God is good, and we can praise Him for what He’s made—for our food, our family, and for the people who help us! We have so much to be thankful for. We can praise God because **[Bottom Line] God is good. Who is good? [Bottom Line] God is good.**”

7. Prayer

What You Need: Paperclipped “Memory Verse Card” in your Bible at Psalm 107:1

SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL): “It’s prayer time!

“Our Bible story today was about how we can praise God because He is good! We can praise Him for this amazing world He made, for food, for family, and for people who help us. Everywhere we look, we see good gifts from God because **[Bottom Line] God is good. Who is good? [Bottom Line] God is good!**

“The Bible verse we have learned will help us remember to thank God because **[Bottom Line] God is good!** It says . . . *(Turn the pages of your Bible to the Memory Verse Card.)*

“Give thanks to the LORD for he is good, Psalm 107:1. (Close Bible and lay it down.)

“Let’s stand up and say it together with the motions, one more time. Then, anyone who wants to can try to say it!”

CHILDREN and SGL: *“Give thanks (clap on each word) to the LORD (point up) for he is good, (two thumbs up) Psalm 107:1.” (Open hands like a book.)*

SGL: “You sound great! I know you can do this. Let’s sit down. When it’s your turn to say the Bible verse, you can stand up and try it.”

(Say each child’s name. Make sure to give each child the opportunity to say the verse on his/her own.)

SGL: “You did it, [child’s name]! *(Repeat with each child as they try to say the Bible verse.)*

“Okay, let’s sit down so we can pray and talk to God.

“Now, we’ll pray together. When I say your name, you to tell God, ‘I praise You because You are good.’ Let’s say that together a few times then we’ll pray.”

CHILDREN and SGL: “I praise You because You are good.” *(Repeat until you think the children have it.)*

SGL: “Sounds like we’re ready. Listen for your name. When I say your name, tell God, ‘I praise You because You are good.’”

Prayer

SGL: “Dear God, We praise You because You are good! [Child’s name] . . . *(prompt child to say, ‘I praise You because You are good!’)* [Child’s name] . . . *(Continue with each child.)* We love You, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.”