



Date: _____

Series: God Talks to Me
Fall Year 1, Lesson 27

The First Thanksgiving

Bible Event: Psalm 136:1

Take Home Point: *GOD GIVES ME GOOD THINGS—
Thank you, God.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson. The leader will say the first part of the phrase (CAPS). The children respond with the second part of the phrase (*italics*).

Jesus Link: Thank you, Jesus, for dying for my sins.

What kids will learn about God in this worship experience:

- Children will learn that God loves us so much that he blesses our lives in all kinds of ways every single day. In fact, he loves us so much that he even sent his own Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. For that, and all of our other blessings, we should be thankful to God. Kids will take home the point: ***GOD GIVES ME GOOD THINGS – I thank God.**
- Children will respond to God's love as they pray to him, thanking him for loving them and sending Jesus for them. They will offer him their songs of worship, their offerings, and their actions of love as they actively learn God's word.



Welcome Zone: (15-20 minutes)

Purpose: While kids arrive, give them a simple learning readiness activity that requires minimal supervision. This might include a video, games, blocks, or puzzles.

Video Suggestion: Choose a video and list it here.

Activity Suggestion: Blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons.



Opening Worship: (10-15 minutes)

Children can bring forward the cross, candles, Bible, offering plate, and treasure box. The treasure box contains the props used to tell or dramatize the Bible event. Open with a simple prayer, having the children repeat after you. Collect offering and talk about how God will use it.

Praise Songs:

Choose two or three songs and list them here.

Bible Event: Video

Test your sound and video system beforehand. Cue the video to precise beginning. For larger groups of children (15 or more), use a large screen TV or imager. Dim the lights before showing. To introduce a video, you might read from a Bible storybook and leave off the ending, inviting them to see what happens by watching the video. Also, you can introduce the video by inviting them to watch for special actions or words.

Ask the children what they know about the first Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims, Native Americans, etc. Ask them if they know that, even way back then, the people were thankful to God for all of their blessings.

Show: *William Bradford - The First Thanksgiving*, an Animated Hero Classics video, 1992 Nest Family Entertainment, Inc. (30 min.)



Action Zones: (20-30 minutes)

Purpose: Children move at their leisure to the activities according to their interest. Adults are assigned to oversee each of the zones, watching for safety, assisting any activity, and helping the children connect to the lesson of the day. All zones are introduced at the beginning of Zone Time. Some suggested zones are included below. It is usually best to have all children go to the Snack Zone first. Sing a blessing song or say a snack prayer together before dismissing to the zones.

During the Zone Time, children may arrive from mid-service dismissal if this is an option at your church. Be prepared to welcome the children and invite them to choose a zone.

Snack Zone: Corn chips or tortillas and cheese dip. Optional: small slices of pie (pumpkin or other flavors).

Drama Zone: Recreate the first Thanksgiving. Provide play food (or pretend with imaginary food) and the traditional pilgrim and Native American costumes. Have the children practice saying either prayers of thanksgiving or blessings before meals.

Puppet Zone: Let kids use puppets to act out the story of the First Thanksgiving.

Messy Zone: Provide play dough for children to make “Thanksgiving food” like pumpkins, ears of corn, turkeys, etc.

Craft Zone: Make “Thank You, God” magnets. Give each child a fourth of a piece of cardstock. Have them attach a pre-made sticker (Avery 5160) saying, “Thank You, God.” Have them decorate the rest by drawing pictures of things they are thankful for, like family, pets, house, Jesus, etc. Finally, attach a magnet to the back of the cardstock.

Quiet Reading Zone: Basket of books, include any stories you have about The First Thanksgiving.

Music Zone: “Thank You, Lord, for Making Me,” by Vince Barlow from the CD titled *Dance, Shout, Sing* or your choice of other music.



Closing Worship: (20 minutes)

Purpose: As you empty the zones and clean up, begin the music so the children can start wandering over.

Worship Songs:

Choose one or two songs and list them here.

Bible Application with Puppet Presentation:

Purpose: The puppet demonstrates the need that will be met in today's lesson. The scripts are not written verbatim, but give a story line in which the group leader can interact with the puppet.

Bubba comes out very sad. He's dragging his feet and pouting. The large group presenter tells him that he looks like a grump from the dump and asks him what is wrong. Bubba tells him that everything is wrong. This is the worst day ever for Bubba. The large group presenter asks why. Bubba tells him that Thanksgiving is almost here, and he found out that his family couldn't make it to Grandma's this year. Because they're not going to Grandma's, he doesn't get to have any of his favorite pie. He also doesn't get to see his cousin. Thanksgiving is usually one of Bubba's favorite days and this year it is ruined! He isn't thankful for anything this year.

The large group presenter tells Bubba it is too bad that he can't make it to Grandma's house, have his favorite pie, or see his cousin. But, maybe the day isn't totally ruined. There are some things that Bubba should be thankful for. Bubba doesn't believe him. The large group presenter explains to Bubba that he needs to look at things differently. He asks Bubba if he loves his Grandma. Of course, Bubba does. Then Bubba should be thankful that he has her, even if he doesn't get to see her that day. Does Bubba like any other desserts besides his favorite pie? Maybe Bubba's Mom could help him make another pie or dessert for Thanksgiving instead. The large group presenter asks Bubba if he could call his cousin to tell him that he misses him and ask him if he will see him at Christmas? Bubba decides that he could do that. Maybe Bubba is thankful for some things.

The large group presenter explains that, even when things don't work out exactly as we want them to, we always have things to be thankful for.

You see, Thanksgiving is about giving thanks. We can give thanks to God for so many things. You can be thankful for family, or friends, or food to eat, or a warm house to live in. You can be thankful for lots of blessings in your life. The large group presenter asks if anyone knows what the most important thing to be thankful for is? The large

group presenter explains that we should be thankful for God sending Jesus to take away our sins. That means that we will be friends with God forever. We should be thankful to God every day for sending Jesus to us.

Remember: ***GOD GIVES ME GOOD THINGS – I thank God.**

Close with children praying for things they are thankful for.

Prayer Time:

Purpose: Allow children to contribute their own prayers. This will teach them to turn to God in both good times and in times of trouble. End with the Lord's Prayer.

"Children Pray" Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Train Option:** Children line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone and speak their brief prayers of thanksgiving.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Children stand in a circle around one child sitting on a chair in the middle. All children in the circle will lay a hand on the child sitting in the chair as they say a prayer together.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and taps children on the head to stand and speak their prayer.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire Prayer along with you.

Blessing:

May God, who is all around you,
pour his love upon you.

(Beginning at the bottom of the circle, slowly make large circle with your hands. Finish by bringing your hands down and wiggling your fingers to resemble rain.)

And Jesus, his life a sacrifice,
walk right there beside you.

(Slowly make a large sign of the cross. Then move your hands out to the sides.)

And may God's Holy Spirit,
the one who lives inside you,

(Cross hands over your heart.)

keep you strong,
comfort, lead and guide you!

(Move to a "strong man" position. Then cross your arms with your hands on corresponding upper arms to communicate comfort. Bring one hand forward with "lead" and the other with "guide" to complete the blessing.)

Song of Sending:

Choose one song and list it here.



Closing Zones:

Purpose: *Children go to an activity zone, such as the coloring zone, quiet reading zone, and children's Christian music video zone, as they wait for their parents.*

Supplies:

Welcome Zone:

- blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons

Opening Worship:

- *William Bradford - The First Thanksgiving*, an Animated Hero Classics video, 1992 Nest Entertainment, Inc. (30 min.)—order from:
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/1572251565/002-1331796-6652867?v=glance> or from:
<http://www.libraryvideo.com/product.asp?mscssid=HLUDN2L9T5XC8PPEWJC2FVJ880P72LNE&sku=K7713>

Action Zones:

Snack Zone:

- corn chips or tortillas
- cheese dip
- various flavors of pie (optional)

Drama Zone:

- plastic food
- traditional pilgrim and Native American costumes

Craft Zone:

- sheets of cardstock
- scissors
- markers and crayons
- one pre-made sticker* (Avery 5160) per child that say, “Thank You, God”
- magnets (either individual or from a roll)
- glue (depending on the magnets)

Puppet Zone:

- puppets to act out the story of the First Thanksgiving

Messy Zone:

- play dough
- newspaper

Music Zone:

- *Thank You, Lord, for Making Me*, by Vince Barlow from the CD titled, *Dance Shout, Sing*, 1998 Willow Creek Association—order from:
<http://www.promiselandonline.com/music/features/dance.asp>

Quiet Reading Zone:

- basket of books

Coloring Zone:

- crayons and markers
- “The First Thanksgiving” coloring page[†]

Closing Worship:

- Bubba, the puppet

Closing Zones:

- colored pencils
- paper
- basket of books

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.