



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Series:** Thanksgiving  
Fall Year 3, Lesson 27

# Thanksgiving- A Marvelous Memory

**Take Home Point:** \*Thanksgiving beats the lie of “gotta have it.” \*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

**Bible Event:** Philippians 4:11-13; 1 Timothy 6:6-8; Hebrews 13:5-6

**Key Verse:** Philippians 4:11b, “I’ve learned to be content in whatever situation I’m in.”

**We will help kids know:**

- The enemy, Satan, tells us the lie, “We gotta have it.” Our materialistic world says if we just had more, we would be happier.
- God calls us to be content by not focusing on our wants. Rather, we should focus on what God wants.
- God calls us to be content as our needs are met in Jesus and we focus on thanksgiving.




**We will help kids feel:**

- The discontent that comes from envy as created in a simulation game.
- The joy of being content because we have marvelous memories of our blessings through Jesus.

**We will help kids do:**

- Identify things that the enemy uses to rob joy by creating discontent and envy.
- Identify material and spiritual blessings, and give thanks for those blessings.
- Take home “marvelous memory blessing” cards to help the families have a fun Thanksgiving meal activity.

# THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
<b>Small Group Warm-Up</b> 	3	Some kids are rewarded with candy to provoke discontent with the others. This creates the "gotta have it" attitude versus thanksgiving.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• large bag of M&amp;M's per group</li> <li>• one candy bar per group</li> </ul>
<b>Large Group</b> 	4  6  8  11	<b>Overview</b>  <b>Puppet Presentation</b> – Gordy has the "Gotta Have Its"  <b>The Contentment Meter</b>  <b>Puppet Conclusion</b> -Gordy has the "Gotta Have Its"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• empty bag of M&amp;M's taped to Gordy's hand</li> <li>• salesman's coat and hat</li> <li>• packet of M&amp;M's</li> <li>• super-size candy bar</li> <li>• videotape cued to a commercial for a popular kids' toy or a toy itself</li> <li>• Bible with notes or script for the child</li> <li>• poster board made into a "contentment meter"</li> </ul> <p><b>The contentment meter:</b> a two foot arrow cut out of poster board, clipped to the bottom center of the poster board. A line is drawn across the bottom. On one side of the meter, write "content." On the other side write "discontent." The arrow should be able to move 180 degrees, showing different levels of contentment or discontentment.</p>
<b>Small Group Application</b> 	4  12	Kids use scripture and practice how to change discontentment to contentment.  Appendix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• large bag of M&amp;M's</li> <li>• bowl</li> <li>• copies of take home devotional sheet for Thanksgiving dinner called "M&amp;M's for Thanksgiving" (see appendix)</li> </ul>

# Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



**Purpose:** *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

*The purpose of the Small Group Warm-Up will be to provoke the feeling of discontentment in some of the kids. Today they will be shown that the enemy lies to us by telling us we should always want more. As soon as we notice what someone else has, "we gotta have it." Our envy leads to discontentment. On the other hand, our thanksgiving leads to contentment as we focus on the gifts that God has given us.*

*Needed: M&M's and a candy bar*

Welcome the kids and start a casual conversation about what each child is planning for his Thanksgiving celebration. Then ask the following questions.

**Do you know what it means to be content? To be content means to be satisfied and happy with what you have. How many of you are content this morning?**

Most kids should respond with a high level of contentment when asked this question.

**Who brought offerings this morning?**

Collect the offerings. Give every child that brought an offering five M&M's. Tell them the candy is a way to thank them for remembering their offering. Encourage the kids to eat and thoroughly enjoy their M&M's right away.

Tell these children that they should not share their candies with those who did not receive any. Listen for comments of discontentment from those left out. (You will discuss these feelings in a few minutes.) While the kids are munching on their candy, continue with casual conversation.

After a while, give one of the children who brought an offering a candy bar. See if the kids eating their M&M's show signs of discontentment. You might even encourage the child with the candy bar to open it and take a bite. This might raise the discontentment level of all the kids.

Talk to the kids about how they feel. Begin by asking the kids left out of the M&M reward to tell how they felt when that happened.

**Did you come to Kingdom Quest feeling content and soon become discontented or unhappy? What made you feel discontented?**

Next, ask the entire group a question.

**What did it feel like when you did not receive the candy bar? Did you feel discontented or unhappy?**

**Did those of you who had M&M's lose your feeling of thankfulness? Did you feel discontented that you did not have a candy bar?**

**Is there a toy or gift that you really want? Do you want this toy or gift so much that you forget to be thankful for the toys you already have?**

**Today we will talk about how Satan wants to rob us of our joy and keep us discontented by convincing us to think too much about having more and more and more. God has an answer for that. We are to give thanks for all the things that God has given us. *\*Thanksgiving beats the lie of "gotta have it."***

## **Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes**



**Purpose:** *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

**Puppet Presentation:** Gordy has the "Gotta Have Its"—Gordy isn't satisfied with just five or six M&M's but continues eating until the bag is empty. His "Gotta Have Its" makes him sick.

**Dramatic Presentation of the Bible Event:** "The Contentment Meter"—A volunteer is selected to demonstrate the meaning of Philippians 4:11-13.

**Puppet Conclusion:** "Gordy has the "Gotta Have Its"—Gordy learns to be thankful for what he has, especially for the gift of a Savior, Jesus.

## **Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes**



**Purpose:** *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

*Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.*

Application Activity:

*Needed: a bag of M&M's, a bowl, copies of take home devotional sheet for Thanksgiving dinner called "M&M's for Thanksgiving" (see appendix)*

Begin with discussion about the opening warm-up and how the children experienced discontentment when they were quick to think of what they did not have as opposed to what they did have. Then continue with:

**What are some things you could want so badly that you become discontented with what you already have? (These things might include toys, clothes, or popularity.)**

Each time a child shares something, have him/her take a M&M's out of the bag and place it in a bowl in the center of the group.

After filling the bowl, have the children read out loud some passages on contentment: Philippians 4:11-13, 1 Timothy 6:6-8, Hebrews 13:5-6.

**Boys and girls, look at the M&M's in our bowl. We are going to pretend that "M&M" stands for "Marvelous Memory." I want you to think of a marvelous memory of what God has done for you. It can be a blessing that he gave you like your clothes, your friends, or your house. It can be a blessing in your heart like love or peace. It can be a spiritual blessing like everlasting life or friendship with God.**

**When we remember what God has done for us and we think of marvelous memories, we become thankful and content. We are more than happy because we see how blessed we are.**

**Each time you share a marvelous memory you can eat one M&M. We will say, "I have a marvelous memory of \_\_\_\_\_, and I thank you, God." These are, in fact, prayers.**

Encourage the children to think of spiritual blessings God has given them. Thinking about these spiritual blessings keeps us from the discontentment of wanting more material things. Review the take home point: ***\*Thanksgiving beats the lie of "gotta have it."***

Close by explaining the take home devotional sheet for Thanksgiving dinner called "M&M's for Thanksgiving." Challenge the children to participate in this event at home.

Closing Prayer:

Wrap up with a prayer remembering the most marvelous memory of all, Jesus.

**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.

# Large Group Presentation

## Gordy has the “Gotta Have Its” Puppet Presentation

*The main point of the large group presentation is that we often lose our contentment because we are so quick to think, “We gotta have it” as we wish for more. Having thankful hearts gives us true contentment. Thanksgiving is having a marvelous memory of what God has given us. As we are thankful to God, we become more content and less driven to fill our discontentment with the accumulation of more things.*

Gordy appears onstage with an empty bag of M&M’s taped to his hand. Use any other special effects that might help him look ill such as an ice bag or wash cloth taped on his head.

**Mr. King:** Gordy, are you there?

Gordy: *(Sounds sick from behind the stage.)* Ooohhh...I’m here, but I think I want to stay down here.

**Mr. King:** Why, Gordy? Why don’t you come out and visit?

Gordy: Ooohhh...I just don’t feel like it.

**Mr. King:** Okay. Today we are talking about feeling content.

Gordy: *(Appears onstage.)* I wish I felt that way.

**Mr. King:** Being content means you are satisfied and feel happy. Did you come to Kingdom Quest today feeling content?

Gordy: I sure did, but it didn’t last long.

**Mr. King:** What happened?

Gordy: Well...some kids got M&M’s...

**Mr. King:** Ah. Then you weren’t content any more?

Gordy: Yeah, that’s right.

**Mr. King:** Did that happen to any of you, boys and girls? *(Pause for children’s response.)* I guess you’re not alone, Gordy.

Gordy: But I was content. I got some M&M’s.

**Mr. King:** Yes, I can see the empty bag there. How long did that happiness last?

Gordy: Not too long.

**Mr. King:** I bet I know what happened. You saw someone get a big candy bar and you wished you had it. You weren't happy with M&M's anymore. Is that what happened to some of you, boys and girls? (*Pause for response.*) Is that what happened to you, Gordy?

Gordy: Well, no.

**Mr. King:** It's not?

Gordy: No. I didn't want the big candy bar.

**Mr. King:** You didn't?

Gordy: No. While the shepherd wasn't looking, I took the whole bag of M&M's and ate them all!

**Mr. King:** Yuck! You could get sick doing that.

Gordy: Well, there were only fifty or sixty in there.

**Mr. King:** Double yuck! No wonder you feel terrible. What were you thinking?

Gordy: I was just thinking, "I gotta have it!"

**Mr. King:** Gotta have fifty or sixty M&M's?

Gordy: At first I just thought, "I gotta have five or six." After that I thought, "I gotta have ten or twelve."

**Mr. King:** Did you stop there?

Gordy: Well, then I said, "I gotta have thirty or forty!"

**Mr. King:** And, finally, you stopped at fifty or sixty.

Gordy: That's just when they ran out. Now I gotta have some stomachache medicine.

**Mr. King:** Gordy, you need to listen to today's Bible event. Paul talks about the secret of being content whether you have a little or a lot. It has to do with being thankful and not always thinking you gotta have more stuff. That's the true secret of contentment and that's the reason why

it's so important to be thankful. Take your stomachache medicine and listen. Then I'll talk to you after the Bible event.

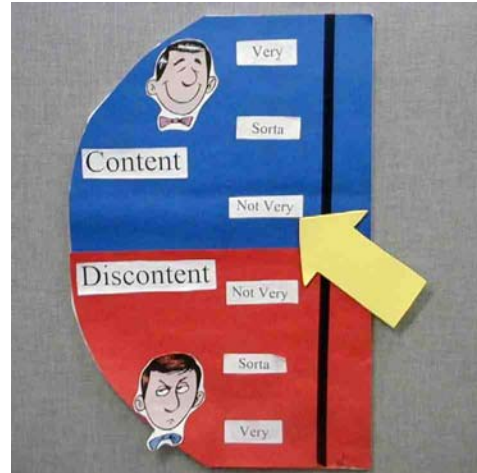
## The Contentment Meter

### Characters:

- a child from the audience who in advance has rehearsed the drama
- a super slick salesman character
- the presenter

### Props:

- salesman's coat and hat
- packet of M&M's
- super-size candy bar
- videotape cued to a commercial for the latest in kids' toys
- Bible with notes or script for the child
- "Contentment Meter" (see picture)



**Mr. King:** Boys and girls, welcome to "The Contentment Meter" where we will measure someone's contentment. "Contentment" means you are satisfied, you are happy, and you have enough. I am going to now choose our contestant and invite her onstage. Select the prearranged volunteer from the audience. Let me ask you something. Are you content?

Child nods head "yes."

**Mr. King:** Good. I want to introduce you to a super slick salesman who you better watch out for. He has something to show you and I'm not sure you can trust him.

The salesman goes through a series of presenting things the child is content with until she sees the new thing. The child will respond to each item with "Gotta have it!" The items are:

- Item 1: small amount of M&M's
- Item 2: large candy bar
- Item 3: the video-taped commercial advertising a popular toy
- Item 4: shirt of a child in the audience that looks extra sharp
- Item 5: the color of another child's hair that is unlike the color of the contestant's hair

The super slick salesman will present each one of these items to the child. The child has the same pattern of response for each item. The salesman will ask the child if she is



content. The child nods her head “yes.” Then the child is shown the next bigger prize. The child is again asked if she is content and shakes her head “no” and says, “Gotta have it!” The large group leader moves the arrow on the contentment meter farther down the side of discontentment. After discontentment is registered, the salesman asks, “Well, what do you say?” The child responds, “Gotta have it.” The cycle repeats.

During the second part of the drama sketch as follows, the child offers thanksgiving and the contentment meter is moved by the presenter closer and closer to full contentment.

**Mr. King:**     **Wait a minute. I have an answer for your contentment meter. The apostle, Paul, says in Philippians 4:11-13, “I’ve learned to be content in whatever situation I’m in... when I have too much or when I have too little. I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me.”**

**Paul wrote this while he was in jail. He had learned the secret of contentment. As he focused on Jesus, he was not quick to always want more things. Paul learned that he could be content with what he had and be thankful that God provides for his every need.**

Refer to the child and continue.

**What would happen if this person remembered all the blessings God has given her and was thankful? Let’s see.**

Mr. King gives the child a Bible. *(A script can be left in the Bible to help the child give the following responses.)*

The salesman offers the child the M&M’s and she takes a handful.

**Child:**       **M&M—Marvelous Memory. I have the marvelous memory of how God has given me more than enough food and even dessert. I thank him.** Eats M&M.

Mr. King registers the contentment meter to show more content. Salesman entices child with larger candy bar. Child declines and picks up an M&M.

**Salesman:**    *What?! What do you mean being content with God? Don’t you gotta have more?*

**Child:**       **M&M. I have a marvelous memory of how God has given me a chance to be alive and with him today here at church. I have all my friends around. I am thankful to God.** Eats M&M.

Mr. King registers the contentment meter to show more content. Salesman entices child with commercial or fancy toy. Child declines and picks up an M&M.

**Child:** *M&M. I have a marvelous memory of how God lives forever and has given me Jesus so I might live forever with him. I thank you, God, for living with you forever.* Eats M&M.

Mr. King registers the contentment meter to show more content. Salesman entices child by pointing out an attractive shirt worn by another child in the audience. Child declines and picks up an M&M.

**Child:** *M&M. I have a marvelous memory of how God has given me a family to love and care for me. He surrounds me with his love. I thank you, God, for my family.* Eats M&M.

Mr. King registers the contentment meter to show more content. Salesman entices child with another child's differently colored hair. Child declines and picks up an M&M.

**Child:** *M&M. I have a marvelous memory. I thank you, God, that you made just one me. You gave me special talents and abilities that are just for me. Thank you, God, for how you made me special.* Eats M&M.

Mr. King registers the contentment meter to the top of contentment.

**Mr. King:** Boys and girls, do you understand what we can do when we are *not* content with what we have? When we feel discontent, we can instead give thanks to God and remember the wonderful things he has done for us and has given us. Those marvelous memories can help us to think about how wonderful God is and how much he has done to show us his love. When we do that, we have learned the secret of contentment, just like Paul. Paul said, "I've learned the secret of contentment when I have too much or when I have too little."

Let's remember our take home point: *\*Thanksgiving beats the lie of "gotta have it."*

Now let's give a hand to our volunteer.

## **Gordy Has the "Gotta Have Its"**

### Puppet Conclusion

**Mr. King:** So, Gordy, what did you think?

Gordy: I think my tummy is feeling better.

**Mr. King:** Good, but what about your contentment?

Gordy: I am thankful that my tummy isn't hurting so badly.

**Mr. King:** **You're learning about contentment then. *\*Thanksgiving beats the lie about "gotta have it."***

Gordy: Yeah, just like that demonstration showed. I guess we do have much to be thankful for.

**Mr. King:** **And the best thing we have to be thankful for is...what?**

Gordy: M&M's, of course.

**Mr. King:** **Oh, Gordy!**

Gordy: I'm just joking. It's Jesus. He gave us everything, even his own life when he died on the cross.

**Mr. King:** **Yes, and because of that, we can trust him, have his forgiveness, and his love and power in our lives. Gordy, why don't you pray for that now?**

Gordy: Okay. Dear God, sometimes we get kind of silly and eat too many M&M's. Or we think we just "gotta have it all." That's a lie. Then we are discontent. You know all about that. Please forgive us and help us not to do that. Instead, help us be thankful. Thank you God for everything you have given us... especially Jesus. In his name, we pray. Amen.

## M&M's for Thanksgiving!

### Take Home Devotional for Thanksgiving Meal



Every person writes his name on a small slip of paper and folds it in half. Have a drawing so that everyone draws another person's name.

Next, place an M&M at every person's plate. For this conversation game, each person would take the M&M and share a "Marvelous Memory" that he has about the person whose name he has drawn. He can conclude with how he thanks God for that person.

Hopefully, many marvelous memories will be shared. Afterwards, everyone can enjoy their M&M's!

## M&M's for Thanksgiving!

### Take Home Devotional for Thanksgiving Meal



Every person writes his name on a small slip of paper and folds it in half. Have a drawing so that everyone draws another person's name.

Next, place an M&M at every person's plate. For this conversation game, each person would take the M&M and share a "Marvelous Memory" that he has about the person whose name he has drawn. He can conclude with how he thanks God for that person.

Hopefully, many marvelous memories will be shared. Afterwards, everyone can enjoy their M&M's!