



Faithful People Thank God for Jesus

Luke 2:22-40


First- and second-graders' level of emotional intelligence is growing, and they're generally at a place where they can understand gratitude on an emotional level. As children learn about a real living God who came to earth as a man, this helps them truly have a thankfulness toward God. Use this lesson to show kids in a concrete way the part God plays in their lives in order to develop an attitude of gratitude in them.



► **Bible Point**
We thank God for Jesus.

Key Verse
"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name" (Psalm 100:4).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will show thanks to God for sending Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Thankful for Gifts <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Talk about special gifts they've received, and worship by singing the Key Verse song.	CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson) Teacher Pack: CD	
	Gifts of Gratitude <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Learn about Mary and Joseph's visit to the Temple, and make bouquets of thankfulness.	Bible, several paper muffin cups per child, green chenille wires, glue sticks, stapler	
	Simeon's Praise <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Hear about Simeon's recognition of Jesus, and play a fun game to recognize Jesus for who he is.	Bible, My Bible Fun, paper wads	Tear out the Lesson 4 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.
2 Bible Exploration	Anna's Excitement <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Share Anna's excitement about Jesus, and make postcards to tell others about Jesus.	Bible, pens, 1 index card per child, markers, whiteboard or large sheet of paper Teacher Pack: "Spread the News" stickers 	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p>3 Weaving Faith Into Life</p>	<p>Enter His Gates <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Thank God for Jesus, and commit to living a life of gratitude this week.</p>	<p>My Bible Fun, crayons or markers</p>	
<p>4 Lasting Impressions</p>	<p>Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.</p>	<p>My Bible Fun</p>	
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Thankful for Gifts Supplies

CD player
copies of the lyrics
page (at the end of the
lesson)

Teacher Pack

CD: "His Love Endures
Forever" (Psalm
100:4-5) (track 9)

1 GETTING STARTED

Thankful for Gifts

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together.

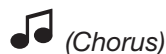
Say: **Think about a gift you got recently that you really loved.** Allow time. **Now turn and tell a friend about that one gift you thought of.** Allow time.

Say: **I can tell you're feeling thankful for those special gifts because of your smiles and because your faces lit up like light bulbs just thinking about them. Today we'll hear about some people who had thankfulness like that—thankfulness for Jesus. You see, Jesus was actually the very first Christmas gift anyone received. Before we get started with our lesson, let's pray and thank God for Jesus.** Invite the children to pray, thanking God for Jesus, and then close the prayer.

Say: **Our Key Verse for today tells us how to thank God for Jesus. Listen while I read Psalm 100:4: "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name" (Psalm 100:4).** Lead the children in repeating the verse with you several times.

Say: **When the Bible was written, many things about life were the same, but there were also some things that were different. Entering his gates and his courts might not mean anything to you. Let me help you: At that time, people went to thank and praise God at a temple, and they entered the temple through large gates.**

Say: **Let's enter the gates of our room with thanksgiving and praise right now.** Have all the children line up outside the door. Then play "His Love Endures Forever" (Psalm 100:4-5) (track 9 on the CD) and lead children through the doorway while singing and clapping to the beat.



**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him and praise his name.
For the Lord is good, and his love endures forever.**
(Repeat.)

**His faithfulness continues
Through every generation.
He is faithful;
He is faithful.**



And I will praise him
For as long as I live.
He is faithful;
He is faithful.

(Repeat chorus 2x.)

“His Love Endures Forever” (Psalm 100:4-5) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Think back to the gift you thought of during the beginning of our activity—what did you do to show how thankful you were for that gift?
- Why do you think it’s important to show thankfulness for a great gift?
- What about Jesus are you thankful for?

Say: **There are so many things to thank Jesus for because everything about him is good. And he wants to be involved in our lives all the time—so that means he wants to bring goodness into our lives all the time. ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS because he’s the greatest gift of all time. Every time we come to church—or anywhere else we go—we can come with hearts full of thanksgiving and praise.**

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2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Gifts of Gratitude

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Open your Bible to Luke 2:22-24, and show children the passage. Say: **Jesus was a tiny baby when Mary and Joseph took him to the Temple for the first time. Mary and Joseph wanted to present Jesus to God to dedicate him to God. This was their way of saying thank you to God for giving them Jesus.** Read Luke 2:22-24.

Say: **There are so many ways to say thank you for something. Let’s say thank you to God today by making a gift for God. I have the supplies to make bouquets of flowers.** Give each child several paper muffin cups and green chenille wires. Lay out glue sticks and a stapler for everyone to share.

Demonstrate first how to make a daffodil-like flower: Flatten one muffin cup with your hand. Staple a chenille wire to the back of the cup. Rub the inside center of the muffin cup with the glue stick, and press another muffin cup onto the glue.



Gifts of Gratitude Supplies

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- Bible
- several paper muffin cups per child
- green chenille wires
- glue sticks
- stapler





Simeon's Praise Supplies

Bible
My Bible Fun
paper wads

Simeon's Praise Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 4 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.

Help the children as they make several flowers. While the children are working on their flowers, talk about reasons to be thankful for Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why do you think a gift like this can tell someone thank you?
- What are some other ways you can show you're thankful to someone?
- What ways do you tell God you're thankful to him?

Say: **Whether we sing, dance, make something, or simply say words, there are many ways show someone you're thankful. Mary and Joseph dedicated Jesus to God. We made thankful bouquets. Whatever we do, ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS because we know what a great gift Jesus is.**

Simeon's Praise

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to Luke 2:25-35, and show children the passage. Say: **When Mary and Joseph were at the Temple, an old man named Simeon came up to them. Simeon loved God very much. He knew God was sending a special person to save the Jews from the things that made them sad.**

Ask:

- What are some of the things that make you sad?

Say: **The Jews were sad because at one time they'd been a mighty country. But other groups of people took over their land. The Jews were also sad because, just like us, they did wrong things and needed forgiveness for their sins. The Jews were waiting for a special person called the Messiah to come and rebuild their kingdom and forgive them of their sins.**

Say: **Let's pretend to look for a special person like the Jews did.** Have the children stand. Demonstrate how to show you're looking for something in the distance by putting one hand above your eyes on your forehead, squat a bit, and turn side-to-side. Have kids do the same and lead them to look in different directions of the room. Ham it up for a minute, and then have the kids sit.

Say: **Here's where Simeon comes in: God had told Simeon that Simeon wouldn't die until the Messiah came. And when Simeon saw Jesus, he knew right away that Jesus was the Messiah. The Holy Spirit told him that Jesus was the one that all of the Jews had been awaiting for hundreds of years.** Encourage the children to cheer and make different noises of celebration, such as "Woohoo!" or whistling.





Say: **Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God for him. He said, “God, now I can die in peace because I have seen the one you sent to save us. This baby is a light that will help everyone, even non-Jewish people, see you and believe in you.”**

Say: **Because of Jesus, we too can know God. It’s true that we’re not living at the same time that Jesus was a man on earth, but we do know a lot about God and Jesus because of what we learn at church and in the Bible. Let’s play a game to give thanks to God for what we know about Jesus.**

Give each child a My Bible Fun page. Point out the “Let’s Thank Jesus” section. Say: **Here’s how to play: Toss a small paper wad onto one of the pictures and notice where it lands. Then say a one-word or one-sentence prayer thanking God for something about Jesus that’s in that category. For example, if the paper wad lands in the square about miracles, you could thank God for calming the storm or for healing a blind man, or for a miracle Jesus has done in your life.**

Play a couple of rounds of the game with the whole group. Then help the children find partners. Have them play the game with partners for several minutes. Then set aside the My Bible Fun pages for later use.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Simeon knew Jesus would help the Jewish people. What are some ways Jesus helps you when you’re sad?**
- **What can you do to find Jesus when you’re looking for help from him?**
- **Why are you thankful to know Jesus and God?**

Say: **In our game, we talked about many of the good things Jesus does. Just like Simeon, we can say thank you to Jesus by recognizing who Jesus is and the good things he does. And ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS anytime, anywhere.**

Anna’s Excitement

What You’ll Do

Open your Bible to Luke 2:36-40, and show children the passage. Say: **While Mary and Joseph were at the Temple, they also met an old woman named Anna. Anna loved being at the Temple because she loved to worship God. It didn’t matter if people came to the Temple early in the morning or late at night—no matter what time they came, they would find Anna praying and worshipping God there.**

Ask:

- **Tell about something you love to do so much that you could do it all the time, like Anna.**



Anna’s Excitement Supplies

-
- Bible
 - pens
 - 1 index card per child
 - markers
 - whiteboard or large sheet of paper
 - Teacher Pack**
 - “Spread the News” stickers





Say: **When Anna saw Simeon with Mary and Joseph and Jesus, she came right over and gave thanks to God for Jesus. She, too, knew that Jesus was the special Messiah God had promised. Then Anna started telling everyone in the Temple that Jesus was the Messiah.**

Say: **Let's have fun doing what Anna did—let's tell others that Jesus is the Messiah. First let's practice what we're going to say. Because we want to thank God for Jesus, we'll start out by saying, "Thank God." Say that with me. We'll point up to God while we say it. "Thank God." Point up. Then we'll tell people who Jesus is. We'll shake hands with each other and say, "Jesus is the Messiah." Shake hands and say that with me. "Jesus is the Messiah." Shake hands with a child.**

Give the children one minute to thank God and spread the word about Jesus to each other.

Say: **Let's send postcards to let others know about Jesus.** Give each child an index card; then set out pens, markers, and the "Spread the News" stickers. Tell children to press the stickers to the front of their "postcards" and then draw pictures of themselves telling others about Jesus. Then have children write notes about Jesus on the back of their postcards. Help them with spelling. Write words that most of the children are using, such as "Jesus" and "thank you," on a whiteboard so they can all refer to the words.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why do you think Jesus is such good news?**
- **Talk about someone you want to tell about Jesus this week.**

Say: **Anna knew Jesus was good news—the best news ever. One way she showed she was thankful to God for Jesus was to tell other people about him. ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS, too, and we can tell others what good news it is that God sent his Son to earth to be with us.** Have the children take their postcards home and give them to friends or family members.

**3 WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE**

Enter His Gates

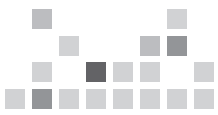
What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Mary, Joseph, Anna, and Simeon all thanked God for Jesus in different ways. We've praised God for Jesus in many ways today. We can thank God for Jesus every day in lots of different ways.**

Enter His Gates
Supplies

My Bible Fun
crayons or markers





Give each child the My Bible Fun page, and provide crayons or markers. Direct the children’s attention to the “Enter His Gates” section.

Say: **We’ve talked about coming to church with attitudes of thanksgiving and praise. We come to church with those attitudes because we want to worship Jesus. And we can worship Jesus everywhere! Draw a picture of yourself entering the gates of the picture. Then think about the reasons you want to praise and thank Jesus. Write those on the bricks of the gates. If you need help with spelling, I can help you.** Brainstorm ideas with the children, and then give them a few minutes to work.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What things did you write on your bricks?
- Why do those things matter to you?
- Why does it matter to you that Jesus is part of your life?

Say: **Everyone has reasons they’re thankful to God, just like Simeon and Anna did. Some of the things we’re all thankful for. And some of the things are different for different people. But one thing we know is ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do

Say: **Let’s think about how ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS.**

Have kids find this week’s Daily Challenges on their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Lead your family in singing two of your favorite praise songs as you ride in the car somewhere this week.**
- **Write or draw a thank-you note to God to thank him for sending Jesus.**
- **Give your postcard to someone you want to tell about Jesus. Then talk to that person about why you’re thankful for Jesus.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.



Daily Challenges
Supplies

My Bible Fun





Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

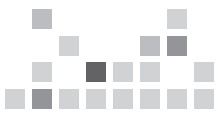
Say: **God is always glad when we show we're thankful to him, just like he was glad when Simeon and Anna were thankful in the Temple. And we certainly have a really great thing to be thankful for: ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS. This week, let's try to show God how thankful we are for Jesus by doing our Daily Challenges.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how we thank God for Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God for Jesus. Ask your kids to share reasons they're thankful for Jesus. Then pray: **God, thank you for sending Jesus. We thank you because he's strong and powerful, kind and loving. We thank you because he helps us, cares for us, and saves us. Jesus is a good gift. We want to be thankful for him every day. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Lyrics ■■■■

His Love Endures Forever (Psalm 100:4-5)

(Chorus)

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him and praise his name.
For the Lord is good, and his love endures forever.**

(Repeat.)

**His faithfulness continues
Through every generation.**

He is faithful;

He is faithful.

And I will praise him

For as long as I live.

He is faithful;

He is faithful.

(Repeat chorus 2x.)

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