

7 Days to Teach Your Child a Thankful Heart



**FOOD FOR
THE HUNGRY**

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Raising children is hard work, and raising godly children is even harder work. As parents, we want the best for our kids – as Christian parents, what we want even more is for our children to know and love God. With that comes a lifetime of teaching and learning ourselves.

We parents have an amazing opportunity to prepare our children to greet each day with an abundance of joy while still maintaining a humble and thankful heart.

Food for the Hungry wants to help you in that endeavor. That's why we prepared seven days of daily activities, Bible verses and other resources to help you cultivate a family that truly embodies thankfulness – not just for one week, but for the entire the year.

Let's get started!

DAY ONE

Today we're going to focus on thanking God by praising Him for all he has given us.

Message to Share:

Take time today to be still and look around for God's blessings! You'll find that you don't have to look very hard to find all the wonderful things in your life that God has blessed you with. What do you see? Be sure to think past just physical blessings. Be sure to remember the people and opportunities in your life as well.

Bible Verses to Share:

- **Psalm 148:3-5**

Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all stars of light! Praise Him, highest heavens, and the waters that are above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created.

- **Philippians 4:19**

And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Activity to Share:

Let's create a Tree of Thanks today. This is a craft that will help you discover things around you that God has made, and then praise Him for being the God of the universe. We hope this will be a visual reminder for you to continue noticing God together for the rest of this week.

Here's What You'll Need:

- Watercolor paints
- Paintbrush
- Coffee filters
- Brown construction paper
- Sharpie
- Scissors
- Tape





Here's What to Do:

STEP ONE

On a protected surface, flatten out a coffee filter and cover it in watercolor paint. It's best to use 3-4 colors on each filter. Once the filter is filled in lay out or hang up to dry. Repeat on at least 10 coffee filters. You can certainly do more if you'd like your tree to have more leaves.

STEP TWO

Use a sharpie to draw out a tree trunk and branches. Don't worry too much about how the branches look since the leaves will cover it up. It's just helpful for spacing. Once your tree is drawn, cut it out with scissors.

STEP THREE

Once your coffee filters are dry, you can begin cutting them into leaf shapes. Each coffee filter should give you 2-4 leaves depending on how large you'd like them to be. We suggest a variety of sizes for layering on your tree.



STEP FOUR

Once all your leaves are cut out ask your kids to write something that they're thankful for on each one. Feel free to help with this part if your kids still aren't old enough to write themselves.

STEP FIVE

Tape up the tree trunk on a wall in your home and begin taping the leaves on the branches one at a time. With each leaf, be sure to talk about that thing or person and thank God for that blessing in your life.

DAY TWO

Today we're going to focus on others.

Message to Share:

Take time today to think about the people around us in our daily lives. There are people we know and people we don't know. Regardless of if we know them, if we have things in common with them, or even if we live in the same place or believe the same things, God loves and deeply cares for everyone equally.

Think about someone you love very much. If someone else were to do something for that person, it would make you happy too. That's just how God feels when we do nice things for the other people He loves. Let's think about how we can bless those around us and how happy it will make God to see us do that.

Bible Verses to Share:

- **Hebrews 13:16**

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

- **Philippians 2:4**

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

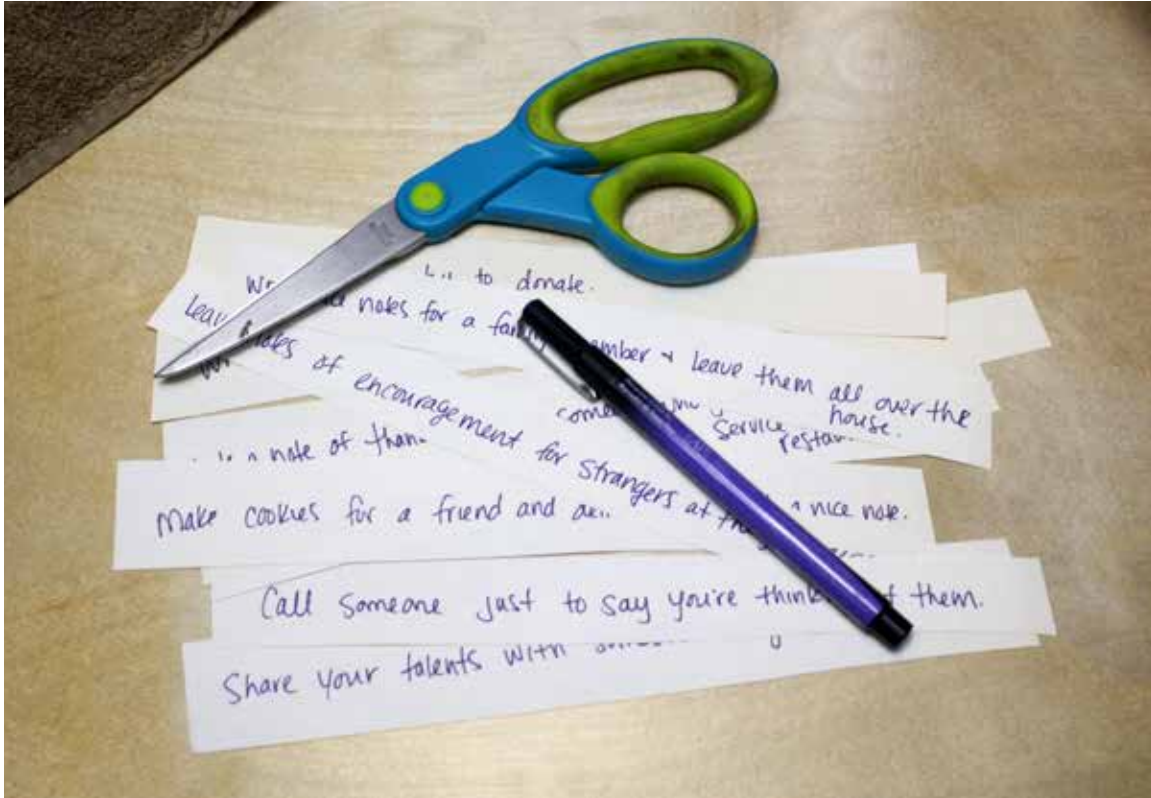
Activity to Share:

Let's create a give thanks jar today. This craft will help remind you to think about how you can bless others. Decide as a family how often you'll pull a good deed from the jar and commit to seeing it through together. Remember to think about the person you're blessing and how much God loves them.

Here's What You'll Need:

- Acrylic paints
- Paintbrush
- Mason jar or other glass jar
- Tag of your choice
- White sheet of paper
- Pen
- String or ribbon of your choice





Here's What to Do:

STEP ONE

On a safe surface, cover your glass jar with a thin layer of paint. Allow paint to dry and then apply a second coat. Repeat until the jar is covered to your liking.

STEP TWO

Cut strips of paper and write out activities that you can do as a family that will bless others or help you to be thankful.

STEP THREE

Decorate your tag and tie it around the neck of your jar using the string or ribbon.

STEP FOUR

Fill the jar with the strips of paper and choose how often your family will draw out and complete one of these tasks. This is a great practice long after Thanksgiving is over to continue to cultivate thankfulness all year long.

DAY THREE

Today we're going to focus on the blessing of our minds and how we can have a positive attitude, which affects how we act.

Message to Share:

Take time today to think about how we think. How we think and how we feel about others is very important as it affects how we treat others. When we have a positive attitude, it's easier for us to live out what God wants for us.

Bible Verses to Share:

- **Matthew 15:11**

What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.

- **Philippians 4:8**

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.



Activity to Share:

Today we're going to create a collage to help us express our feelings. When we talk about and understand our feelings, it's easier for us to see how we're acting towards others and make changes if necessary to love people better.

Here's What You'll Need:

- Piece of paper and a pen
- Variety of old magazines
- Scissors
- Tape or glue
- Cardstock



Here's What to Do:

STEP ONE

On your piece of paper, write the word attitude in a vertical column. Brainstorm characteristics of a positive attitude with your kids, one to go with each letter in the word attitude.

STEP TWO

Search through the magazines for visual representations of the words you filled in on this week's downloadable piece for attitude. Cut them out.

STEP THREE

Arrange the different cutouts on the cardstock. Once you've created an arrangement you're happy with, begin to tape or glue the pieces in place until you have a page filled with great images.

DAY FOUR

Today we're going to focus on the blessing of our bodies.



Message to Share:

Today we're going to take time to think about our physical bodies and how God made them. We should be thankful that he has given us life and a body that moves us around. Because we're thankful for our bodies that means it's important for us to take care of them. What are some good ways that we can show God that we're thankful for the body he gave us? Does God care about how we see our bodies? Does God care about how we eat and exercise?

Bible Verses to Share:

- **1 Corinthians 3:16-17**

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy Him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

- **Genesis 1:27**

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female he created them.

• **Psalm 139:14-16**

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

Activity to Share:

Today we're going to create a game that we can use to exercise and think about how God wants us to care for our bodies.

Here's What You'll Need:

- Pumpkins in various sizes depending on the age of your child
- Traffic Cones or something else to mark distances
- An open outdoor area of grass or dirt
- Stopwatch



Here's What to Do:

STEP ONE

Arrange your cones or area markers a designated distance from your start point. 50 feet from your starting point is a good start, but you can certainly adjust depending on the age and capabilities of your child, as well as the space you have available.

STEP TWO

Set the children up at the starting line with their pumpkin. They can race one another or just the stopwatch. Count down from 3 and say 'GO' to begin.

STEP THREE

Have the children push/roll their pumpkin along the ground towards the cone. They should circle the cone and come back to the starting line. The first child back wins or you can encourage your child to beat their time by playing several times.

VARIATION

You can also make the game more challenging by adding other obstacles to the playing field such as areas where they have to pick up the pumpkin and carry it or stop and jump over the pumpkin. Feel free to change it up and have fun.

DAY FIVE

Today we're going to focus on how we can share with God what we're thankful for and give Him praise for those things.



Message to Share:

Today we're going to take time to think about how we say thank you to God and others. Saying thank you is important because it lets the person you're thanking know that you noticed what they've done for you and you recognize their thought and appreciate them for being in your life. There are lots of ways to say thank you. What are some ways that you can let someone know you're thankful for what they've done for you?

Bible Verse to Share:

• Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Activity to Share:

Today we're going to create 'Thank You Cards' because giving cards is one way that we can say thank you to other people. We're going to write a card to God (and other people in your life if you like) to let them know that you appreciate all the things they've done for you. Feel free to share this card before your meal.

Here's What You'll Need:

- Several pieces of cardstock, decorative paper, and embellishments
- Glue or tape

Here's What to Do:

STEP ONE

Use the paper and embellishments to create the thank you cards. Feel free to use a variety of techniques. The one we used here is weaving and die cuts, but explore and make the cards your own. You can even use things like glitter, ribbon, or paint to decorate your cards.

STEP TWO

Fill out the card to someone who you're particularly thankful for this year or you can fill out the card to God and share with Him your thankfulness for all of your many blessings.

STEP THREE

Share the card with the person you wrote it for or share the content of the card with God in prayer.



DAY SIX

Today we're going to focus on sharing what we're thankful for with others.

Message to Share:

Take time today to think about how important it is to be thankful to God for everything we have. It is because of Him that we're blessed richly with talents, opportunities, friends and family, as well as our homes, food, and clothing.

Bible Verses to Share:

- **Colossians 3:15-17**

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

- **Isaiah 12:4-5**

And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name, make known His deeds among the peoples, proclaim that His name is exalted." Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth.

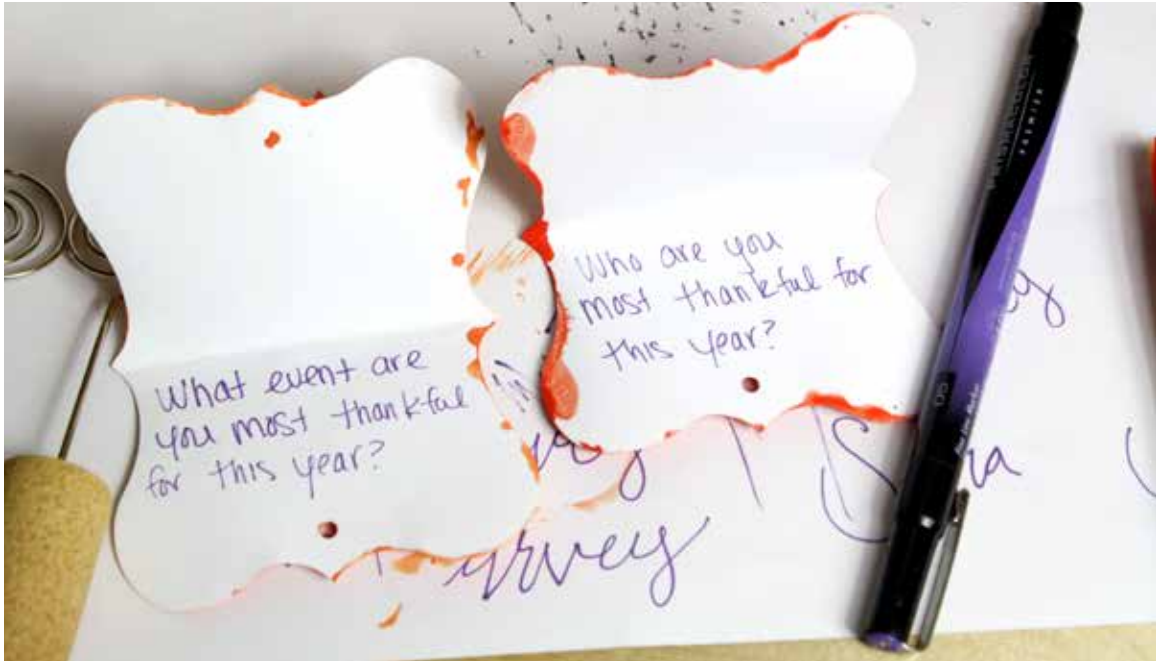
Activity to Share:

Today we're going to create place card holders for your table. Each card will have the name of the person who will sit in that place and a question for them to answer as you share dinner with friends and family.

Here's What You'll Need:

- Pre-cut cardstock tags or pieces of plain cardstock
- Watercolor paints
- Sharpie
- Craft Wire
- Wine cork





Here's What to Do:

STEP ONE

Decorate, paint, or embellish the cardstock tags in anyway you like. We used watercolors to paint the tags in fall colors.

STEP TWO

Fold the tags in half. On the inside, write a question for your guests to answer. You can ask them things like: Who are you most thankful for this year? What event happened in your life that you're most thankful for this year?

STEP THREE

Write the name of your guests on the outside of each folded card.

STEP FOUR

Cut 12 inches of craft wire and begin bending one end into a spiral wheel until you have several layers surrounding one another.

STEP FIVE

Push the other end of the wire into the top of the wine cork being sure to leave the flattest side for the bottom. Place the name card holders on your table settings and ask each person to answer their question before eating.

DAY SEVEN

Today we're going to focus on how we can be good to other people who aren't blessed like we are.

Message to Share:

Today we're going to take time to think about how we can do kind things for other people who might not have as much as we do. There are lots of people in the world who don't have the same opportunities, resources, or people in their lives to encourage them like we do. God loves these people and values them as just as much as He values you. When we care for those who don't have as much and we share what we have with them, it makes God very happy. Think about ways that you can bless others who don't have as much as you. Sponsoring a child through Food for the Hungry is one way you can continue to facilitate a thankful heart all year long. Find out more about child sponsorship at fh.org/give/sponsor.



Bible Verse to Share:

• Matthew 25:40

The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for Me."

Activity to Share:

Today we're going to create gift boxes for the homeless. These boxes are easy to put in your car and have on hand for when you see someone who might be needy. Remember that it's not our place to judge them, but to offer them love and kindness. One way we can show them love is by giving them things they need most.

Here's What You'll Need:

- Plain paper bag or tissue box
- Various craft paper and embellishments
- Various hygiene items such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, wet wipes, etc.



Here's What to Do:

STEP ONE

Decorate, paint, or embellish the bag or box in anyway you like. We chose to cover ours in decorative paper, but you can use other methods as you like.

STEP TWO

Fill the box with the various hygiene and food items. You may also include a note of love and encouragement or a scripture if you choose.

STEP THREE

Keep the box or bag in your car until you're faced with a moment of need where you can offer the gift to someone.

We hope that you've enjoyed this journey toward creating a thankful heart in preparation for Thanksgiving. We wish a blessed and restful time with your friends and family as you celebrate all your blessings tomorrow and each day afterwards.

If you found this free resource from Food for the Hungry helpful, why not share that with your Facebook friends now.



1224 E. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85034
480.998.3100

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