

Always be Thankful

**"Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."
Ephesians 5:20**

INTRO:

When was the last time you blessed someone when they sneezed? I don't mean saying, "God bless you," when you hear them blow. I mean when was the last time you said, "God bless you," and meant it? My guess is most of us in here – kids and adults – have never thought of it that way. Saying, "God bless you" is a habit. We are taught that when someone sneezes, we say, "God bless you." We are taught to say the words, but we aren't necessarily taught why.

Parents teach kids a lot of habits like this. We wash our hands after using the bathroom. We brush our teeth at bedtime. We buckle our seat belts when we get in the car. We tuck our nose into our elbow when we sneeze. These are great habits because they are habits that keep us healthy and safe.

Parents also teach their kids other habits, habits that help us to be polite and kind. They teach us to say, "God bless you" when someone sneezes. They teach us to say, "May I," and, "Please," when we ask for things.

They teach us to say, "Thank you," when someone gives us something or does something nice for us.

Saying, "Thank you," is a very important habit, one we should all practice, but if "Thank you" is just an automatic habit, like saying, "God bless you," we are missing out. ***Being thankful is an important part of being a Christian. God wants us to be thankful every time we pray. He wants us to count our blessings and praise him for all of them. And God wants us to show gratitude to the people who do good things for us, big and small, every day.***

Let's look at a story from Jesus' life and see what being truly thankful looks like.

LUKE 17:11-19 - Be Thankful

¹¹ Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. Traveling from Galilee to Samaria, ¹² he came into a small town. Ten men met him there. These men did not come close to Jesus, because they all had a harmful skin disease. ¹³ But they called to him, "Jesus! Master! Please help us!"

¹⁴ When Jesus saw the men, he said, "Go and show yourselves to the priests."^[a]

While the ten men were going, they were healed. ¹⁵ When one of them saw that he was healed, he went back to Jesus. He praised God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ Then he bowed down at Jesus' feet and thanked him. (This man was a Samaritan.) ¹⁷ Jesus asked, "Ten men were healed; where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Is this Samaritan the only one who came back to thank God?" ¹⁹ Then Jesus said to him, "Stand up and go on your way. You were healed because you believed."

MAIN POINT:

Jesus gave these ten lepers something no one else could. He gave them back their health, but he also gave them back their lives. Leprosy was such a contagious disease that lepers were forced to live outside the city. They could never see their families or friends again. If someone came too close, they literally were required to chase them away!

When Jesus healed them. He restored their health and their lives, but only one man came back to say thank you. The others were too excited to show themselves to the priests, to be declared clean, and get home to see their loved ones. **The one leper who said, "Thank you" shows us how important it is to stop what we're doing and show real gratitude to the people who bless us every day.**

When was the last time you thanked God for life? For flowers? For puppies? Or for Jesus? When was the last time you sat down and counted all the blessings, big and small, that God has given you?

God wants us to have grateful hearts. He wants us to show our thanks to him and everyone who blesses us. When we are thankful, we let other people know that we appreciate them. We also remind ourselves, over and over, how blessed we truly are. A grateful heart can't be a sad heart for long because a grateful heart is always aware just how much our God and our loved ones care for us!

Saying, "Thank you," is a great habit, but it should never be a mindless habit. God wants us to be mindful of our blessings. He wants us to take the time to thank Him and others for all they do for us. Be intentional when you say thank you, and go out of your way to thank the people who go out of their way for you.

Don't just say the words, "Thank you," because you have to; say, "Thank you," because you mean it.

"Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:20

Have the children repeat this verse several times aloud with you. Then, ask them why they think we should give thanks to God the Father for everything?

What are some things for which we can give Him thanks?

Let's all thank the Lord three times for everything using our expression of joy.

I will demonstrate it and then we will do it together as a class.

"Thank You, thank You, thank You Lord for everything!"

Read: 1 Timothy 4:4-5

"Everything that God made is good. Nothing that God made should be refused if it is accepted with thanks to God. ⁵ Everything God made is made holy by what God has said and by prayer."

Discussion:

1. Is everything created by God? *(Yes.)*
2. Does scripture say that everything made by God is good or bad? *(Good.)*
3. If food is received with thanksgiving, are we to reject it? Why or why not? *(No, because God made food to feed our bodies.)*
4. Do you think the meal you will eat during Thanksgiving was created by God? *(Yes, while our parents or grandparents might buy and cook the food, it was created by God.)*

Read: Psalm 136

****As we read Psalm 136, I want you to remember one thing we read from the verses, for which you can thank God.**

God's Love Continues Forever

Give thanks to the Lord because he is good.

His love continues forever.

² Give thanks to the God over all gods.

His love continues forever.

³ Give thanks to the Lord of all lords.

His love continues forever.

⁴ Only he can do great miracles.

His love continues forever.

⁵ With his wisdom he made the skies.

His love continues forever.

⁶ He spread out the earth on the seas.

His love continues forever.

⁷ He made the sun and the moon.

His love continues forever.

⁸ He made the sun to rule the day.

- His love continues forever.
- ⁹ He made the moon and stars to rule the night.
His love continues forever.
- ¹⁰ He killed the firstborn sons of the Egyptians.
His love continues forever.
- ¹¹ He brought the people of Israel out of Egypt.
His love continues forever.
- ¹² He did it with his great power and strength.
His love continues forever.
- ¹³ He parted the water of the Red Sea.
His love continues forever.
- ¹⁴ He brought the Israelites through the middle of it.
His love continues forever.
- ¹⁵ But the king of Egypt and his army drowned in the Red Sea.
His love continues forever.
- ¹⁶ He led his people through the desert.
His love continues forever.
- ¹⁷ He defeated great kings.
His love continues forever.
- ¹⁸ He killed powerful kings.
His love continues forever.
- ¹⁹ He defeated Sihon king of the Amorites.
His love continues forever.
- ²⁰ He defeated Og king of Bashan.
His love continues forever.
- ²¹ He gave their land as a gift.
His love continues forever.
- ²² It was a gift to his servants, the Israelites.
His love continues forever.
- ²³ He remembered us when we were in trouble.
His love continues forever.
- ²⁴ He freed us from our enemies.
His love continues forever.
- ²⁵ He gives food to every living creature.
His love continues forever.
- ²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven.
His love continues forever.

Discussion:

1. Why does Psalm 136 say we should thank the Lord? *(Because God is good.)*
2. What endures forever? *(God's Love for us.)*
3. What is one thing mentioned in the scripture that God has done for which you are thankful? *(Allow for discussion. He alone does mighty wonders: He made the heavens and the earth; He protects His people; He remembers us, and He provides our needs such as food, water, shelter, etc.)*

God wants us to have grateful hearts. He wants us to show our thanks to him and everyone who blesses us. When we are thankful, we let other people know that we appreciate them. We also remind ourselves, over and over, how blessed we truly are. A grateful heart can't be a sad heart for long because a grateful heart is always aware just how much our God and our loved ones care for us!

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Final Thoughts:

- Being grateful is an important part of following Jesus. It lifts us up when we are down, and it helps us to be mindful of the blessings God gives us.
- This week, seek out a few people who have been extra kind to you, and let them know you appreciate all they've done. Give thanks to the people who bless you, and give thanks to God who sends all good things from above.

Close in Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for all you've given us.

In Jesus' name,
Amen

Memory Verse:

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CRAFT IDEA: Thankful Blessings



Videos:

Jesus and the Lepers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzZUDRrKgl8>

Thankful Hearts

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1E98C_BZT4

Veggie Tales - Madame Blueberry

<https://app.pureflix.com/videos/267051046470/veggietales-madame-blueberry?recommended=q%3A%20blueberry>

Feel free to take a picture of their art work or share how your activity went!
Post it on our Facebook page or share it on GroupMe. Have a Blessed Day &
Week! Until we can meet again

~ *Teacher Chrissy*

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