

Bible Point ▶

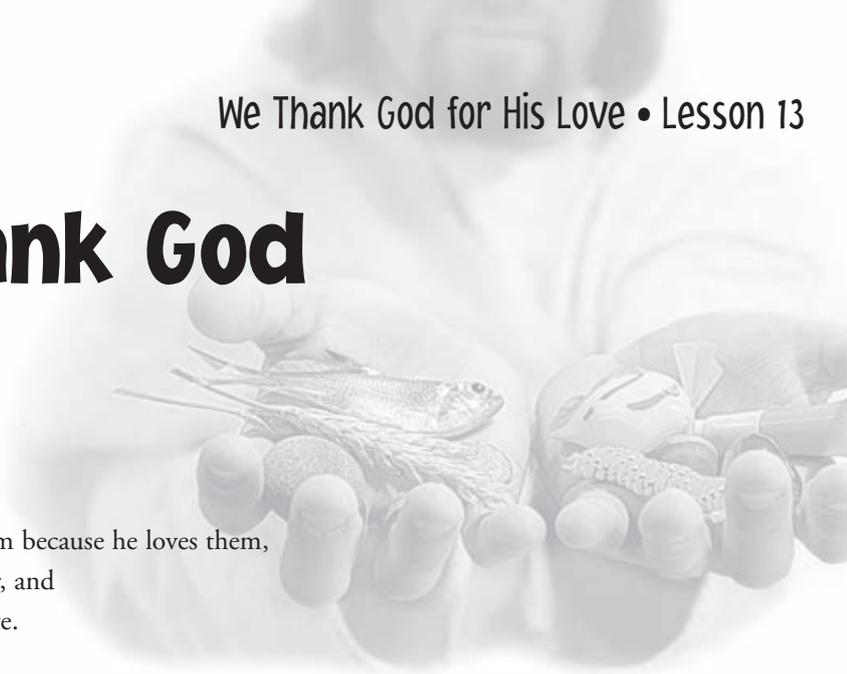
We Thank God

Bible Verse

We thank God (adapted from Psalm 107:1).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- realize that God provides for them because he loves them,
 - look for things to be thankful for, and
 - express their thanks for God's love.



Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

- We thank God for his love.

Deuteronomy 16:13-15



The Festival of Shelters was to be a time for remembering—not just what God had done to provide for the agricultural needs of the nation that year but also to remember the Exodus from Egypt. Both the physical and the spiritual were in view. God wanted these remembrances to bring joy—great joy—to the people (Deuteronomy 16:15).

It is too easy to let the cares of this world rob us of the joy God intends us to have. Often the cure for joylessness is to take better care to record and remember the things that God has done in our lives. Whether it be the ways in which he has met our physical needs, helped in times of distress, or brought us to a closer walk with him, these blessings are milestones of joy along life's way.

By looking back, we can increase our joy in the present and look with hope to what God has in store for us in the future. Christians have different times throughout the year when God's wonderful deeds are remembered. Help the children you teach see the value of these times but also see the value of remembering the little things God does for them on a daily basis.

Prayer

- Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.
- What sorts of things do you reflect upon during the Lord's Supper?
- What steps might you take to make the Lord's Supper a more meaningful spiritual time for you?
- *Pray:* Lord, as I look at my life, I see your hand of blessing at many different points. Thank you, most of all, for the love you showed me by giving me salvation through Jesus Christ. Help me grow deeper in my fellowship with you.

Before the Lesson

- Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart on the next page.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

| | What Children Will Do | Classroom Supplies | Learning Lab Supplies |
|--|--|---|---|
| Arrival Activities Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives. | Welcome Time —Receive a warm welcome from the teacher and Cuddles the Lamb. | Name tags (p. 8), marker, tape or safety pins, CD player |  |
| | Option 1: Deck the Walls —Create a colorful thank-you to God. | White shelf paper, sponges, paint shirts or grocery sacks, paper plates, tempera paint, newspaper or plastic tablecloth, tape, marker, scissors | |
| | Option 2: Hidden Hearts —Find paper hearts, and learn that God's love is never hidden. | Red and pink construction paper, scissors, building blocks | |
| | Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they help clean up the room. | CD player |  |
| Bible Story Time | Bible Song —Sing a song about the Bible. | Bible, CD player |  |
| | We Thank God —Interact with sensory items on the StoryBoard as they learn about being thankful from Deuteronomy 16:13-15. | Napkins, apple slices, crackers, bowl, CD player |  |
| Bible Activities | Guessing Game —Try to guess objects they can't see, and learn they never have to guess whether God loves them. | Paper lunch sacks |  |
| | We Thank God in Many Ways —Sing a fun song, and learn new ways to thank God. | CD player |  |
| | Interactive Bible Bulletin Board —Review the Bible Point with Cuddles the Lamb as they create a bulletin board together. | Heart patterns (p. 189), scissors, tape, pink or red construction paper |  |
| | Sing It Out —Sing a fun song, and learn new ways to thank God. | CD player |  |
| | Bible Craft —Create unusual "thankful necklaces" to wear. | "Thankful" patterns (p. 189), elastic thread, scissors, crayons, tape |  |
| | Bible Game —Play a lively game. | Paper hearts from Option 2 | |
| | Closing  | Hearts and Hugs —Say a prayer, and have a snack. | Large pretzel twists, napkins, apple juice, paper cups |

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Arrival Activities

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: name tags (p. 8), marker, tape or safety pins, CD player



- Play “We Thank God” (adapted from Psalm 107:1) (track 15) from the CD as children are arriving.
- Use Cuddles the Lamb to help you greet each child by name and with a warm smile.
- Tape or pin a name tag to each child’s clothing.
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► we thank God.**
- Place Cuddles out of sight so the children won’t be distracted by him during the next activity.

Option 1: Deck the Walls

SUPPLIES: sponges, scissors, newspaper or plastic tablecloth, white shelf paper, tape, paper plates, tempera paint, paint shirts or grocery sacks, marker

Before class, cut sponges into heart shapes.

Cover the floor in one corner of the room with newspaper or a plastic tablecloth. Roll out a 4-foot length of white shelf paper, and tape the ends of the paper to the floor covering. Set out a few paper plates, each containing a spoonful of colored tempera paint and a heart-shaped sponge. As children arrive, invite them to don paint shirts or grocery sacks with head- and armholes cut out of them. Let children use the sponges to stamp heart-shaped designs on the paper. As they work, make comments such as “We’re making a beautiful thank-you card to God” and “Look at our pretty hearts. They remind us that we’re thankful for God’s love.” Mention to children that they’ll hear a Bible story about saying thank you to God. Remind children that ► we thank God for his great love.

When children have finished painting, use a marker to title the poster “We Thank God.” Then tape it to the wall for everyone to enjoy.

Option 2: Hidden Hearts

SUPPLIES: pink and red construction paper, scissors, building blocks

Before class, cut a pink or red construction paper heart for each child.

Set building blocks on the floor, and hide the paper hearts under the blocks. As children come into the room, invite them to go on a “heart hunt” by peeking under the blocks. Let children make a long line across the floor with the paper hearts they find. Remind toddlers that ► we thank God for his love. Explain that we never need to hunt for God’s love because it’s always with us—God loves us all the time! When all the hearts have been found, have children hide and find the hearts again.

Save the paper hearts to use later in this lesson.



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.



■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



As Arrival Activities draw to a close, gently mention that it will soon be time to clean up. Encourage children to help you pick up things in the room as you lead them in singing “Let’s Pick Up All Our Things” (track 2). Use the CD and sing the song to the tune of “Looby Loo.”



Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things
And put them all away.

Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Let’s put it all away.

Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
It’s time to stop our play.

Bible Story Time

■ Bible Song

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Say: **Who do we thank for his love? ► We thank God. How do we know that? The Bible tells us.** Show children the Bible. **The Bible is God’s special book. The Bible tells us about God and Jesus. Let’s sing a song about the Bible.** Using the CD (track 3), lead the children in singing “God’s Special Book” to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”



This is God’s special book.
Yes, it’s God’s book you see!
I learn about all God has done
And his love for me!

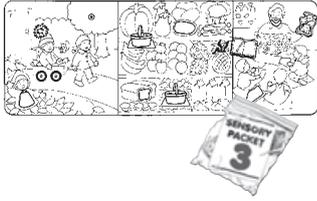
(Repeat.)

Bible!



■ Bible Story: We Thank God

SUPPLIES: napkins, apple slices, crackers, bowl, CD player



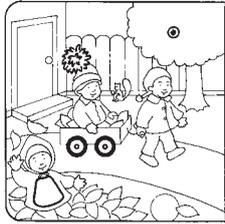
Before class begins, please make sure the sensory items are still attached securely so the children can touch them without danger of pulling the items off or putting them into their mouths.

Place napkins in the baskets you made in week 10, and add crackers and thinly cut apple slices. Have extra crackers and slices in a bowl beside you.



See page 5.

Panel 1



track 16



Place the paper leaves, cellophane, and food baskets beside you. Say: **Our Bible story is about saying thank you to God. Long ago, God helped the Israelite people by saving them from a mean king. God gave the people food to eat when they were hungry. He loved the people and took good care of them. Then the people had a special party to thank God. They lived in tents for seven days and sang songs, prayed, and ate good food while they thanked God for his love.**

Open the StoryBoard to reveal Panel 1. Say: **God loves and takes care of us just as he loved and cared for the Israelite people. There are lots of ways to see how much God loves us in this picture. Let's find some things to be thankful for. I'll give each of you a paper leaf. When you find the picture I name, hold the leaves over your hearts like this.** Demonstrate holding a leaf over your heart. Then ask children to find the pictures, and have them follow the directions given in parentheses.

- apple trees (sniff the apple sticker)
- leaves (have children rustle the cellophane and listen to the “rustling” leaves)
- wagon (turn the wagon wheels)
- jacket (touch the fabric)
- hat (touch the pompom)

When everyone has had a turn to touch one or more items on the StoryBoard, say: **That was fun! There are so many things that God gives us. God gives us things like food and clothes and friends because he loves us. Let's tell God “thank you” in a special way. We'll count to three and then toss our leaves in the air and say, “Thank you, God!”** Count to three, and then have children toss their leaves as you lead them in saying, “Thank you, God.” Then say: **Let's sing our thank-you song as we pick up the leaves.** Using the CD, lead children in singing “We Thank God in Many Ways” (track 16) to the tune of “London Bridge” as you pick up the paper leaves. Place the leaves in a pile near the StoryBoard.

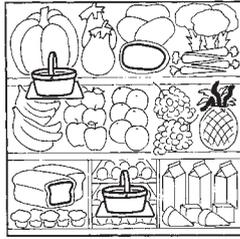


**We thank God in many ways—
Clap our hands; sing his praise.
We thank God in many ways
Because we love him.**

**We thank God in many ways—
Jump and hop; sing his praise.
We thank God in many ways.
Because we love him.**

When you've finished singing, say: **It's fun to thank God. What else can we thank God for?**

Panel 2



Open the StoryBoard to reveal Panel 2. Say: **We thank God for delicious food! God made lots of yummy foods to eat because he loves us and wants us to grow healthy and strong. Let's play our riddle game. I'll tell about a food, and you find it on the StoryBoard.** Ask the following riddles, and invite toddlers to find and touch the foods.

- **I'm orange and crunchy, and bunnies can munch me. What food am I?** (A carrot.)
- **I'm soft and white and make sandwiches right. What food am I?** (Bread.)
- **I grow in a bunch; I'm delicious to munch! What food am I?** (Grapes.)

Good for you! Now let's find other foods that God gives us. Help children point to the milk and eggs, the broccoli and bananas, the eggplant and potatoes, and the pineapple and oranges.

Every day before we eat, we can tell God "thank you" for our food. Fold your hands, and let's say a prayer. Dear God, thank you for good food to eat. Amen. Set the food baskets on the shelves. **Now let's taste some delicious foods.**

Have children wash their hands. Let them each take a cracker and apple slice from the bowl. Remind them to say "thank you" as they take their food.

Panel 3



Unfold Panel 3 of the StoryBoard. Say: **Oh, look at the boys and girls having fun at church! We can have fun, too. If I say "boy," boys stand up and then sit down. If I say "girl," girls stand up and then sit down. But if I say "Cuddles" (point to the figure of Cuddles), you say "baa."** Alternate saying "boy," "girl," and "Cuddles," and help children with correct responses.

Then say: **We hear exciting Bible stories at church.** Place the punch-out Bible in the teacher's hand and fasten the figure of Cuddles to the floor in the picture. **The teacher is telling the children a Bible story. See how quietly they're sitting? Let's touch the teacher's beard and the carpet square.** Hold the StoryBoard so children can touch the beard and the mat.

God gives us lots of things, but the best thing is his love. And ► we thank God for his love! Let's clap and say, "Thank you, God!"

Lead children in clapping and cheering. Then put the StoryBoard away.

teacher tips

Important: Put the StoryBoard away and out of reach of children.



Bible Activities

■ Guessing Game

SUPPLIES: paper lunch sacks



Remove the *fun foot*, *porcupine ball*, and the piece of *blue cellophane* from the Learning Lab. Place each item in an individual paper lunch sack.

Say: **Now we're going to play a "feeling and guessing" game. I'm going to let you take turns feeling one of the things we've used in our lessons, but you won't be able to see the item. I want you to try to guess what you're feeling.**

Choose a child to place his or her hand inside one of the bags. Hold the bag closed enough so the child can't see what's inside. Depending on the size of your class, you can let each child try to guess what's in one bag, and then move on to the next bag. Or, you can let several children use one bag and the next group of children another bag, and so on. Either way, be sure each child gets at least one turn to guess.

After the game, praise children for their participation whether or not they guessed correctly.

Say: **I let you feel the item in the bag, but I didn't let you see it.**

Ask: • **How could you guess what was in the bag?** (Because of how it felt; I just knew; it was prickly.)

Say: **You guessed what was in the bag because you could feel if it was thin like the *fun foot*, or squishy like the *porcupine ball*, or crinkly like the *blue cellophane* paper. You could tell by the way it felt, right?**

God gives us lots of things that we can see or feel, like food, clothes, friends, and family. But the greatest thing that God gives us is his love. We can't actually see or touch God's love, but we know it's there.

Ask: • **How do you know God loves you?** (Because he takes care of me; the Bible says so; he gives me good things; he gave me a nice family.)

• **How can you thank God for his love?** (By saying "thank you"; by praying to him; by going to Sunday school.)

Say: **We can't touch God's love, but we know it's there. We know God loves us when we feel the warm sunshine that he makes or when someone in our family gives us a hug. We know God loves us when we eat good food or have warm clothes to wear. God loves us so much!**

That's why it's good when ► ***we thank God*** for his love. We can thank God by praying to him. We can come to church, sing to God, and give money to our church to thank God for his love. And we can be kind to others to say thank you to God.

Let's sing a song about thanking God!



◀ BIBLE POINT

■ We Thank God in Many Ways

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD, lead the children in singing “We Thank God in Many Ways” (track 16) to the tune of “London Bridge.” For extra fun, form a circle and do the motions in parentheses.



We thank God in many ways (walk around in a circle)—

Clap our hands; sing his praise. (Clap three times; then cup your hands around your mouth.)

We thank God in many ways (walk around in a circle)

Because we love him. (Cover your heart with your hands.)

We thank God in many ways (walk around in a circle)—

Jump and hop; sing his praise. (Hop three times; then cup your hands around your mouth.)

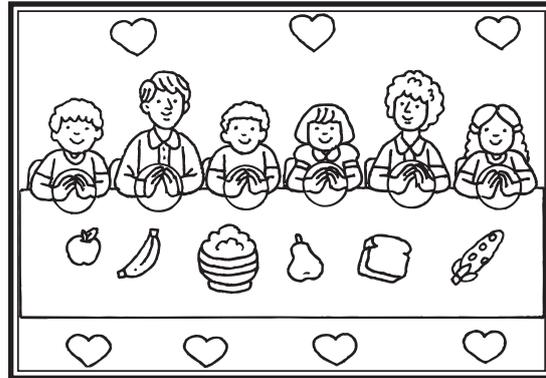
We thank God in many ways (walk around in a circle)

Because we love him. (Cover your heart with your hands.)

BIBLE POINT ▶ Say: There are lots of things ▶ ***we thank God*** for. We can thank God for his love. Let’s add a little “love” to our bulletin board.

■ Interactive Bible Bulletin Board

SUPPLIES: heart patterns (p. 189), scissors, tape, pink or red construction paper



Before class, photocopy the heart patterns onto pink or red paper. Cut out a paper heart for each child and one for Cuddles the Lamb. You may wish to use the hearts from Option 2, but make sure there is a paper heart for each child. Tape a paper heart to Cuddles’ nose.



Bring out Cuddles the Lamb with a paper heart on his nose.

Cuddles: Hi, boys and girls! How are you?

Teacher: Hello, Cuddles! Say, what's on your nose?

Cuddles: *(Turning his head all around, trying to look at his nose)* What? What? I can't see what's on my nose!

Teacher: Children, what does Cuddles have on his nose? *(Pause for responses.)*

Cuddles: Oh! *That's* where my heart is! I made a paper heart to remind me to thank God for his love. But I thought I'd lost it. I'll give everyone a cuddle for helping me find it! *(Have Cuddles warmly hug each child.)*

Teacher: We've been learning that ► we thank God for his love, Cuddles. We're going to put paper hearts on the bulletin board to show how much we love God. Would you like to help?

Cuddles: Sure! It's fun to help.

Have Cuddles hand each child a paper heart. Help children tape the hearts on the bulletin board wherever they choose. As each child places a heart, lead him or her in saying the Bible Point. Then invite children to find and point to the different pictures already on the bulletin board.

Teacher: Let's celebrate God's love with a special song.

Set Cuddles out of sight.

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■ Sing It Out

SUPPLIES: CD player



track 16

Using the CD, lead the children in singing "We Thank God in Many Ways" (track 16) to the tune of "London Bridge." For extra fun, do the motions in parentheses.



SING

We thank God in many ways *(walk around in a circle)*—
Clap our hands; sing his praise. *(Clap three times; then cup your hands around your mouth.)*

We thank God in many ways *(walk around in a circle)*
Because we love him. *(Cover your heart with your hands.)*

We thank God in many ways *(walk around in a circle)*—
Jump and hop; sing his praise. *(Hop three times; then cup your hands around your mouth.)*

We thank God in many ways *(walk around in a circle)*
Because we love him. *(Cover your heart with your hands.)*



BIBLE POINT

Say: **I'm so glad that God loves us. God gives us so many things to be thankful for. Let's make a "thankful necklace" to remind us that we thank God for all that he gives us.**

Bible Craft

SUPPLIES: "Thankful" patterns (p. 189), elastic thread, scissors, crayons, tape



Before class, photocopy the small church, food, clothing, and people patterns. Cut out one of each pattern for every child. You'll also need to cut a 20-inch length of elastic thread for each child. Tie the thread into loops. Cut the cellophane from the Learning Lab box into a 2-inch square for each child.

Set out tape, crayons, the loops of thread, the cellophane squares, and the paper leaves from the Learning Lab box. Hand each child one set of cutouts. Invite children to scribble-color their cutouts.

When children have finished, help each child tape his or her pictures to their paper leaves. Then help children tape the leaves and cellophane squares to loops of thread to make "thankful necklaces." Encourage toddlers to identify the pictures on their necklaces.



BIBLE VERSE



Say: **The Bible says in Psalm 107:1 that we thank God for many things, such as church, food, clothing, and people. And especially we thank God for Jesus, our forever friend. Because of Jesus, someday we can live in heaven. What a wonderful gift God gave us! He loves us very much.**

Bible Game

SUPPLIES: paper hearts from Option 2

Place the paper hearts used for Option 2 in a pile in the center of the floor. If you chose not to do Option 2, cut out 10 paper hearts or use the hearts from the Interactive Bible Bulletin Board.

Say: **We need some trees to play this game. If I tap your head, you can be a pretend tree. Tap half of the children gently on their heads and have them stand around the room. The rest of you can be pretend leaves. When I say, "Leaves on the trees," run to gather a paper heart, and then go stand beside a "tree." When I say, "Leaves off the trees," run to put your paper heart back in the "leaf pile."** Demonstrate how to play until children are familiar with the game. After you've called "leaves on" and "leaves off" a few times, let children switch roles.

When you've finished playing, say: **You were such good leaves and trees! Isn't it great that we thank God for beautiful trees? Now let's be tall trees and walk to the snack table.**



BIBLE POINT

Closing

■ *Hearts and Hugs*

SUPPLIES: large pretzel twists, napkins, apple juice, paper cups

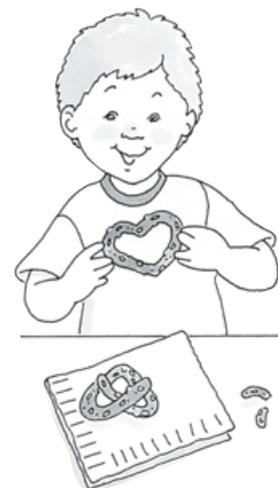
When children have washed their hands and gathered at the snack table, ask:

- **Who do we thank for everything we have?** (God.)
- **Who do we thank for his great love?** (God; Jesus.)

Say: **It's important to thank God for all that we have. ► *We thank God because we love him. Let's say a prayer and thank God and tell him how much we love him. Fold your hands.*** Pray: **Dear God, we thank you for everything you give us, and we love you so much! In Jesus' name, amen.**

Say: **Now let's have some fun with hearts and hugs!** Hand each child a paper cup with apple juice and a napkin with three large pretzel twists on it. Show children how to gently nibble or pick the center from one of the pretzels to make a heart shape. Then ask toddlers to look at another pretzel and notice how it's wrapped around itself like a hug. Encourage children to give themselves a "pretzel hug." Then invite children to munch their snacks and gobble them up.

Remind children to throw their napkins and paper cups in the wastebasket. Be sure children wear their "thankful necklaces" home.





For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Action Rhyme**

Lead children in the following action rhyme.

When I stretch up high (*stand on tiptoe and stretch arms upward*),

I thank God.

When I wave bye-bye (*make waving motions*),

I thank God.

When I quietly pray (*close eyes and fold hands*),

I thank God.

When I jump and play (*hop up and down*),

I thank God.

There are many ways (*hold arms out at sides*)

That I thank God.

■ **We Thank You, God**

Without using the CD, lead the children in singing “We Thank God” (adapted from Psalm 107:1) to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me.”



SING

Thank you, God, for food and friends (*pat a friend's shoulder*)

And your love that never ends. (*Cover your heart with your hands.*)

Thank you for the clothes we wear (*point at your clothes*)

And for church where we can share. (*Make a rooftop over your head.*)

We thank God. (*Fold your hands.*)

We thank God. (*Fold your hands.*)

We thank God (*fold your hands*),

And we love him, too. (*Nod your head.*)

Patterns

Cut loosely around each pattern instead of cutting exactly on the outlines.

