

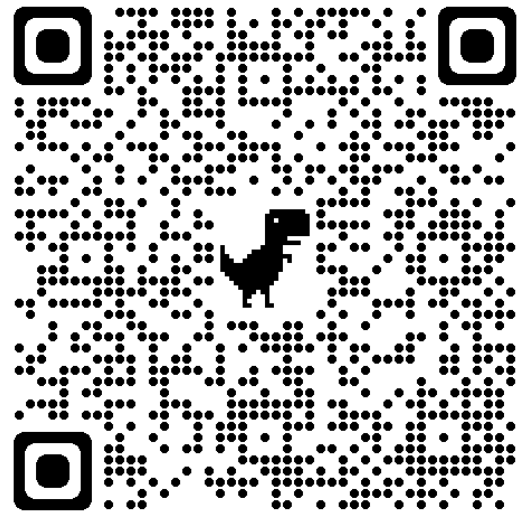


"Harvesting Gratitude: 4-Week Children's Ministry Curriculum" is about appreciating God's blessings. This study will help children to recognize, understand, and express gratitude for the blessings that God has given them in their everyday lives. It will guide them on a journey of discovery and appreciation for all the good things in their lives.

Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Big Idea: Jesus loves us so much, He gives us lots of good things to be thankful for every day! I can trust in His goodness and enjoy these blessings."

You are viewing the first week's lesson as a free sample. Visit this link or scan the QR code to buy the complete 4-week curriculum.



<https://sundayschool.store/products/harvesting-gratitude-4-week-thanksgiving-curriculum>



**Give thanks in all circumstances; for this
is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**

1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV





**In every thing give thanks: for this is
the will of God in Christ Jesus
concerning you.**

1 Thessalonians 5:18 KJV





**Give thanks in all circumstances; for
this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

1 Thessalonians 5:18 NIV





Week 1 – Recognizing God's Blessings

Main Idea: The first step in gratitude is recognizing all the blessings that God gives us. Children will learn to identify these blessings in their everyday lives.

Bible Story: 1 Kings 17:7-16 – Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath. In this story, God's blessing is seen as a never-ending supply of flour and oil, even during a severe drought. This teaches children about recognizing God's blessings, even in the most challenging circumstances.

Introduction & Group Game: Blessings Scavenger Hunt

Teacher Script: "Good morning, everyone! I am so excited to see each one of you here today. It's a beautiful day, and I am thankful we can all be together to learn and grow in God's love.

We're starting an amazing new journey together called "Harvesting Gratitude: Appreciating God's Blessings." Can anyone guess what we might be learning about from that title? Yes, that's right - gratitude! But we're not just talking about saying 'thank you' - though that's important too! We will explore how to see and appreciate all the wonderful blessings God showers us with daily.

Just like a farmer plants seeds and watches them grow into a bountiful harvest, we too can 'plant seeds' of gratitude in our hearts. And when we water these seeds with recognition and appreciation, they'll grow into a beautiful 'harvest' of joy and contentment.

Today, we're starting with our first lesson - Recognizing God's Blessings. We'll learn how to see and appreciate the blessings that God gives us each day. So, are you ready to embark on this journey of gratitude? Great! Let's start with a fun group game!

Group Game: "Blessings Scavenger Hunt"

Materials: Paper, pen/pencil for each child.

Instructions:

1. Hand out a piece of paper and pen/pencil to each child.
2. Tell them that they are going to go on a "Blessings Scavenger Hunt."
3. Explain that they have five minutes to list as many blessings as possible.
These blessings can be anything - their family, friends, pets, favorite food, or even the beautiful day outside!
4. After the time is up, have each child share a few things they wrote down. You can keep track of shared blessings on a whiteboard or a large piece of paper.
5. After everyone has shared, point out the variety and number of blessings that were listed. Highlight how these are all God-given gifts and that part of gratitude is recognizing these blessings.

Remember, this game is not about who can list the most blessings but about recognizing that God blesses us in many different ways. It's a perfect way to introduce our theme and get us ready to dive into our first Bible story. Let's get started!

Object Lesson: The Gratitude Jar

Materials: A clear jar, small stones or marbles, a permanent marker

Teacher Script: Can anyone tell me what this is? (Hold up the jar.) That's right, it's a jar. Right now, it's an empty jar, isn't it? But what if I told you that this jar could help us understand something very important about recognizing God's blessings? Would you be curious to find out how? Good! Because that's exactly what we're going to do.

Let's imagine that every stone or marble I put in this jar represents a blessing from God. (Hold up a stone or marble). Now, can anyone give me an example of a blessing? (Let the children respond. Write the blessing on the stone with a permanent marker and place it in the jar.)

See, when we start to name and recognize our blessings, our jar starts to fill up. (Continue to add stones or marbles to the jar as more blessings are named.) Just like this jar, our lives are full of blessings from God, but sometimes we might not see them if we're not looking for them.

And what happens if I keep adding blessings to this jar? (Continue to fill the jar as you talk.) That's right, it gets fuller and fuller. And just like this jar, the more we recognize the blessings in our lives, the more our hearts fill with gratitude.

But here's the thing: sometimes, life can be tough, and it might feel like our jar is empty. (Empty the jar.) During those times, it's especially important to remember

our blessings, because even in tough times, God is still blessing us. We might have to look a little harder, but the blessings are still there.

So, our challenge is to keep our eyes open and see the many ways God blesses us daily. And when we recognize those blessings, we should say a prayer of thanks to God, because all good things come from Him.

Now, let's dig into our Bible story today, where we'll see an example of someone recognizing God's blessings in a very tough time. Can anyone guess who it might be? (Lead into the Bible story of Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath.)

Bible Story:

Elijah and the Widow

Teacher Script: Today, we're going to dive into a special story from the Bible. This story is about a man named Elijah and a widow from a place called Zarephath. It's a story of faith, hope, and recognizing God's blessings, even in hard times.

READ: 1 Kings 17:7-9

Can anyone remember who Elijah was? (Allow for answers.) That's right! Elijah was a prophet—a messenger from God. Now, at this time, there was a severe drought. Does anyone know what a drought is? (Allow for answers.) Yes, a drought is when there's very little rain for a long time, and it can be tough because without rain, plants can't grow, and people and animals have trouble finding enough water to drink.

So, God told Elijah to go to Zarephath, where he would meet a widow who would provide for him. But when Elijah arrived, he found that the widow was also suffering from the drought.

READ: 1 Kings 17:10-12

What did the widow say when Elijah asked her for some water and a piece of bread? (Allow for answers.) That's right. She didn't have enough. She only had a handful of flour and a little oil. She planned to use it to make a final meal for herself and her son. They were in a really tough situation, weren't they?

But Elijah had faith in God. He knew that God wouldn't send him to someone without planning to provide for them.

READ: 1 Kings 17:13-16

Elijah told the widow not to be afraid and to make him a small loaf of bread. He promised her that God said the jar of flour and jug of oil would not run out until it rained again. Can you imagine how much faith it took for the widow to trust in God's promise through Elijah? (Allow for answers.) Yes, it must have been incredibly difficult, but she did as Elijah asked.

And what happened? (Allow for answers.) Yes, just as God promised, the flour and oil did not run out. Even in the middle of a drought, when it seemed like all hope was lost, God provided for Elijah, the widow, and her son.

So, what do you think this story teaches us about recognizing God's blessings? (Facilitate a discussion based on their responses.)

Exactly! Even in the toughest times, God's blessings are there. Sometimes, like in the widow's case, it may seem impossible. But God can provide in ways we can't even imagine. The key is to recognize these blessings and have gratitude in our hearts.

Isn't it incredible how God works? This week, let's remember the story of Elijah and the widow and look for the blessings in our lives, just like they did. Let's thank God for His provision and care for us, even when times are tough.

Memory Verse Activity: Verse Puzzle

Materials: Index cards, marker, Bible

Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Teacher Script: Today, we have a very special verse to remember. It's from the book of 1 Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 18. This verse reminds us to give thanks in all circumstances.

Let's make learning this verse a bit more fun with a game! I'm going to write each word of the verse on an index card. (Write each word on a separate index card. Don't show the children yet.)

Now, I'm going to mix up these cards and give one to each of you. (Hand out the cards.) Your task is to put the words in the right order to create the memory verse.

You'll need to work together as a team, discussing and deciding where each word goes. Once you think you have the verse in the correct order, we'll check it together using our Bibles. Ready? Go!

(After the kids have ordered the cards, read the Bible verse aloud to check their work. If they got it right, congratulate them. If not, help them figure out the correct order.) Well done, everyone! This week, let's try to remember this verse and think about how it relates to our story about Elijah and the widow. Remember to give thanks in all circumstances, just as our verse says, whenever you find yourself in a challenging situation.

Teaching Skit: Blessings in Disguise

Characters: Alex, Taylor, Mom

Scene: Alex and Taylor are sitting at home after a day of school. Mom is cooking dinner in the background.

Alex: (Looking sad) I had such a bad day at school today. I forgot my homework and didn't do well on the spelling test.

Taylor: (Sympathetic) That sounds tough.

Mom: (Overhears and approaches) What's going on, you two?

Alex: (Sighs) I'm just having a really hard day, Mom.

Mom: I'm sorry to hear that, Alex. Do you remember the Bible story we learned about Elijah and the widow last Sunday?

Taylor: Yeah, they were having a tough time because of a drought, but God provided for them.

Mom: Exactly, Taylor. Sometimes, it's hard for us to see the blessings when we're having a tough day. But just like in the story of Elijah and the widow, God is always providing for us.

Alex: But how, Mom? I don't see any blessings today.

Mom: Well, let's try to think about it. You have a home, a loving family, food to eat for dinner, and a chance to try again at school tomorrow. Those are all blessings.

Taylor: And even though you had a bad day, it doesn't mean you're bad at school. Maybe this tough day will help you remember to prepare better for the next test. That could be a blessing in disguise.

Alex: (Nods) I guess you're right. Even on a tough day, I have a lot to be thankful for. And I will try harder next time.

Mom: That's the spirit! Remember, God is always with us and always gives us blessings, even if we have to look a bit harder to see them sometimes.

End of Skit

Discussion Questions & Prayer

Leader Script: Hello everyone! I'm so proud of how well you all paid attention during our Bible story today. You did an amazing job! I hope you enjoyed learning about Elijah and the widow of Zarephath and how they recognized God's blessings even in tough times.

Now, let's talk more about what we learned today. I have some questions for you, and remember, there are no wrong answers. We're here to share and learn together.

1. Can anyone share one thing you learned from the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath?
2. Can you think of a time when you were like the widow, and you found a blessing in a tough situation?
3. How do you think the widow felt when she realized that the flour and oil were not running out?
4. How can we remember to recognize and thank God for His blessings every day?
5. Great discussion, everyone! Now, let's take a moment to share any prayer requests. Is there something you're worried about, or something you're thankful for that you'd like us to pray about?

(Allow the children to share their prayer requests.)

Thank you for sharing. Let's bring these requests to God in prayer now.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the lessons we learned today from the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath. Please help us to always recognize your blessings, even in tough times, and to remember to thank you for them. We lift up the concerns we've shared and ask for your comfort, guidance, and protection. We are so grateful for your love and care for us. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.

Keep looking for God's blessings this week, everyone! I can't wait to hear about what you discover next time we meet.

Craft Activity: Chain of Thanksgiving

Supplies Needed:

- Scissors
- Stapler
- Crayons or markers
- Construction paper

Craft Directions:

1. Cut colorful construction paper into strips, or help children cut the paper.
2. One day at a time, identify an item that families feel thankful to have and write on the paper.
3. Staple the paper strips together, forming a chain that lengthens each day.
4. Hang your chain of thanks and appreciate the blessings of God!



Word Search

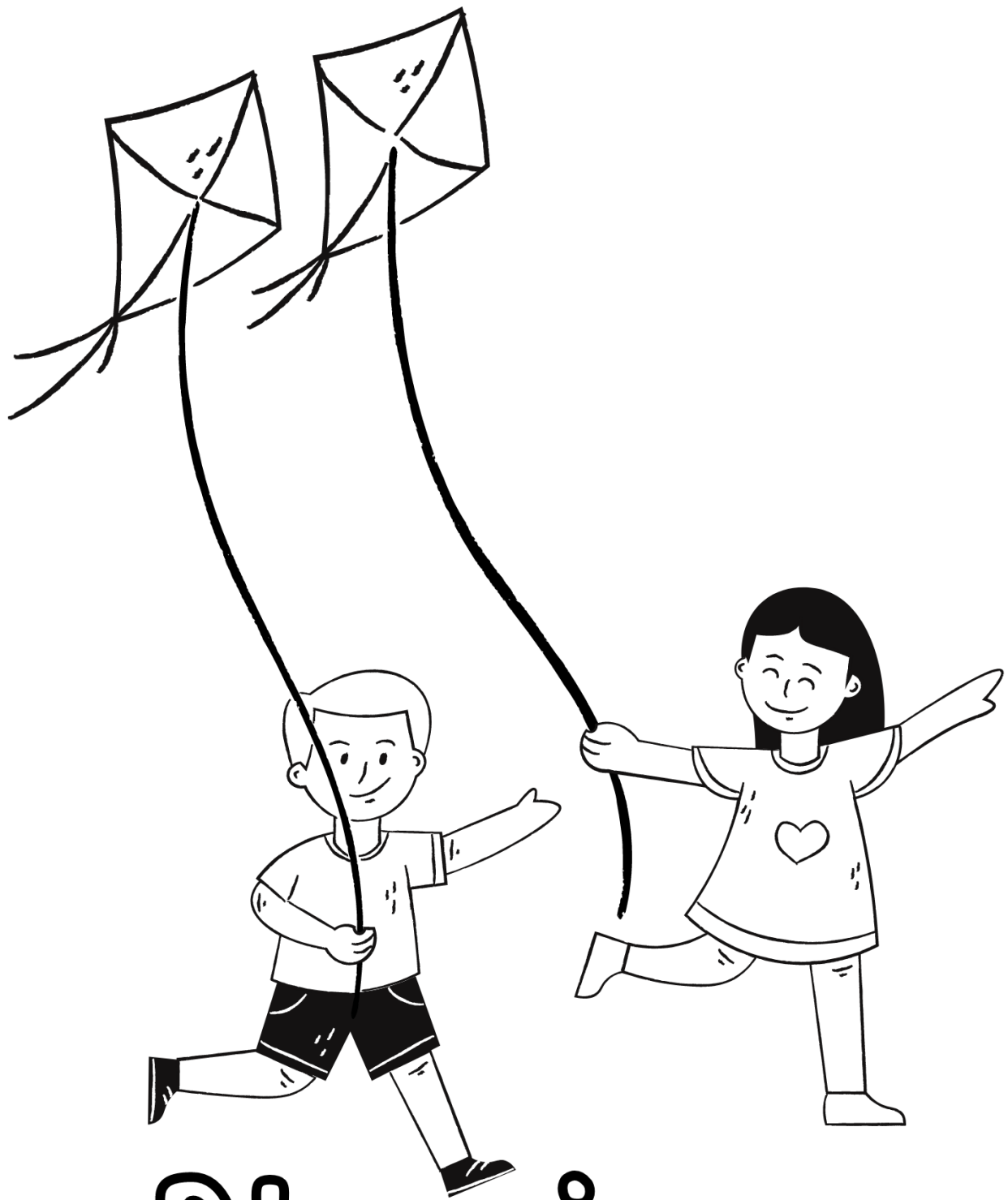
BLESSINGS - DROUGHT - ELIJAH - FAITH - FLOUR - GRATITUDE

HARVEST - MIRACLE - OIL - THANKS - WIDOW - ZAREPHATH

Y	Q	M	I	R	A	C	L	E	H	Q
D	R	O	U	G	H	T	L	O	Y	G
F	L	O	U	R	F	O	L	U	N	E
B	D	I	L	A	W	I	D	O	W	Z
P	W	C	N	T	E	L	I	J	A	H
Z	Z	F	A	I	T	H	V	S	W	A
V	G	N	S	T	H	A	N	K	S	R
T	S	Y	I	U	R	F	Q	U	Y	V
O	Z	I	K	D	G	Q	C	E	J	E
L	Z	B	L	E	S	S	I	N	G	S
I	Z	A	R	E	P	H	A	T	H	T

Word Search Answers

Y Q M I R A C L E H Q
D R O U G H T L O Y G
F L O U R F O L U N E
B D I L A W I D O W Z
P W C N T E L I J A H
Z Z F A I T H V S W A
V G N S T H A N K S R
T S Y I U R F Q U Y V
O Z I K D G Q C E J E
L Z B L E S S I N G S
I Z A R E P H A T H T



Blessings

Note for Parents: Recognizing God's Blessings

Today's lesson began our new series, "Harvesting Gratitude: Appreciating God's Blessings." We focused on recognizing God's blessings, using the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath as our guide. Your child learned about God's providence in tough times.

The memory verse is from 1 Thessalonians 5:18, encouraging us to "Give thanks in all circumstances." We encourage your child to keep this verse in mind throughout the week.

Consider discussing the day's blessings at home and start a simple gratitude journal. This will help instill a daily practice of recognizing and appreciating God's blessings. Also, revisit the story of Elijah and the widow, discussing how God provides for your family.

We appreciate your support and look forward to our next lesson!