

Thank You x Infinity

Bible Story: Thank You x Infinity (Give thanks all the time) • 1 *Thessalonians* 5:18

Bottom Line: You always have something to be grateful for.

Memory Verse: “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 *Thessalonians* 5:18, NIV

Life App: Gratitude—letting others know you see how they’ve helped you.

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Early Arriver Activity (8:45) (10:30) (5:45)

What You Need: An offering container

What You Do:

Invite the kids to place their offerings into the container, and then ask the following questions: What time do you usually wake up? Eat breakfast? Go to school? Eat lunch? Watch your favorite TV show? Eat supper? Go to bed? (*Note: Some kids may not yet have a good concept of time. Be sure to accept whatever time the kids offer for each activity, even if it doesn’t make sense. It’s the participation—not the accuracy—that counts.*)

Plug In (9:00) (10:45) (6:00)

Time After Time

What You Need: White board, tear sheet, or piece of art paper; appropriate markers

What You Do:

Briefly introduce the concept of time by asking questions such as:

- Which is longer: a second or a minute? A minute or an hour? An hour or a day? A day or a year?
- Would it take 30 minutes to eat supper or 30 years? Would it take one second to say your name or one hour? Would it take a couple of hours to watch a movie or a couple of years?

Next, lead the kids in a wacky, Mad-Libs® style fill-in-the-blanks game. Guide the kids to suggest six numbers. The numbers can be real or imaginary (umpteen, a gazillion). Print the numbers on the white board or paper, and then use the numbers to fill in the blanks as you read the story below.

Minute Melinda was mixed up with time.
It took her _____ months to tie her shoe;
But only _____ minutes to tour the zoo.
To eat a lollipop took more than _____ years,
And she needed _____ hours to clean out her ears!
It took her _____ months to pet a mouse,
But only _____ seconds to build a house!
Minute Melinda was mixed up with time!

Read the completed story to the kids, hamming up the absurdity. If time allows, the kids can pantomime the story on a second reading.

What You Say:

[Transition] “Let’s go to Large Group where we’ll hear about something we should ALWAYS take time to do.” Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Prayer Time

After large group, gather children in their small groups. Lead them in prayer focusing on “The Bottom Line.”

Catch On #1

Time Out! (*memory verse activity / great for active learners / possible large-group activity*)

What You Need: Bibles

What You Do:

Help kids use the navigation tips to look up the Bible verse. Then read the verse aloud as the kids point to the words.

Finding verses with kindergartners: Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word 1 *Thessalonians* at the top of the page as you say “1 *Thessalonians*” aloud. Then guide children to find the big number 5 on the page. Explain that

this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 5 for the little 18; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.

Finding verses with 1st graders: Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find 1 Thessalonians in the list under “New Testament.” You can help by telling them that 1 Thessalonians starts with the number 1 followed by the letters T-H. When the kids find 1 Thessalonians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find 1 Thessalonians. Help the kids find the page. When they find 1 Thessalonians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 5. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 18 in chapter 5.

Unpack the verse, emphasizing the fact that God wants us to thank Him no matter what happens—whether it’s something that seems good or something that seems not-so-good.

To reinforce the concept, play a variation of freeze tag. Choose one child to be “It.” Guide the other kids to spread out in your playing area. At your signal, It chases the other players. When It tags a player, that child must say, “Thank you,” stand with her legs spread apart, and freeze. She is unfrozen only when another player crawls between her feet and she yells, “Thank you!” Add variety to the game by randomly calling out different ways for the kids to move: tiptoe, baby step, jump, hop on one foot, slow motion, etc. (*HINT: Change “It” throughout the game so that each child has an opportunity to tag others. If you have a large group, choose two or three children to be It.*)

When the game ends, guide kids to **[Apply] brainstorm times when it is easy for them to be thankful (I get the present I want for my birthday; my mom makes my favorite thing to eat; I get what I want for Christmas; I have good friends) as well as times when it may be difficult to be thankful (when other kids aren’t nice to me; when I don’t like what we’re having for dinner; when my friend plays with another friend instead of me; when my mom and dad are arguing; when I get in trouble instead of my brother or sister; etc.).**

What You Say:

[Apply] “God wants us to be thankful no matter what happens, whether it’s something that seems good or something that seems not-so-good. In our game, it was fun to say thank you for the not-so-good thing of being tagged, but every day we can say thank you to God for the good AND not-so-good things, too.

“When it’s hard to be thankful, we can always thank God because Jesus loves us, He will always be with us, and we can **[Recycle] trust God no matter what.** So remember: ‘Gives thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank him because you believe in Christ Jesus.’ (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV) It’s true: **[Impress] you always have something to be thankful for.”**

Catch On #2

Thank You (application activity)

What You Need: “T-H-A-N-K” (Activity Pages)

What You Do:

Give each child a “T-H-A-N-K” game board and “Thank you, God” cards. Read a scenario below. Guide the kids to search their game boards for the picture you describe. When they find it, lead them to cover the picture with a “Thank You, God” speech bubble. The game ends when every child has his/her game board covered.

- Your best friend is moving to another city. With God’s help, you choose to be thankful that you can still talk to her on the phone and visit her every once in a while.
- Your parents agree to let you have a puppy!
- You break your arm and miss playing in the big game. With God’s help, you choose to be thankful that you can still go to the game and cheer your friends on.
- Your mom is really sick and can’t leave the house. With God’s help, you’re thankful for all the people who help your family by sending cards, making meals, and praying with you and your dad.
- Your dad makes your favorite meal for supper.
- Your parents say that your friend can spend the night.
- You have a hard time learning addition as quickly as your friends. With God’s help, you’re thankful that you’re learning a little bit more each week.

- All your friends are able to come to your birthday party!
- Kids at the playground make fun of you. With God's help, you thank God that you can pray for them. You ask God to help you show them His love.

What You Say:

"In 1 Thessalonians, Paul said, 'Give thanks no matter what happens.' Sometimes it's easy to give thanks, and sometimes it's hard. Look at the scenarios on your game boards. In which scenario would it be easy for you to be grateful? *(Pause.)* In which scenario would it be hard for you to be grateful? *(Pause.)* ***[Make It Personal]*** ***(Tell a child appropriate time when you chose to be thankful even though it was difficult to do so.)***

[Apply] "When it IS hard to be thankful, take TIME OUT to think about all the things you can be grateful for. You can be grateful for your family, your friends, and especially the fact that God loves you no matter what! So remember: ***[Impress]*** you always have something to be grateful for."

Return of the Leper

Bible Story: Return of the Leper (Jesus heals 10 lepers) • *Luke 17:11-19*

Bottom Line: Take time to say thank you.

Memory Verse: “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV

Life App: Gratitude—letting others know you see how they’ve helped you.

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Early Arriver Activity (8:45) (10:30) (5:45)

What You Need: Offering container

What You Do:

Invite the kids to place their offerings into the container and then ask the following questions: What is the worst sickness you have ever had? What did it feel like to be sick? Who helped you when you were sick?

Plug In (9:00) (10:45) (6:00)

Human Shell Game

What You Need: Large Solo® or other plastic cups, ping-pong ball

What You Do:

Choose one child to be “It.” Guide It to close his or her eyes while the other kids wear the cups like hats. Give one child a ping-pong ball to hide under his/her cup. It will have two or three tries to guess where the ping-pong ball is hidden. The child with the ping-pong ball will be the new It. Play until each child has a turn to hide the ball and be It.

What You Say:

“You did a good job finding the one person who had the ball. Was it hard or easy to find the person who was different? **[Transition]** Let’s go to Large Group where we’ll hear about one person who stood out from the group.” Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Prayer Time

After large group, gather children in their small groups. Lead them in prayer focusing on “The Bottom Line.”

Catch On #1

One Came Back (review the Bible story / great for active learners)

What You Need: “10 Leaping Lepers” Activity Pages, tape, Bible marked at Luke 17

What You Do:

Place or post the “10 Leaping Lepers” pictures sequentially around your environment. As you do, ask prompting questions to review the Bible story:

- What was a leper? (*Someone who had a skin disease*)
- Where did lepers have to live? (*Outside of town; away from their families; with other lepers*)
- How many lepers asked Jesus to heal them? (*10*)
- Of the 10 lepers, how many came back to say thank you to Jesus? (*one*)

Quickly “review” the numbers on the pictures and then invite a volunteer to open the Bible to Luke 17. Read the story below, emphasizing each number as you read. Whenever you say a number, pause for the kids to run to the corresponding picture.

One day, Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. He traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he came to a village, **one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten** men met Him. All the men—from **one** to **ten**—had leprosy. The men called out in a loud voice, “Jesus! Master! Have pity on us!” (*Luke 17:13, NIV*)

Jesus saw the **one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten** lepers and said, “Go. Show yourselves to the priests.” (*v. 14*) The lepers must have been surprised by Jesus’ words! Lepers weren’t supposed to go near anyone, especially priests! But the **one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten** lepers obeyed Jesus and went. And while the **one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten** men were on the way, they were healed! Their sores were gone!

Nine lepers kept going, but **one** of the **ten** came back, praising God in a loud voice. The **one** man threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. Jesus said, "Weren't all **ten** lepers healed? Where are the other **nine**? Didn't anyone else return and give praise to God ...?" (vv. 17-18) Then Jesus said, "Get up and go on. Your faith has healed you." (v. 19)

If time allows, repeat the story, guiding the kids to move in different ways: hopping on one foot, tiptoeing, crab walking, etc.

(Note: If you have multiple Small Groups in the same environment, you can line these up on the floor next to your group rather than hanging them on the wall.)

What You Say:

"One man understood that it was important to take TIME OUT to let Jesus know he had seen how Jesus helped him. What did Jesus say to the one leper who came back? How do you think Jesus felt that nine men didn't take TIME OUT to say thank you? *(Pause.)* How do you think he felt that one man DID take TIME OUT to thank Him? *(Pause.)*

"Just like the one leper, **[Apply]** we can take time out to thank Jesus for the things he does for us, too. **What is something you can thank Jesus for?** *(for loving me, for providing for me, for giving me a family, for being my Savior, etc.)* **[Make it Personal]** *(Share an age-appropriate story about a time Jesus did something for you and you were thankful.)* So remember to **[Impress]** take time to say thank you to Jesus. Your gratitude will make Jesus *(name the emotions the kids suggested earlier).*"

Catch On #2

There and Back (memory verse activity / great for active learners)

What You Need: T-ball, whiffle ball, or baseball bat; "Bible Verse Cards" Activity Page; Bible marked at 1 Thessalonians 5

What You Do:

Guide the kids to line up at one end of your environment. Lay a bat on the floor opposite the kids at the other end. Just beyond the bat, set the "Bible Verse Cards" in random order.

Lead the kids in a "Dizzy Izzy" relay game. To play, the first child runs to the bat, picks it up, and sets the round end on the floor. She then puts her forehead on the end of the handle and runs around the bat ten times, all the while keeping the bat touching the floor and her forehead touching the bat. She then moves—dizzily!—to the Bible verse phrases, picks one up, runs back to her team and tags the next child in line. Be sure to provide as much coaching (and dizziness assistance!) as necessary during the game.

When the kids retrieve all the cards, guide them to work together to put the verse in order. Guide the kids to point to the words as you say the verse aloud together.

What You Say:

"First Thessalonians 5:18 says that God wants us to thank Him because we believe in Jesus. Thanking God is one way to show Him that we love Him. When Jesus healed the 10 lepers, how many showed Jesus they loved Him by coming back to thank Him? *(One)* Yes, only ONE came back. I don't know about you, but I want to be like the one leper who took TIME OUT to say thank you to Jesus. **[Apply]** **It's important to take time to thank Jesus, because thanking Him shows God and others that we love Him and that we see what He does for us.** So remember: **[Impress]** **Take time to say thank You.**"

Sour Grapes

Bible Story: Sour Grapes (Parable of the Vineyard Workers) • *Matthew 20:1-15*

Bottom Line: Take time to adjust your attitude.

Memory Verse: “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV

Life App: Gratitude—letting others know you see how they’ve helped you.

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Early Arriver Activity (8:45) (10:30) (5:45)

What You Need: An offering container

What You Do:

Invite the kids to place their offerings in the container and then ask the following questions: What are some chores you do at home? What are some chores other people in your family do? Do you get a reward for doing your chores?

Plug In (9:00) (10:45) (6:00)

Workers

What You Need: A simple reward such as stickers or a candy that is safe for every child

What You Do:

Play a variation of “Duck, Duck, Goose.” Guide the kids to sit in a circle. Walk around the outside of the circle and tap the head of each child. With each tap, say either, “not yet,” or, “go!” If you say, “not yet,” the child remains seated. If you say, “go!” the child will pop up and begin doing an active motion of your choice—it might be jumping jacks, hopping on one foot, repeatedly alternating between hands on hips and hands on toes, or any other activity that will get their heart pumping! Continue around the circle, randomly saying, “go!” as you tap kids on the head. (*Note: You can choose for each child to do the same motion or you can assign each child a different motion.*)

In classic “Duck, Duck, Goose” fashion, keep suspense high by varying the speed you move around the circle and tap kids on the head. The catch to the game is that once a child pops up, he continues to do the motion until the game ends. Continue the game until every child is up and moving (and possibly panting)!

What You Say:

“Are you tired? (*Pause.*) Who do you think is the most tired? (*Pause.*) I’m going to give each of you a reward for all of your hard work. (*Give each child the chosen reward, beginning with the last child up and moving, and ending with the first.*) Who do you think should have received the first reward? (*Pause.*) Why? (*Pause.*)

Interesting. **[Transition] Well, in our Bible story today we’ll hear about some workers who thought that their reward wasn’t fair. Let’s go to Large Group to find out more.**” Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Prayer Time

After large group, gather children in their small groups. Lead them in prayer focusing on “The Bottom Line.”

Catch On #1

Rock Around the Clock (review the Bible story / great for active learners)

What You Need: “Around the Clock” (Activity Page), Bible marked at Matthew 20

What You Do:

Use the “Around the Clock” Activity Pages to create a giant clock on the floor. Guide one of the kids to stand at 6:00 and invite a child to open the Bible to Matthew 20. Narrate the Bible story below in your own words. As you name a time of day, have a different kid move to the appropriate hour on the clock until the end of the story.

(*Note: If you have a small number of kids, you can have the entire group of kids move to each hour listed in the story.*)

“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who owned a large vineyard. One day he set out early in the morning—about **6:00**—to hire workers for his fields. He agreed to give the workers the usual pay for a day’s work. Then he sent them into his vineyard.

“At about **9:00**, the man went out again. When he saw more people who needed work, he said, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard. I will pay you what is right.’ So they went.

“The owner went out again at **12:00** and **3:00** and did the same thing. Finally, he went out at **5:00** and found still more workers standing around. ‘Why have you been standing here all day doing nothing?’ he asked. ‘Because no one has hired us,’ they replied. The man said to them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard.’

“When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to the person who was in charge of the workers, ‘Call the workers and give them their money. Start with the last ones I hired. Then go to the first ones.’

“The workers who were hired at **5:00** came, and each received a full day’s pay! So when the workers who were hired at **6:00** in the morning came, they expected to be paid more. But instead, they were also given a day’s pay. When they received their money, they started to complain. ‘The people who were hired last only worked one hour. You paid them the same as us! We did most of the work, and we were in the hot sun ALL DAY LONG!’

“The owner answered one of them, ‘Friend, I’m being fair to you. Didn’t you agree to work for the usual day’s pay? I want to give the ones I hired last the same amount of money that I gave you. Do you feel cheated because I gave so generously to the others?’” (*Matthew 20: 1-15, paraphrased*)

What You Say:

“In Jesus’ story, the workers learned that what THEY thought was fair or unfair wasn’t important. What WAS important was choosing to be grateful instead of choosing to be ungrateful and miserable. The same is true for us. **[Apply] God doesn’t want us to compare what we have with what others have. God wants us to be thankful for what He chooses to give us. It’s all about the attitude we choose. We can CHOOSE to be thankful because we can trust that God is good, that God loves us, and that He knows what’s best for us. So [Impress] take time to adjust your attitude. Choose to be grateful.**”

Catch On #2

A Bountiful Harvest (memory verse activity / great for active learners / optional large group activity)

What You Need: Bibles, prepared balloons taped to your focal wall like a grape cluster

What You Do:

Guide the kids to get into teams of three to five and line up opposite the balloon clusters. At your signal, the first child on each team will run to the “grapes,” “harvest” one from the wall, place it between his knees, hop back to his team, and tag the next child in line. When a team has every balloon, guide the kids to put the verse in order. Lead the kids to look up the verse using the navigation tips from week 1, and then “read” the verse aloud together.

What You Say:

“God loves us and knows what’s best for us, so no matter what happens—even something that seems unfair—we can take time to adjust our attitude and be thankful. So this week, **[Apply] if you find yourself getting grumpy or angry because it seems that someone else is getting more—or getting away with more—than you are, [Impress] take time to adjust your attitude.** Take time to remember that God loves you and that He wants what is best for you. Let God handle what is fair and unfair. Do YOUR part and **[Impress] take time to adjust your attitude** and be thankful. When you do, you’ll show others who God is and what He is like! You’ll also show God that you love Him and trust Him. So remember: **[Impress] Take time to adjust your attitude** and be grateful.”

Once, Twice, Three Times to Celebrate

Bible Story: Once, Twice, Three Times to Celebrate (Israelite Feast Days) • *Exodus 23:14-19 (2 Kings 23, supporting)*

Bottom Line: Take time to celebrate what God has done.

Memory Verse: “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV

Life App: Gratitude—letting others know you see how they’ve helped you.

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Early Arriver Activity (8:45) (10:30) (5:45)

What You Need: An offering container

What You Do:

Invite the kids to place their offerings in the container, and then ask the following questions: How will your family celebrate Thanksgiving? Who will be there? What will you eat? What is your favorite part of Thanksgiving?

(Note: If you live in a country other than the United States, invite the kids to tell about their favorite holiday and why they like to celebrate it.)

Plug In (9:00) (10:45) (6:00)

Categories

What You Need: “Categories” Activity Pages

What You Do:

Show the kids the pictures and guide them to identify each. Next, encourage the kids to categorize the objects. Challenge the kids to come up with multiple ways to group them.

What You Say:

[Transition] “In our Bible story, we’ll hear what these items have in common. Let’s go to Large Group to learn more.” Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Prayer Time

After large group, gather children in their small groups. Lead them in prayer focusing on “The Bottom Line.”

Catch On #1

Celebrate! (review the Bible story / great for active learners / optional large group activity)

What You Need: Upbeat worship music, such as “All the Glory” from *Movin’ Me*; music player; streamers and/or bandanas

What You Do:

Ask the kids to name times and ways we celebrate God today. Briefly review the Bible story and the feasts.

Remind the kids that during the Feast of Weeks, the Israelites had a special service to worship and honor God.

Give each child a streamer or bandana and play the music. Encourage the kids to move and wave the streamers in worship as the music plays.

What You Say:

[Apply] “God wants us to celebrate the good things He has done for us. Celebrating what He’s done is one way we can show Him gratitude. What are some ways we can celebrate what God has done? (Pause.)

So remember to **[Impress]** take time to celebrate what God has done.”

Catch On #2

Happy Celebration Day (application activity)

What You Need: “Happy Celebration Day” Activity Pages, markers or crayons

What You Do:

Guide the kids to imagine their own holiday to celebrate what God has done. Lead them to brainstorm what they would do to celebrate His goodness. Give each child a “Happy Celebration Day” page and encourage the kids to draw or write how they would celebrate God. Invite volunteers to tell about their drawings. After the kids share,

[Make It Personal] tell how you would **[Impress]** take time to celebrate what God has done.

What You Say:

“The Israelites had special feasts to remember and celebrate all that God had done for them. ***[Apply]*** We can celebrate and remember what God has done for us, too. We can celebrate at Thanksgiving, at Christmas, at Easter, or at any time of the year. God wants us to celebrate all the good things He has done, and He wants us to have fun doing it! So remember: ***[Impress]*** Take time to celebrate what God has done.”

Credit Where Credit Is Due

Bible Story: Credit Where Credit Is Due (Paul thanks people) • *Romans 16:1-19*

Bottom Line: Take time to remember how others have helped you.

Memory Verse: “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1
Thessalonians 5:18, NIV

Life App: Gratitude—letting others know you see how they’ve helped you.

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Early Arriver Activity (8:45) (10:30) (5:45)

What You Need: An offering container

What You Do: Invite the kids to place their offerings in the container, and then ask: Who are some people who help you? (*Parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, teachers, coaches, police officers, firefighters, crossing guards, etc.*) How do they help you?

Plug In (9:00) (10:45) (6:00)

Name Game

What You Need: No supplies necessary

What You Do:

Guide the kids to gather around you as you pat/clap a steady rhythm. Lead the kids to pat/clap with you. When the kids master the rhythm, say, “I thank God (*kids echo*) for [child’s name],” (*kids echo*) in time with the beat. Continue until you name each child. If time allows, invite a volunteer to establish a rhythm and lead the chant.

What You Say:

“I am so thankful for each and every one of you. **[Transition]** In our Bible story, we’ll hear about a man who was thankful for others, too. Let’s go to Large Group to learn more.” Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Prayer Time

After large group, gather children in their small groups. Lead them in prayer focusing on “The Bottom Line.”

Catch On #1

Time to Be Thankful (application activity / review the Bible story / great for active learners)

What You Need: “See ‘n Say Thank You” (Activity Page), upbeat music of your choice, music player

What You Do:

Play a life-sized, human version of “See ‘n Say.” Choose one child to be “It.” Guide the other kids to stand in a circle with each child about an arm’s length from his neighbor. Lead It to stand in the center. Give each child in the circle a “See ‘n Say Thank You” card and lead him to hold the picture in front of him. Briefly identify the person(s) on each card. Guide It to hold an arm straight out, finger pointed, and spin in a circle while you play the music. When the music stops, It stops. Lead It to identify the person pictured on the card that he is pointing to (or closest to pointing to). Guide the group to chant, “Take time to remember how (*name of person, such as ‘a police officer’*) helps.” Invite It to name a way that person helps as well as a way he can show gratitude to that person. (If It can’t think of a way to show gratitude or simply doesn’t wish to answer aloud, invite the other kids to share ideas.) Allow as many children as possible a chance to be It.

Note: if you are in an environment with multiple groups, you can count down from 10 or 15 while the child who is “it” spins in a circle.

What You Say:

“Paul took time to say thank you to all the people around him who helped make his work possible. **[Apply]** God wants us to take time to say thank you to the people who help us, too. We can take a TIME OUT to thank our parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, friends, teachers, coaches, police officers, firefighters, doctors, nurses, store clerks, bus drivers, and everyone else who helps us. So this week, **[Impress]** take time to remember how others have helped you.”

Catch On #2

I Thank God for You (*application activity*)

What You Need: “Applause!” Activity Pages, scissors, markers or crayons, unsharpened pencils or straws, glue sticks or clear tape, candies or other simple items that the kids can give along with their “Applause!” thaumatropes (*optional*)

What You Do:

Give each child a set of “Applause!” figures. Guide the kids to cut them apart and then color them as they choose. When they finish, lead the kids to glue or tape their figures back to back, leaving the bottom unglued. (Be sure they match top-to-top and bottom-to-bottom.) Help the kids insert a pencil into the unglued space between the bottoms of the pictures, stopping after about 1/3 of the pencil has been inserted. Let them tape their figures to the end of a pencil, being careful not to cover the boy in the pictures with tape. **[Make It Personal] (Make your own “Applause!” thaumatrope, too.)**

Show the kids how they can hold the pencil between the palms of their hands and rub their hands together to make the pencil twist quickly backwards and forwards. As the pencil twists, the figure will appear to clap!

As kids work, encourage them to think of someone who helps them. It might be a parent, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher, coach, bus driver, police officer, or firefighter. The possibilities are endless! Encourage the kids to take their “Applause!” creations home and give them to someone who helps them.

Optional: Provide candies or other simple items that the kids can give with their thaumatropes.

What You Say:

“Paul was a busy man, but he took time to say thank you to the people who helped him. We can follow Paul’s example and take time to say thank you to the people who help us, too. We can do that by giving them ‘applause’ (twist your thaumatrope to make it clap). **[Make It Personal] (Tell the kids who you plan to give your “Applause!” figure to.)** And you know what? **[Apply] When you show gratitude to others, you help them see who God is and what He is like.** So this week, **[Impress] take time to remember how others have helped you, and give them some “applause.”**