GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD
God commands us throughout His Word to give thanks to Him. When you read through the Bible, you see a reoccurring theme: you see God’s people giving thanks to God and you see God pouring out unbelievable miracles in their lives. Before you can teach this lesson to the kids, you first have to get into an attitude of thankfulness before the Lord. God commanded the Levites in 1 Chronicles 23:30 to stand before Him every morning and every evening to give thanks and praise to His name. Imagine how much better your home will be if you stand before the Lord every morning and every evening just to say, “Thank you Lord for what you have done in my life. Thank you Lord for what you plan to do in my life. Thank you Lord for being Lord. There is no one like you. Lord, I thank you.” You won’t be able to count the miracles God will do in your midst.

Before you get started with this lesson, I want you to take the time to read Psalm 100 out of the Message Bible:

A thanksgiving psalm
On your feet now—applaud God!
Bring a gift of laughter, sing yourselves into his presence.
Know this: God is God, and God, God.
He made us; we didn’t make Him.
We’re his people, His well-tended sheep.
Enter with the password: “Thank you!”
Make yourselves at home, talking praise.
Thank Him. Worship Him.
For God is sheer beauty,
all-generous in love,
loyal always and ever.

As we taught this lesson to our children in NYC, we gave them several opportunities throughout the lesson to thank God for themselves. We experienced an unbelievable presence of the Holy Spirit in our church. When we thank God and give Him the praise He deserves, He presents Himself to us. This cannot be just another ordinary lesson taught. This lesson has one main objective: to get the kids to thank God for themselves.
**PRE-OPENING ACTIVITY: I’m Thankful for**

*Participants:* Any kid sitting down with their hand up, someone to write, and a “runner” with a microphone.

*Props:* Wipe board and dry-erase markers.

*Preparation:* Set up the white board. Tell the “runner” to pick kids that are sitting down with their hands up.

*Playing:* The “runner” will pick kids to share with everyone what they are thankful for. As the kids share, have someone on the stage writing what they say for everyone to see. *This activity works the best during the week of Thanksgiving, or when you are teaching about thankfulness. The list created by the kids can be tied into your lesson time.*

**OPENING**

Welcome
Rules
Opening Prayer
Pledges
Songs of your Choosing
4 Reasons

**GAME TIME**

1. *Turkey Stuff*
*Props:* Two pairs of extra large, long underwear or long johns, 50 small inflated balloons in a garbage bag, and pin (or dart).

2. *Turkey Call*
*Props:* None.
LESSON TIME

Short Overview of the Lesson
Quiet Seats Explanation
Props: 4 red balloons, 4 blue balloons, a whistle, and quiet seat prizes.

Lesson Introduction
Props: Poster board with the words “Thank you” written on it.

Power Point: Give thanks to the Lord
Sub points:
1. He provides for you
2. He understands you
3. He heals you

Memory Verse
“Give thanks to the Lord for He is good.” (1 Chronicles 16:34 NIV)
Props: Overhead projector, blank transparency or posterboards.

Bible Lesson: “Jehosaphat” (2 Chronicles 20)
Props: 5 actors and 5 Bible costumes.

Object Lesson #1: “He provides for you”
Props: A bread man with a basket of bread. A milk man with a lot of milk.

Object Lesson #2: “He understands you.”
Props: A jar filled half way with water (mix in 3 drops of blue food coloring and put a lid on the jar) and a giant book.

Object Lesson #3: “He heals you.”
Props: A doctor, female actress, and a folder with papers in it or anything that resembles a doctor’s report.

Life Lesson: “Sarah’s Birthday”
Props: Illustrated Story

NEXT WEEK

Somebody has to Prepare the Way.

Director’s Note
Don’t Reinvent the Wheel
WELCOME

Props: Whistle

Everybody look up heaven. Look down really fast. Look up again and say, Thank you Lord. Put two hands up in the air and say Lord, You are good. Now put your hands down and look at me. You just made God so happy. He loves to hear his children thank Him for the many things he does in our lives. Look at your neighbor right now and say give thanks to the Lord at all times. Look at your other neighbor and say, I am so glad you are here today. Now everyone look at me and say thank You Lord for giving us a church we can come to and learn all about you. I’m so excited to be here today because we are going to spend the entire day giving thanks to the Lord. I’m ready to get started. Everybody put 10 fingers up in the air and count down with me. 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

RULES

Kids’ Church always works best when we work together. When we follow rules, things run smoothly. There are many children here today. In order for us all to have fun and learn, we all have to follow the same rules. We do not play favorites in Kids’ Church and we do not allow bullies either. We all follow the same rules. Today we have a shortcut to help us remember the rules. The shortcut is the word “SOW.” Let us sow a good seed today by obeying the rules. (Keep the rules posted or write them on the chalkboard or on poster board.)

Let us review the rules:

S- Stay in your seat.

O- Obey your leaders.

W- Whistle means quiet.

Set the tone right away as the kids are entering the building:

1. Music - Have upbeat, age-appropriate music playing as the kids are entering the building.

2. Greeters - Have greeters at the door greeting the kids and telling the where to sit.

3. Announcements - Make sure there is someone on the mic communicating clearly to the kids such things as: “Welcome to Kids’ Church. We have 10 minutes before Sunday School starts. Take off your coat. Girls, sit on my left Boys, sit on my right. I am excited to see everyone here today!”

4. Countdown - We officially start Sunday School with a countdown.

Graphics are included in the Powerpoint Presentation.
OPENING

OPENING PRAYER

Dear God,
We thank You today for all the great and wonderful things you have done in our lives. Thank You for giving us food to eat. Thank You for giving us clothes to wear. Thank You for sending your one and only son Jesus Christ to die for my sins. Lord thank You for giving us parents to take care of us. Thank You for everything. Amen.

PLEDGES

Graphics are included in the power point presentation.

SONGS OF YOUR CHOOSING

If you have a Praise and Worship team, it would be great to implement them for this part of your service. If you do not have a Praise and Worship team, then use CD’s. Try to play songs that the kids will know. Have the songs written on transparencies or posterboards so the entire audience can see the words and participate in your Praise and Worship time.
OPENING

THE FOUR REASONS WHY WE COME TO KIDS' CHURCH

Props: Posterboard or overhead projector so everyone can see the “Four Reasons.”

Every week, always take time to teach the kids why they come to Kids' Church. “Spaced Repetition” is the name of the teaching technique that we employ at this point in the lesson. The concept is simple; by reinforcing and repeating these four key truths every week, it becomes ingrained in our children. Have the kids repeat “The Four Reasons Why We Come to Kids' Church.” You can even give rewards to kids who can say them correctly without help. Pick two boys and two girls, and have them say the “Four Reasons” without looking at them. Doing this every week can be a great start for your kids to always know why they are doing the things we tell them to do every week.

1. To love God first
2. To learn His word
3. To lead others to Jesus
4. To live right every day

Graphics are included in the Powerpoint Presentation.

Before you pick the two boys and girls to say the four reasons, teach them to everyone as a group. You can start off by saying to the kids, “If you are in school and someone asks you why you go to church, what will you say?”
Lesson 8

Leader's Notes

1. Use your game time as a review time.
2. Make sure you have two opposing teams.
3. Assign runners.
4. Assign someone to operate your CD player.
5. Put someone in charge of organizing and cleaning up games.
6. Put someone in charge of giving out prizes.
7. Ask simple questions.
8. Explain the game well.
10. Make sure you rehearse the games with your workers.

GAME TIME

Games are fun and exciting. I do not know one single kid who does not like to play games. I do not know one single kid who does not like to win cool prizes after playing a game. Let's face it, kids are bored at church. They want to laugh, play, and have fun. Teachers want them to learn the Word of God. Is it not possible to have both? Who says Sunday School has to be dry and boring? There is a middle ground. Include games in your Sunday School.

Game Time should be:

- A review of last week's lesson
- Fun
- Organized

A review of last week's lesson

The only way that kids can play a game, is if they answer a question from last week's lesson. Instantaneously, kids are going to start listening to your teaching every week because they want to play a game.

Fun

Game time must be fun! Make sure your games are exciting and unpredictable not get in a rut with your games. You need to keep the kids guessing as to what will happen next.

Organized

We call game time, “controlled chaos.” We want the kids to have the most fun they can have in a controlled environment. There is a lot of organization required for game time. For instance, someone has to:

- Set-up and clean-up the game
- Pick kids to answer the review question
- Operate the CD player
- Help the kids pick a prize

For other game ideas, click here.
REVIEW QUESTIONS
Select one child from each team who can answer their review question correctly to play in this first game. Allow each child to choose one partner of the same sex to play this game with them.

1. Control your anger or it will control _______? Answer - You

2. The memory verse said, “In your anger, do not _______”? Answer - Sin

GAME #1
Turkey Stuff
Participants: Two boys and two girls.

Props: Two pairs of extra large, long underwear or long johns, 50 small inflated balloons in a garbage bag and pin (or dart).

Preparation: Once selected, your workers must quickly dress one boy and one girl in the long underwear.

Playing: Have one boy and one girl put on long underwear over their regular clothes. They are designated as the “turkeys.” Place the bag of balloons about 20 feet from the “turkeys.” The other participants are the “stuffers.” When you say “Go,” the “stuffers” run to the bag of balloons, take one, run back and stuff it in the long underwear of their “turkey.” They will have one minute to stuff as many balloons as possible into the long underwear. After the minute is up, count the number of balloons for each team, popping them with a pin as you count. The team with the most balloons stuffed is the winner.

GAME TIME
Lesson 8

1. Use your game time as a review time.
2. Make sure you have two opposing teams.
3. Assign runners.
4. Assign someone to operate your CD player.
5. Put someone in charge of organizing and cleaning up games.
6. Put someone in charge of giving out prizes.
7. Ask simple questions.
8. Explain the game well.
10. Make sure you rehearse the games with your workers.

**Leader’s Notes**

1. Use your game time as a review time.
2. Make sure you have two opposing teams.
3. Assign runners.
4. Assign someone to operate your CD player.
5. Put someone in charge of organizing and cleaning up games.
6. Put someone in charge of giving out prizes.
7. Ask simple questions.
8. Explain the game well.
10. Make sure you rehearse the games with your workers.

**Game Time**

**Note:** Be sure that the children stuffing the balloons in the long underwear distribute the balloons all around the “turkey.” Helpers can help by pointing to areas that need to be stuffed and that can handle more balloons.

**Precautions:** Be sure that the girl chosen to be the “turkey” is wearing pants.

**Review Questions**

Select one child from each team who can answer their review question correctly to play in this second game. Allow each child to choose two partners of the same sex to play this game with them.

1. When you get angry you need to stop and release it to ______? Answer God.
2. In the story did Maddie the Cow control her anger? Answer No.

**Game #2**

**Turkey Call**

**Participants:** Three boys and three girls.

**Props:** None.

**Preparation:** Make sure that the kids you selected can all whistle.

**Playing:** First of all, get someone to imitate the sound and actions of a turkey. Really exaggerate the actions to make this funny for the kids. Then get the kids to imitate what they saw, or attempt to do an even better turkey impression themselves. The kid to do the best turkey impression is the winner.
Lesson 8

Leader’s Notes

1. This is what we are teaching.
2. This is why we are teaching what we are teaching.
3. This is our supporting verse.
4. This is how we will support the powerpoint.

SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE LESSON

Power Point
Give thanks to the Lord

Direction
It shows you appreciate Him

Memory Verse
“Give thanks to the Lord for He is good”
(1 Chronicles 16:34)

Sub Points
• He provides for you
• He understands you
• He heals you

KEY WORDS AND KEY PHRASES

Key words and Key phrases that should be used throughout the lesson.

Give thanks to the Lord
It shows you appreciate Him
He is good
He Provides for you (Object Lesson #1)
He Understands you (Object Lesson #2)
He Heals you (Object Lesson #3)
**QUIET SEAT**

*Props:* You will need a loud whistle, four blue balloons for the boys’ side, and four red balloons for the girls’ side. You will also need helpers on the boys’ side and helpers on the girls’ side to pass out the “Quiet Seat” prizes. Prizes like candy, snacks, or Bibles are all effective prizes. The prizes are given only to the kids who are the quietest during the teaching time. The “Quiet Seat” time officially starts after the whistle has been blown.

*Presentation:* Boys, I have four balloons on your side. If I see you talking to your friends or playing with your neighbor, I am going to pop a balloon. If I pop all four of your balloons, I am going to give all of the candy to the girls. Girls, you also have four balloons. If I see any type of distraction on the girls’ side, I am going to pop a balloon. If I pop all four of your balloons, I am going to give all of the candy to the boys. I have quiet seat watchers walking around looking for the perfect kids. A perfect kid is a kid who is sitting up straight, feet on the floor, hands in your laps, and whose eyes are on the teachers. If the quiet seat watchers see a perfect kid, they will slip a piece of candy into your hand. You are not to eat that candy until you are outside of the building. Everyone should be sitting up straight with your feet flat on the floor. No one should be moving around at this time. The bathrooms are now closed. The only ones who will be moving around here are the quiet seat watchers. Their job is to watch you, not us. If I see anyone talking, I will pop a balloon. You know what happens if we pop all of your balloons; you go home today with nothing. We are now ready for the most important time of the day. It is now time for the preaching of the Word of God. On the count of three, I will blow my whistle, and quiet seat time will officially began. One, two, and three. (Blow the whistle.)
Lesson 8

Leader’s Notes

Thanksgiving is our response to what God has done, and turns our attention from the things we’ve been given, to the Giver.

There are some lessons where the kids need to simply be quiet and focus their complete attention on the preachers; however, there are some lessons where the kids need to speak to God. Be thankful to God is one of those lessons where they need to give thanks throughout the lesson.

Whenever you allow the kids to speak during the lesson time, teachers should make sure they have complete control of the situation. Make it clear to the kids they are only allowed to talk when the teacher asks them to give thanks to the Lord.

Props: Poster board with the words “thank you” written on it.

Preparation: Illustration 1—Have you ever stopped to think just how much power exists in two words? Picture this in your mind. You do something good for a person and what do you expect to hear? (Thank you.) You give up your free time to help another kid with his homework. What do you expect that kid to say to you? (Thank you.) You share your food with a kid who has no lunch. What do you expect that kid to say to you? (Thank you.) If you do something good for someone, you expect them to say “thank you” because you want to know that person is grateful for what you did. You want to feel appreciated. Our memory verse says, “Give thanks to the Lord for He is good” (I Chronicles 16:34, NIV)

God has done so many good things for you. God expects for His people to give him thanks. Whenever you stop and give thanks to God, you are telling God how grateful you are to have Him working in your life. Whenever you stop and give thanks to God, you are telling God you appreciate all the wonderful things He has and will do for you. You can never thank God enough. There are millions of reasons for you to say thank you to God. You can thank God for the clothes you are wearing. You can thank God for the air you are breathing. You can thank God for the time He gives you each day to spend with your mom or dad. You can thank God for giving you a sister or brother. You can thank God for giving you a house to live in. If you can't think of one particular thing to say thanks for, you can say, “You God, because You are good.”. This is how good God is:

- He provides for you
- He understands you
- He heals you
“Give thanks to the Lord for He is good”. 1 Chronicles 16:34

Props: Overhead projector and a transparency with the scripture verse written on it. If you do not have an overhead projector then use posterboard with the verse written in markers large enough so everyone can read it.

Preparation: Set the overhead before the lesson begins so all you have to do is turn the projector on. Or if you have a posterboard with the verse written on it, make sure it is ready to be carried out.

Presentation: Memory Verse was explained in the Lesson Introduction.
BIBLE LESSON

KING JEHOASHAPHAT

2 Chronicles 20
Props: 5 actors and 5 Bible costumes

Preparation: Have your actors read over the Bible lesson. Rehearse all entrances and exits for the different characters.

Point: Give God your battles and thank Him for His help.

Presentation: What would you do if you found out a group of people were coming to your neighborhood to fight against you? Would you go get your family and the other people on the block to help you fight? Or would you stop and ask God to help you deal with the problem? There was a king in the Bible who was faced with this exact situation. The King’s name was Jehoshaphat. His enemies were the Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites. These three groups of people joined forces to make war against King Jehoshaphat.

Soldier: Illustration 2—King Jehoshaphat, A huge force is on its way to fight against you. There is no time to waste. They are already at Hazazon Tamar.

Teacher: King Jehoshaphat was shaken by this news. There was no way he could win this war. The army was too big. King Jehoshaphat prayed. He went to God for help and ordered a nation-wide fast. People from all over the country came together and prayed to God. God spoke to a man named Jahaziel and gave him this message to give to the people.

Jahaziel: This is God’s war, not yours. Tomorrow you’ll go after them. You won’t have to lift a hand in this battle; just stand firm, Judah and Jerusalem, and watch God’s saving work for you take shape.
Give thanks to the Lord

Teacher: King Jehoshaphat and all the people knelt to the ground. They began to praise God and give him thanks for what he was about to do. (The people kneel down and start to thank God.) The next day, King Jehoshaphat appointed a choir for God. He dressed them in holy robes and sent them ahead of the soldiers. The choir was singing, Give thanks to God, His love never quits. (Illustration 3 & 4--The choir starts singing and thanking God.) As soon as they started shouting and praising, God set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir. By the time King Jehoshaphat got to the field where these men were, they had all killed each other.

It seemed impossible for them to win this battle until they started to give thanks to the Lord. It may seem impossible for you to win the different battles in your life. If you live your life where you are constantly giving thanks to the Lord, you will see that your battles will be easy to face. As long as you are thanking God and reminding him of his faithfulness, God will face every battle with you. Maybe your battle is a bully at school. Maybe your battle is an angry teacher who does not like you. When you find yourself in the midst of a battle, I want you to do something. Take your focus off of your battle or problem and start thanking God. When you thank God, you are telling him, how much you appreciate having Him in your life.
Let’s practice thanking God for being in your life. While you thank Him, I want you to give your battles over to Him.

Lord, thank You for my school. I ask you to help me study and understand the work my teacher assigns to me. Lord, thank You for my home. I ask that you will bring peace and love to my home. I thank You for letting everyone in my house know how much you love them. I thank You for helping my family to be a good example to everyone in the neighborhood. Thank You Lord for giving me life and thank You for always being apart of this life you have given me.

This is how you give your battles to the Lord; by asking Him to help you and thanking Him for his help. Kids, the Bible is clear about this matter. You are to constantly give thanks to the Lord.
OBJECT LESSON 1
George Mueller

Props: A bread man with a basket of bread. A milk man with a lot of milk.

Preparation: Rehearse with your actors. Make sure they know when to enter and when to exit.

Point: Give thanks to the Lord. He provides for you.

Presentation: A lot of times when I tell people, give thanks to the Lord because He provides for you, those people think God is going to drop money from heaven for them. God provides for us in many different ways. Your concern should not be how God will provide. Your concern should be to thank Him because He provides. I want to introduce you to a man who always thanked God and believed that God would meet every need he had. His name is George Mueller. George had an orphanage with over 100 kids. He never had a lot of money for food and supplies, but he always prayed and thanked the Lord in every circumstance. Some days, the kids would sit down for breakfast and there would be no food or money to buy food. George would do the same thing every time this happened.

George: (Illustration 5—Kneeling in prayer) Lord, I thank you for providing for all of our needs. We need your help now. We don't have any food or any money to buy food. God, I thank you because you are faithful to us. You always provide what we need.

Teacher: This seemed like a crazy thing to do. Why would anyone pray and thank God for things they don't have? That's a simple question to answer. We pray and thank God for things we need because we know God answer prayers. We are telling Him ahead of time that we appreciate Him for what He is about to do. George believed with his whole heart that God would provide for him.
Not only did God provide for George; sometimes, God even answered George’s prayers before he finished praying. (Knock on the door).

**Baker:** (Illustration 6—Comes in with bread in his hands) Hello George. God woke me up early this morning. He told me to bake enough fresh bread to feed you and all your children.

**Milk Man:** (Illustration 7—Knock on the door) My milk cart has broken down. If I don't get rid of the milk quickly, it will spoil. Can you use all of my milk so that I can go get my milk cart fixed?

**George:** Yes of course—Thank you.

**Teacher:** God provided for George every single time. God didn’t send money down from heaven. Instead, God moved upon the hearts of other people to help George in his time of need. God can and will provide for you in many different ways. Nothing is impossible for Him. That’s why you should give Him thanks. Be confident that God will provide your every need. Just like God provided for George and his orphanage, God will also provide for you. The Bible tells us to give thanks to the Lord. What do you need today? Let’s stop and ask God to provide for your needs. After we ask Him to provide you with what you need, we will then thank Him in advance for meeting that need. Now we are going to practice giving thanks to the Lord.

(Allow the kids one minute to ask God to provide for their needs, then allow them to give thanks to the Lord).

1. 
2. 
3. 

Make a list of things the kids need in their lives and help them to thank God for those things now.

Write down three things the kids may need God to provide for them. When you get to this part of the lesson, you may have to guide them through their prayers.
OBJECT LESSON 2

A jar with my tears in it and a book with my name in it

Props: A jar filled half way with water (mix in 3 drops of blue food coloring and put a lid on the jar) and a giant book.

Point: Give Thanks to the Lord. He understands you.

Presentation: Most people don't give thanks to the Lord because they think God does not understand them. Think about it. How many times has your heart been broken and you have sat alone in a corner crying because you thought no one understood how you feel? The last thing you want to do is lift your hands and give thanks to the Lord. I know what that feels like but I'm telling you that the first thing you should do in that situation is to give thanks to the Lord. God understands you. In fact, in Psalms 56:8, King David says, “You keep a record of all my sorrows. You have collected all of my tears in a bottle (Pull out the jar half filled with tears). You have recorded each one in your book (Pull out the giant book). Do you know what King David is saying, “God you understand everything about me. You understand and you care. You care so much you collect my tears and you record them in your book.”

Because David believed that God understood who he was, David always gave thanks to the Lord. He always let God know how much he appreciated Him. When he was in a bad situation, he thanked God. When no one else understood him, he thanked God. Today, I’m asking you to be like King David. Give thanks to the Lord in every situation because, God understands you. God understands why you cry. God understands why you feel all alone. When you find yourself in one of those situations, give thanks to the Lord. He understands you and He is waiting to hear from you.
If God records every time you cry, He also records every time you say thank you. Let us make a mark in God’s book today. Let’s thank God for understanding who we are.

Repeat after me. Lord, I thank You because you understand me. Lord I thank You that you understand why I cry. You understand why I lose my temper. You understand why I can’t keep up in school. You understand why I have problems in my home. You understand what makes my heart happy. I thank You for understanding me and I ask that You help me live the life you want me to live. God, every time You read through the book of my life, remind me to stop and give You thanks.

You have so many reasons to thank God. Every day brings new reasons. I want you to stop throughout your day and just say “Thank you Lord”.

**OBJECT LESSON 3**

**God’s Healing Power**

**Props:** A doctor, female actress, and a folder with papers in it or anything that resembles a doctor’s report.

**Point:** Give thanks unto the Lord. He heals you.

**Presentation:** There was a lady who had only one son. He was sixteen years old. One night, as he was coming home from a basketball game, he was in a terrible accident. The mother was called to the hospital immediately. *(Illustration 10—Mother walks out on stage.)* The doctor met the mother with her son’s chart in his hand. *(Teacher pulls out a folder with papers inside of it.)* He opened his folder and started to tell the mother all of the things wrong with her son. He said, “Your son has suffered major head injuries. He may never be able to speak or think clearly again. Your son has suffered trauma to his legs. He may never be able to walk again. He ruptured his spinal cord. He will be in a vegetative state for the rest of his life.”
The mother looked at the doctor and tears started to roll down her cheeks. She lifted her hands to heaven (Illustration 11—Mother lift her hands to Heaven) and started to say, “Thank you Lord. Thank you Lord! Thank you Lord!” The doctor looked at the mother. He could not believe this lady was so thankful. “Lady, I just told you that your son may never be able to think clearly or communicate clearly, he may never be able to walk again and he will not be able to ever take care of himself and you are thanking God for that? The lady looked at the doctor and said, “I'm thanking God right now because I know God has the power to heal.” The doctor looked at the lady and said, “I don't think you understand what I said. Your son's condition is permanent.” The lady kept thanking God and reminding God of all the good things God had done in her life already. She kept thanking God through every surgery the doctors performed. She kept thanking God through the physical therapy the boy had to go through.

One day, her son started to talk clearly. He could communicate to other people again. He gain strength in his legs and walked again. It was a miracle. And you know what the lady did? She thanked God for that miracle. Not only did she thank God, but she told her friends that God has the power to heal.

When her son received the last treatment for that doctor, he looked at the lady and asked, “Hey what would you have done if God did not heal your son?” She said, “I would have still thanked him. It didn't matter whether my son got healed or not, God still has the power to heal. I was just thanking God for all the times he has healed me and others.”
There are billions of stories just like this all around the world. Stories of how God has healed people. There are also stories of people who did not get healed. I have no idea why some people get healed and some people don’t. All I know is this, I want to be like that lady who says, “God I thank you because you heal your people. I will be thankful to you even if my son doesn’t get healed”.

You don’t have the power to heal people but you do have the power to thank the one who heals. I know this may be hard for some of you to do because you know people who you prayed for God to heal and they were not healed. The Bible tells us to give thanks to God in every circumstance and in every situation. I don’t want you to lose hope that God will heal, instead I want you to build your life around thanking him because he heals.

If you need healing or if you know people in your life who need healing, I want you to be really bold right now and give thanks to God because God heals you. Let’s stop right now and thank God for his healing power and pray that God will heal the people in your life who need to be healed.

(Give the kids one minute to pray for those who need to be healed and to thank God for his healing power. You may have to guide them through this prayer.)
Give thanks to the Lord

Thanksgiving is a secret strength. We come into His presence with Thanksgiving and in His presence is fullness of joy, and His joy is our strength. Being thankful and being strong in the Lord are two sides of the same coin.

SARAH’S BIRTHDAY

Frame 1
Sarah's birthday is coming up soon and she is so excited she can barely wait. Her mom is letting her have a birthday party this year and she has invited all of her friends to come. She is excited about the games, cake and ice cream and having fun with her friends. But most of all she is looking forward to getting a new puppy. She has been wanting a puppy all year and she hopes she will get one for her birthday.

Frame 2
It was raining outside as Sarah and her parents were getting ready for her party. Suddenly, a news flash came on the TV. “This is a message from the National Weather Association. A hurricane is headed straight for the New Orleans coastline. All residents along the New Orleans coastline are required to evacuate immediately. This is not a test.” Sarah's parents stared at the TV in disbelief. “That's us,” said Sarah's dad. “We have to leave now!” Sarah's dad swooped her up into his arms and out the front door into the rain as her mom followed closely behind.

Frame 3
Sarah and her family had to fight their way through the wind and rain to their car in the driveway.
Little thanks carries with it a great price.
(Romans 1:18-21) Without thanksgiving your thoughts become futile or purposeless and your heart is darkened.

It was crazy outside, tree branches and other debris were flying through the air and the water was quickly rising. They made it into their car as a strong gust of wind knocked a tree over into their house. All they could do was watch their house be destroyed as they drove away.

Frame 4
Hours later, Sarah and her family arrived at a shelter. They were tired, hungry, and wet and the shelter was crowded with other people who had also evacuated. There were long lines everywhere. Lines for food, lines for water, lines for clean clothes, and a long, long line for the bathroom. Sarah and her parents got into the nearest line for food. They didn't mind the lines; they were just thankful to be alive and have a dry place to stay. As they waited, they could hear the people around them complaining. It seemed to Sarah that people were complaining about everything. “This line is too long.” A lady yelled. “I don’t eat sandwiches with mayo!” A man said to the local church people who were handing out food. “I should get a bigger blanket than this!” “There are too many people in here.” “This food is awful!” “I want more water!!” People were complaining about everything. Sarah and her parents moved to the front of the line, got their food, found a table that wasn’t occupied and sat down to eat. But before they ate, Sarah’s father said, “Let’s give thanks to the Lord for everything He had provided for us.

Preaching Point:
To some people, it may have seemed that the people at the shelter didn’t have anything to be thankful for, but Sarah and her parents knew differently. God had provided them with a place to stay and food to eat. They might not have everything they want, but God provided them with everything they needed.
It’s easy to be thankful when you have everything you want, but Sarah and her family were thankful for the small things, like a cot, a blanket and a sandwich. You might be thankful to God for your new PSP, but do you thank him everyday for the small things like providing you with food everyday and a roof over your head?

Frame 5
Sarah and her family spent the whole night thanking God for the small things. The next day things had calmed down outside. The storm had passed. Sarah and her parents had a good rest on the cots they had been given. The first thing they did was thank God for protecting them in the storm. Her dad got in line to get some breakfast when some men from the Red Cross came in with the bad news. “Everything’s been lost.” They said. “The whole city of New Orleans is gone. All of the houses are gone. Everything is demolished by the storm.”

Frame 6
Sarah’s mom sat down on her cot and started to cry. “We worked so hard to have enough money for that house. Everything is gone now, all our pictures, our furniture, everything.” Sarah’s mom cried for hours. Her heart was broken. She hurt so badly on the inside, she didn’t think she would ever be happy again. She loved her home and her town and now it was all gone. Days went by and Sarah’s mom just got sadder and sadder.
What an honor it is to teach this lesson, to be a part of changing these children's identities forever. Romans 6:6 says we know that our old man was crucified with Christ. Christ died for us and as us. The end of this lesson changes the children’s nature. Now they never have to let sin control them anymore!

Frame 7
Sarah didn't know what to do. Her mom was hurting so much that it scared Sarah. She had never seen her mom that sad before, but she remembered something she learned in church. Her mom was crying as Sarah sat on the cot next to her. “Mom?” “Yes, Sarah?” “Jesus came to heal, right?” “Yes, baby.” “Then maybe he will heal your heart.” Sarah and her mom began to pray for healing. Sarah's mom seemed better when they were done.

Preaching Point:
Sarah was right. Jesus came to heal our bodies and our broken hearts. We need to be thankful that God will heal us. God will heal you. I want you to get in the habit of saying, “Thank you God for healing my body. Thank you God for healing my heart”. The Bible says that your God is the God who heals you. Your God takes away your sickness and disease. Give thanks to the Lord because He heals you.

Frame 8
That night, as Sarah was getting ready to go to bed. Her dad kissed her on the forehead. “I'm sorry that we didn't get to celebrate your birthday with a big party like you wanted. You didn't get your cake and ice cream; you didn't get one gift. We were so caught up in the storm I didn't even say Happy Birthday.” “That's ok Dad. I had the most exciting birthday ever and I got to spend it with you and mom. I'm just thankful to be here.”
Frame 9
The next day, Sarah's mom had stopped crying almost completely and her dad had good news for the both of them. "I talked to my brother in Brooklyn, New York and he said we could stay with him and his family for a while. He even has a job lined up for me there. The roads have been cleared and we can leave today for the Big Apple." Sarah was so happy. God had provided a way for her and her family to start all over.

Frame 10
Sarah and her family gathered what little belongings they had and made their way outside. As they walked towards their vehicle Sarah could see something small crouching underneath the car. "Dad, what is that?" she asked, pointing. "Well," her dad said as he reached under the car to pull it out, "I think it's a..." "Puppy!!" Sarah screamed with delight as she cradled the pup in her arms. "Look, mom. Just what I wanted for my birthday." Sarah, her mom, her dad and the new puppy got into the car and headed for New York. Sarah was so thankful for her puppy. She threw her hands up towards Heaven and said, "Thank you Lord."
**POINT OF DECISION**

I want you to start being thankful to God for every little thing He gives you. How many of you want to spend everyday being thankful to God? Right now is the best time to start giving thanks to God. Put your hand over your heart.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord,

Thank You for taking care of me and my family. Lord, thank You for providing me with food and clothes. Thank You for healing my body and my heart. I ask that You would remind me to be thankful more often. I love You God. Thank You Lord for everything.
I'm committed to helping people who have a passion for reaching and leading kids. I encourage people to ask me tough questions, and I delight in giving straight answers. In one case, a helper who had been using the curriculum for over a year was frustrated. She realized she wasn't having the results that she should have experienced. When I asked her questions to get to the core of the problem, I discovered that she didn't believe in separating the boys and the girls. I explained the rationale behind our suggestion that you separate them. First, it helps you organize your room. Station helpers to assign seats to the kids as they enter, boys on one side and girls on the other. Don't allow the helpers to stand around sipping coffee while the kids roam. Helpers should talk to them and get to know them. Find out what's going on with them before service starts. This is a ministry time.

Separating boys and girls aids tremendously in discipline. Make it a contest each week to see which side behaves best. Separating the children also helps teach courtesy and sportsmanship. The games are designed to be contests between the boys and the girls and at this age the kids love to compete with the opposite sex. (Youth groups don't have that dynamic.) In addition, game time reinforces to the children how to win and lose gracefully. It's a healthy balance of competition and camaraderie.

In another meeting, I met a KIDS Church teacher who didn't believe in using a whistle. He said his problem was that the children didn't listen to him and he spent too much time yelling at them. Whoa! If you're conducting KIDS Church the way we suggest in the training resources, you shouldn't need to yell at the kids. (Frustration and anger are not emotions we should be struggling with in the midst of leading kids to God.)

The whistle is a tool to get people's attention and shouldn't be overused. Here's how we use it. “Boys and girls, it’s time for the preaching of God’s Word. In a minute I'm going to blow the whistle. You know that whenever I blow the whistle, everyone must be absolutely quiet. If someone is still talking after I blow the whistle, the helpers will remove you. Now, I'm going to count to three and blow the whistle. ONE everyone sitting up straight. TWO hands on your laps and feet on the floor. And THREE! (Blow the whistle.) That's perfect!”

These methods are not ordained, but they have been proven year after year in all sorts of churches. There's no need to reinvent the wheel when you know some proven methods.