

Teaching Thankfulness to Toddlers

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Figure 1 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

The concept of thankfulness can be difficult to explain to young children, but there are fun and age-appropriate ways to express the meaning of thankfulness for all the gifts that God has given.

For

Young Family

Season

Fall

Needed

Bible, copy of Thankfulness Tree worksheet (see last page), family photos to cut apart, old magazine photos or computer clip art of common foods and household objects, scissors, glue stick

Prepare in Advance

Cut out small pictures of family members and familiar household objects from old magazines, photos, or computer clip art. (For example, flowers, foods, animals, toys, books, bed, stove, etc.) Have 10-12 pictures ready.

Activity Plan

1. Gather the family. Read aloud Psalm 118:24 from your Bible, or use the text below:

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

2. Say: "We are thankful for the whole world God has made. We show we are thankful by taking care of our things and loving our families and saying thank you to God for everything." Discuss: *What do you think we should thank God for today?*
3. Spread the pictures out on a table and let each family member choose one or two. (Children might want to use all of them, and that's OK!) Work together to glue the pictures onto the Thankfulness Tree worksheet.
4. Sing the song below about the pictures on your Thankfulness Tree. Explain that when you sing this song together, you are showing thankfulness for what God has given. Have children point to each object on the Thankfulness Tree as you include it in the song. Name a different object in each line of the song. Repeat the song until you have thanked God for everything pictured on the Thankfulness Tree.

Thank You, God (Tune: "The Farmer in the Dell")

Thank you, God, for *(one of the objects pictured)*.

And thanks for making *(one of the objects pictured)*.

We're so glad you made the *(one of the objects pictured)*.

Thank you, God, for *(one of the objects pictured)*.

(Repeat until you have thanked God for each item, and then sing a stretched-out "A-a-a-men.")

5. You can sing "Thank You, God" while driving in the car or taking a walk, naming what you see along the way. Sing the song at bedtime or mealtime and have family members fill in what they are thankful for that day.



Thankfulness Tree

