



GRATEFUL: An Attitude

Also in this newsletter:

- Connect Your Kids to God • Family Fun • Easy Bonus Activity

TIP:
Display this newsletter at home, and use the activities as desired throughout the week.



Questions to Go at bedtime, mealtime or car time

- If someone doesn't have a grateful attitude, what is he or she like?
- When is it easiest for you to be grateful? Hardest?
- What kinds of things could you think about or remember to help you feel grateful?

Verse to Chew on

"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV).

- Read this Bible verse with your kids. What can you thank God for in your present circumstances? What could you find to thank God for in worse situations?
- Talk about why you think God wants you to do this.

Character Builder: Grateful

Kids who are appreciative stand out. These are usually kids who have been guided from very young to be grateful. Even toddlers can say something that means "thank you" when they receive a cookie or a cup of juice. No matter how old your kids are now, it's not too late to help them develop a more grateful attitude. Here's how you can encourage it.

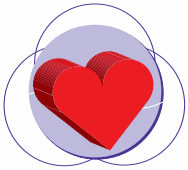
- **Be grateful** yourself. Sincerely thank your kids and others when it's appropriate.
- **Go around the table** before a meal, and give a prayer of thanksgiving with each person finishing this prayer starter: "Thanks, God, for. . . ."
- **Sing thanks** with your family, if you enjoy music. Sing songs you know, play worship CDs or DVDs and sing with them, or make up songs of your own.
- **Read together** in Luke 17:11-19 the story of the ten men who were healed by Jesus and only one returned to thank Him. Talk about the point Jesus made in this story. What do you think happened to the other nine?

Say It Many Ways

Vary the ways you express thanks, e.g., "I appreciate that"; "That was nice of you to do"; "I like what you did for me"; "Thanks for that hug." Let your kids know you are grateful for them: "I'm so glad God put you in my life."

Preschool Focus

Say "thank you" when you give your young child something, whether he repeats it or not. Eventually, hesitate before giving it to him to give him a chance to say it. Make it a habit, not a battle.



Connect Your Kids to God

How can I express my feelings about God's creation?

God made a beautiful creation that He enjoys. He wants you to enjoy it too. When you see a sunrise or sunset, or scenery that amazes you, tell God about it. Know that He is with you, enjoying it, too, because it is His. Paint or draw what you see in God's creation. Write a poem about it. All of these can be expressions of worship to God.

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being" (Revelation 4:11, *NIV*).

You Can Do It!

- When you are outside, bring God's creation to the attention of your kids. Notice the ants and bugs, the birds and other small creatures, the variety of plants.
- Naturally appreciate these things in the form of a conversation to God, e.g., "Wow! What an amazing creature you made, God" or "Father, You made such an incredibly detailed flower."

Family Fun

Get to know your kids in new ways with questions that allow them to share their thoughts. Refrain from judging answers. Be sure to participate in the sharing. If a question leads to further discussion, listen to what your kids are trying to express. Clarify with other questions. If changes can be made, be open.

- What do you like about being part of our family?
- What is the biggest frustration in your life right now?
- If you could change anything in the world or in your life, what would it be?
- What do you like about your room? What would you change if you could?

Visit www.raisingupspiritualchampions.com for more Family Fun.

Did You Know?

Christian parenting is "teaching our children the ways of God, helping them understand the character of God, helping them become sensitive to the darkness of their own hearts. . . . It involves teaching them the power of the cross and the provision of God's promises."

—Gary and Carrie Oliver in "Raising Emotionally Healthy Sons" in *The Complete Parenting Book* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 2005), p. 64.

Easy Bonus Activity

For fun, learn to say "thanks" in different languages. Here are some to try: Spanish: *gracias* (GRAH-see-us); French: *merci* (mare-SEE); Chinese: *Xiexie* (shay-shay); Italian: *grazie* (GRAH-tsee-yeh); Japanese: *arigato* (ah-ree-GAT-o).

Preschool Focus

Reward your kids for saying "thank you." Each time you hear them say it, give them a small slip of paper as a "ticket." When a certain number of tickets have been collected, let your kids exchange them for a small prize.