



Bible Point ▶

We worship God by thanking him.

Bible Verse

“Shout with joy to the Lord!” (Psalm 100:1a).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will

- play an action game of thanks,
- help Whiskers say thank you, and
- say thanksgiving prayers together.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Paul and Silas are set free.



**Acts
16:16-34**

Today’s passage may tweak your curiosity. If the demon-possessed slave girl was confirming the truth of Paul’s message, why did she need to be silenced? Notice Acts 16:18. Paul may have appreciated the affirmation at first, but after days of continued shouting, the girl became distracting and may have driven people away from hearing the actual message.

Put yourself in Paul and Silas’ situation. You’ve been doing your best to preach the message of Jesus but instead of praise you find yourself in prison.

Rather than whining, Paul and Silas spent time singing and praying, grateful for the good things God had done for them.

When the earthquake came, rather than escape, the pair’s fellow prisoners remained—much to the relief of the jailer. If they had escaped, the jailer would have paid with his life. His gratitude made him ready to listen to and believe Paul and Silas’ message.

Prayer

- Read Psalm 106:1-2.
- How do you express your gratefulness to God even when things aren’t going well?
- What could improve your gratefulness quotient?
- Pray: Dear Lord, thank you for all you’ve done in my life. Help me to let my thankfulness show through to the preschoolers I teach. Help them to see...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags and be greeted by the teacher.	Butterfly name tags from Lesson 1, washable markers, scissors, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Jail-Bar Thanks —Make “jail bars” with paint, and thank God for things he’s made.	Table, newspaper, newsprint, small toy cars, pie tins, paint, paint shirts	
	Option 2: Hopping Thanks —Hop to an item they’re thankful for.		
	Option 3: A Fragrant Thank-You —Thank God for friends, and make fragrant gifts to give away.	Sandpaper, scissors, hole punch, yarn or ribbon, cinnamon sticks	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Play a game to identify items they are thankful for.		
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Act out a story from Acts 16 about thankful people.	Bible, CD player	
	Do the Bible Story —Make praise pictures as they listen to different sounds.	Paper, washable markers, CD player	
Closing 	A Thankful Heart —Teach Whiskers to be thankful.		
	Thank You, God —Sing a song of thanks.		

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: butterfly name tags made in Lesson 1, washable markers, scissors, safety pins or tape

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week's "Today I Learned..." discussion. Use questions such as "What songs did you sing?" and "How did you tell your family about Paul and Silas?"
- Say: **Today we're going to learn that ► we worship God by thanking him.**
- Hand out the butterfly name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help children attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren't in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout.
- Direct children to the Let's Get Started activities you've set up.



It's important to say the Bible Point just as it's written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.

Let's Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children's conversation toward today's lesson. Ask questions such as "What are you most thankful for?" or "How do you say thanks for something special?"

■ Option 1: Jail-Bar Thanks

SUPPLIES: table, newspaper, newsprint, small toy cars, pie tins, paint, paint shirts

Cover a table with newspaper, and then place a large sheet of newsprint on top of it. Set out several small toy cars and pie tins. Put a thin layer of a different color paint in each pie tin. Give children paint shirts or smocks to wear. Then have children form "Paul and Silas" pairs, and give each pair two cars and a pie tin. Show children how to make "jail bars" on the newsprint by "driving" the cars through the paint and then across the paper. Help children think of things they're thankful for that are the same color as the paint they're using. After a while, let pairs exchange paint colors. Set the pictures aside to dry.

■ Option 2: Hopping Thanks

SUPPLIES: none

Gather children in one corner of the room. Tell them you will call out a color. Then they will hop to an item they're thankful for that is that color. For example, if you call out the color blue, a child might hop to a blue ball or a blue toy. Give the children time to say why they're thankful for the items they chose before they hop back to the corner to play again. Explain that ► we worship God by thanking him.





teacher tips

If children are reluctant to give their necklaces away in Option 3, encourage them each to make one for themselves and one to give away.

teacher tips

At this stage in their spiritual development, 3- and 4-year-olds enjoy hearing Bible stories and recognize their own church. Your welcoming words and actions can help them develop a sense of belonging at church.

Option 3: A Fragrant Thank-You

SUPPLIES: sandpaper, scissors, hole punch, yarn or ribbon, cinnamon sticks

Before class, cut 3-inch hearts from fine sandpaper. Punch a hole at the top of each heart. Help children thread lengths of colorful yarn or ribbon through the holes to make necklaces. Set out whole cinnamon sticks and have children rub the sticks over the rough side of the paper, covering the heart with fragrant cinnamon. Tell children that we can be thankful for the special friends God gives us. Then encourage children to give their necklaces to friends in class.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" with the CD (track 2) to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



SING

**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: none



Tell children you'll shake the *clapper* to get their attention. Explain that when you shake it, the children are to stop what they're doing and raise their hands. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Painted jail bars with cars; hopped to an item; made a necklace and gave it away.)

Say: **If you made jail bars with paint and car tracks, stand up, wave at me, and then sit down.** Pause. **If you hopped to items you're thankful for, stand up, say "thank you," and then sit down.** Pause. **If you made a necklace, stand up, take a bow, and then sit down.** Pause. **All of you were learning important things about today's Bible story.**

Now let's play a game to get us thinking about the good things God gives us.

Ask: • **Who can tell me some good things God gives us?** (Parents; friends; ice cream; pets.)

Say: **I'll name some things God has given us. Listen carefully and do what I tell you.** Read the following list and lead children in the actions.

- **If you have a family that loves you, jump up and down.**
- **If you have food to eat, stand up and rub your tummy.**
- **If you have a warm bed to sleep in, snore softly.**
- **If you have friends in this class, give someone a hug.**
- **If you have clothes to wear, spin around.**
- **If you can hear with your ears, be very quiet and listen.**
- **If you have eyes to see with, blink three times.**
- **If you're thankful for all the good things God gives us, thank God with our Bible verse, ► "Shout with joy to the Lord!"**
- **If you have feet to walk on, go over to the story area and sit down.**

Wait for children to sit down, and then continue with the lesson.

◀ **BIBLE VERSE**

■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



tracks 3, 4

Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" with the CD (track 3) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



**I'm so glad for the Bible.
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible.
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *trumpet stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. As they come up to you to get their

hands stamped, take time to show them the Bible and explain to them that the Bible is God's Word for them.

Say: **I'm thankful for** [name of child who brought the Bible], **and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" with the *CD* (track 4) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



SING

**I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Open the Bible to **Acts 16**, and hold it up. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Acts in the Bible. Today we're going to listen to our story on the CD. You can help tell the story by doing some special motions. When you hear the words *Paul and Silas*, show me your strong muscles to remind us how brave Paul and Silas were.** Practice the motion a few times. **When you hear the word *prison* or *jail*, wrap your arms around yourself like the chains that wrapped up Paul and Silas.** Practice the motion a few times.

Play the "Paul and Silas" segment of the *CD* (track 12), and cue the children to act out their parts. You can follow the story on the back cover of the *Bible Big Book: Paul and Silas Go to Jail*.

When the story is finished, turn off the *CD* player and gather children in a circle.

Ask: • **What good things happened in our story?** (Paul and Silas helped the little girl; the jail doors fell down in the earthquake; the jailer learned about Jesus; Paul and Silas got to leave the jail.)

• **Who thanked God for the good things that happened?** (Paul and Silas; the jailer and his family.)

Say: **Even though mean people tried to hurt Paul and Silas at first, by the end of the story lots of people had things to be thankful for!**

Open the *Bible Big Book* to pages 4 and 5, and say: **Can you find the hidden trumpets on these pages?** Pause. **The hidden trumpets remind us that God**

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is doing good things even when it looks like something bad is happening. I have a surprise for you. Our *Bible Big Book* has more hidden trumpets! Let's look on the rest of the pages and see if we can find them. Pause. **Wow! You are finding a lot of trumpets.**

Give the children time to find all the trumpets.

Ask: • **How does it make you feel to find the trumpets?** (Happy; excited; glad).

• **What can we do when we find a trumpet?** (We can cheer; we can thank God.)

Say: ► ***We worship God by thanking him, just as the people in our Bible story.***



◀ **BIBLE POINT**



Say: **Jesus encourages us to worship God in every way. Jesus told us that the most important thing we could do is to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We can do this by thanking God and Jesus for things in our lives.**

■ Do the Bible Story



track 13

SUPPLIES: paper, washable markers or crayons, CD player

Give each child a sheet of paper and a few washable markers or crayons. Have children scatter around the room and sit on the floor. Say: **We've mentioned so many things to thank God for today. Can you remember some of them?** (Things in our

classroom; our families; our friends; God.)

Give children time to name several things. Then continue: **I'm going to play some different sounds on the CD. While you're listening to the sounds, I'll say short sentence prayers. When you hear me pray, show your thanks to God by coloring on your papers. For example, if you hear the sounds of a rainstorm and I say, "God, we thank you for rainstorms," you might sprinkle dots of color all over your paper to look like raindrops. Is everybody ready?**

Play the "Praise Pictures" segment of the CD (track 13). Read the following list of praises that match the sounds.

- Children playing: **God, we thank you for our friends at Sunday school and at preschool.**
- Splashing water: **We thank you for making water that we can splash in, swim in, and drink.**
- Praise music: **God, thank you for giving us voices so we can laugh, talk, and praise you.**
- Animal noises: **We're so thankful for your creation, God. Thank you for making animals, birds, and fish for us to enjoy.**
- Running feet: **Thank you, God, for our feet that allow us to dance, walk, skip, hop, and run.**

When the CD segment ends, turn off the CD player and say: **Hold up your pictures for everyone to see.** Pause. **What beautiful pictures you've made! I know God enjoys it when you thank him.** ► ***We worship God by thanking him.*** Take your pictures home to remind you to thank God for things you hear,



◀ **BIBLE POINT**

see, smell, touch, and taste each day. I'm thankful for all of you and for our friend Whiskers, too. Let's visit Whiskers right now!

Closing

■ *A Thankful Heart*

SUPPLIES: none

Bring out Whiskers the Mouse, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



Whiskers: (Big sigh)

Teacher: Hello, Whiskers. What's wrong?

Whiskers: My mom is mad at me. I just don't get it. It's no big deal!

Teacher: What's no big deal?

Whiskers: Well, last night my mom made my favorite dinner—cheese pie. It's sooo good! She's the best cook.

Teacher: So what's the problem?

Whiskers: I sat down and started eating, and my mom made me stop. She said we needed to pray first. But I kept eating. It was just so good, and I was so hungry. I tried to listen to her, but I just wanted that pie.

Teacher: So your mom was upset at you for not praying?

Whiskers: Yeah, and I don't see what the big deal is. Why can't I just eat my food? Why do I have to stop and say thank you? It's too hard to wait when all that good food is sitting there in front of me.

Teacher: I understand your problem, Whiskers. But saying thank you is very important. Your friends in class have been learning about that today. Maybe they can help you. Children, would you tell Whiskers about all the people in our Bible story today who were thankful?

(Lead children to explain that the young girl who was helped by Paul and Silas, the prisoners, and the jailer and his family were all thankful to God.)

Whiskers: Wow, that's a lot of people.

Teacher: Do you know who was probably the most thankful of all?

Whiskers: Who?

Teacher: Paul and Silas. Remember, they were in jail. Do you think they were hungry?

Whiskers: I bet they were starved!

Teacher: Yes, and they were probably cold and tired, too. And they didn't have a mom to set a hot meal down in front of them. But they were still thankful because they got to tell so many people about Jesus!

Whiskers: Boy, I guess it was wrong not to pray and say thank you. If Paul and Silas could be thankful in jail, I should be thankful at home. *(Pausing)* I guess I can wait a little while...even for cheese pie!

Teacher: I'm happy to hear you say that, Whiskers. I'm proud of you. You know
▶ we worship God by thanking him.

Whiskers: I'll try to remember that at dinner tonight. We're having cheeseburgers! 'Bye!

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■ **Thank You, God**

SUPPLIES: none

Form a circle, and say: **Paul and Silas were good friends who worshipped and thanked God. Just like Paul and Silas, we've been worshipping and thanking God with our friends, too. Now let's thank God for our friends with this song. While we sing, I'll point to different children in our circle. Put that person's name in the song to thank God for such a special friend.**

Lead children in singing "Thank You" to the tune of "God Is So Good." Be sure to point to each child in the circle. This song is not on the CD.



Thank you for [name],
Thank you for [name],
Thank you for [name],
God is good to us.

When each child has been named, join hands and pray: **Dear God, thank you for loving us and giving us so many wonderful friends. Help us to remember to thank you each day for all your special gifts. In Jesus' name, amen.**





Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Thank-You Treasures**

Distribute sandwich bags, and take children on a walk outside to look for items they can thank God for. Make sure you have plenty of adult supervision. Tell them that ► *we worship God by thanking him.* Let children collect items such as leaves, twigs, stones, feathers, flowers, and any other “treasures” they find. Bring the items into the classroom to use for the “Make to Take” project. If you don’t do “Make to Take,” have children sort through their items and name one or two things to thank God for. Then let them take their treasures home.

■ **Make to Take: Thank-You Sculptures**



Give each child a handful of modeling dough on a paper plate. Show them how to press into the dough the treasures they found on the “Lively Learning” walk. If you didn’t do the “Lively Learning” activity, set out items such as feathers, stones, sticks, leaves, and flowers, and have children make their sculptures with those. (Make sure the items you set out are larger than a 50-cent piece.) When children finish their sculptures, ask them to point to one item and thank God for it. Remind children that ► *we worship God by thanking him.*

■ **Treat to Eat: Praise Treats**

Give each child a napkin and a handful of your own trail mix made with dry cereal, M&Ms, and dried fruit. (Do not use nuts, as some people have severe allergies to nuts.) Help children name things to be thankful for that are the colors of the candy on their napkins. Then say a prayer of thanks, and let them eat!



■ **Story Picture: Paul and Silas Thank God**

Give each child a photocopy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Set out crayons and small plastic bandages. Have children color their pictures and then place a few bandages on Paul’s and Silas’ wounds. As children work, remind them that the jailer and his family were thankful to learn about Jesus.

Today i learned...

We worship God by thanking him.

Help me learn this:

"Shout with joy to the Lord!" (Psalm 100:1a).

Ask me:

- Why did Paul and Silas thank God?
- When do you say thank you to God?
- What can our family be especially thankful for?

Family Fun

- For a mealtime thank-you prayer, sing a song together. Ask family members to name things they want to thank God for. Then sing the name of the item in a thank-you song to the tune of "God Is So Good." For example, if someone says "food," sing: "Thank you for food, thank you for food, thank you for food. God is good to us."

Lesson 3

Today your child learned that **WE WORSHIP GOD BY THANKING HIM**. The children learned about people in the Bible story who were thankful even during difficult times. Children thanked God for all the good things in their lives.

Paul and Silas Thank God (Acts 16:16-34)



