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An introduction to the *First Steps* syllabus, including hints and tips for running lessons, can be found in the file 'First Steps introduction.pdf' on the *Teaching Little Ones: First Steps* CD-ROM.

A list of all activity materials, including photographs, can be found in the file 'Activity materials.pdf' on the *Teaching Little Ones: First Steps* CD-ROM.

More information about teaching Sunday School to young children can be found in Stephanie Carmichael's book, *Their God is so BIG*, available from Matthias Media. For more details visit [www.matthiasmedia.com.au](http://www.matthiasmedia.com.au).

# Thanking God

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**Bible reference...** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18  
Psalm 107:1

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**Lesson aim...** To make the children aware that there are many things that they can thank God for and to encourage the children to thank God for these things.

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**Main message...** I can say 'Thank you God'.

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**Story card...** Print page 53 and colour in the story card.

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## Introduction...

Bring in a basket with some things that you would like to thank God for. You might have an apple, a warm jumper, a photo of your family and/or friends, some of your favourite things (a book, a teddy, a game etc). Show each thing, saying that it is something that you thank God for.

"God has given us lots of things..."

## Story...

"God likes us to say 'Thank you God'  
Thank you God for our families.  
Thank you God for our friends to play with  
and for our toys.  
Thank you God for our homes and all the things we have.  
Thank you God for food to eat and clothes to wear.  
Thank you God for loving us.  
We can say 'Thank you God' for lots of things."

## Pray...

"Dear God, thank you for our families, our friends, our food and all the things we have. Please help us to remember to say 'thank you God'. Amen."

## Activity suggestions...

### 1. *Playdough thank you*

This activity is only suitable for children who are old enough to shape playdough and can be trusted not to eat it.

Each child will need an egg carton (half-dozen) or a polystyrene vegetable tray with the caption from page 52 pasted on, and six little mounds of playdough. You will also need six stickers to stick above each hole (so the parents know what their children have made) or you can print the labels on page 52 and tape them in each hole. The stickers say: apples, oranges, toys, the sun, boys, girls. Before the lesson, place one sticker, or tape one label, in each hole of the egg carton or on the base of the vegetable tray. In the lesson, the children make things from the playdough that they can thank God for. (Admittedly, the finished products will bear little resemblance to reality, but note the spherical theme.)

First ask the children to make an apple. Put it in the labelled hole in the egg carton. Then the children make an orange and place it in the appropriate hole. Then the children make a toy—a ball—and put it in the appropriate hole. Then the children make the sun and place it in its hole. Then the children make a boy (a bit trickier!) and they place it in the appropriate hole. And then they make a girl and place it in the appropriate hole. And then you're thankful that they've finished!

### 2. *'Thank you God' collage book*

Before the lesson, cut out magazine pictures of things that we can thank God for, e.g. people, food, flowers etc. Print page 54 and fold the page in half so that "Thank you God for ..." becomes the cover. In the lesson, the children open it up and paste pictures on the inside.

### 3. *'Thank you God' bag*

Each child will need a paper bag with the caption on page 52 pasted or written on the outside. You will also need to print pages 55 and 56 and cut out the four shapes for each child. In the lesson, the children are handed one shape with glue on the blank side and a container is placed on the table with small paper squares in the appropriate colour for that item. Then the shape is placed somewhere safe on each child's paper bag, and the container is removed and replaced with the next colour:

- orange paper for the orange
- yellow for the sun
- blue for the T-shirt
- orange, yellow and blue for the ball.

Once each shape is dry, place it in the child's paper bag to take home.

### 4. *Story card*

Print page 53 for the children to colour.

Labels for activity #1:

apples	oranges	toys	the sun	boys	girls
apples	oranges	toys	the sun	boys	girls
apples	oranges	toys	the sun	boys	girls

Caption for activity #1 and #3:

Thank you God for...	Thank you God for...
Thank you God for...	Thank you God for...
Thank you God for...	Thank you God for...
Thank you God for...	Thank you God for...
Thank you God for...	Thank you God for...

# I can say thank you God

God likes us to say 'Thank you God'.

Thank you God for my family.

Thank you God for my friends to play with  
and for my toys.

Thank you God for my home and all the things I have.

Thank you God for food to eat and clothes to wear.

Thank you God for loving me.

I can say 'Thank you God' for lots of things.



Thank  
you  
God  
for...



Thank you God  
for our food



Thank you God  
for our clothes



Thank you God  
for the sun