



Gratitude Materials for Children: UTO and Illustrated Ministries Sample Sermon

Sermon topic: Gratitude when things are hard

Created by the Rev. Rowan Larson for use or adaptation locally.

Does anyone here know the “magic words?” (*pause and take suggestions, see if anyone offers “please” and “thank you”*)

We’re told from the time we’re small that these are magic words for asking for what we want and for saying thanks when we get it.

Sometimes, please can be very small (example, in a small voice: maybe, could I possibly, have just one more cookie, please?)

Sometimes, please is very big and long (example, whiny and louder: Pleeeeeeease can you let me play with my friend today!)

Thank you comes after please. When I get an extra cookie, I find it very easy to say thank you!

But have you ever had to say thank you to someone who gave you something you didn’t want, or didn’t like? What did it feel like? (*let children answer*)

Gratitude is a big word for saying thank you—to our friends, parents, teachers, and to God.

I often ask God for things, and I bet you do too. I ask for things like for my friend who is sick to feel better, or to make my heart brave when I have something scary happen to me. It can be a little hard to know when God has answered me, but sometimes it’s very clear!

Sometimes, things happen to us that are hard, that make us sad, or mad, or scared. It can feel (*use examples from previous question, if possible*) like getting a present that was the opposite of what you asked for. Maybe you’ve had a grown-up tell you that you need to find something to be grateful for about it anyway.

That can be very hard to do!

But with practice, we can find something to say thank you for, even when we don’t like something, or we’re upset. There’s almost always something good that God has made happen in our lives.

Today with your grown-ups, try to practice finding a “thank you” even when you’re not sure there’s anything to say thank you for. I bet you’ll be surprised what you find!