

## Fall Season, Week 1: *Giving Thanks*

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### MATERIALS NEEDED

- CD player and hymn CD with lyrics
- Bowl or basket
- Small pieces of paper, folded with one of the following lines written on each: Something Red, Something Small, Something Big, Something Unexpected, Something Prayed For

### OPENING HYMN

“We Gather Together” – *Hymn-Sing with ElderSong, Volume 2*

### PRAYER

Dear God, we praise You for our fall season! Thank you for the beautiful colors, the cozy temperatures, the memories of holidays, and the time leading up to the birth of Jesus. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

### THIS WEEK’S VERSE

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever. Psalm 136:1

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

The book of Psalms is full of songs and prayers that praise and give glory to God. One children’s song says, “Psalms are 150 poems, songs, and prayers / Whatever I am feeling I can find it there.” If you are feeling lonely, frightened, happy, or just need to be reminded of God’s faithfulness, you can turn to the book of Psalms and find 150 beautiful chapters full of what you need to hear.

Charles Spurgeon, a famous, beloved preacher and writer from London, studied the Psalms quite extensively. He wrote that Psalm 136 was a loved and popular hymn among the Lord’s ancient people. This psalm was sung long ago in temples, in homes, and on battlefields, and is still read today. God’s love, Word, and song endure forever. Spurgeon also wrote that this particular psalm/hymn was full of praise and could only truly be enjoyed by a devoutly grateful heart.

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### REFLECTION

- *What is something that you are thankful for today?*
- *The word “devoutly” means deeply religious or connected with a particular way of life. Knowing that, what do you think a “devoutly grateful heart” is? Do you think you have one?*
- *Psalm 136 was likely a hymn. Name one of your favorite hymns or songs that you love. What do you think about when you hear it?*

When I chose this verse to open our season of gratitude, I wanted to choose a verse that connected with the season of love that we just finished studying. Psalm 136 is a great transition verse because it reminds us to give thanks to the Lord for he is good. All things that come from God are good. He loves his children; he loves each of us. He loves us, even when we are broken. Verse 1 also reminds us that, “His love endures forever.”

So, our verse this week speaks two amazing truths for us to remember: God is good and will love us forever. Knowing these truths will give us a thankful heart. During our darkest days or darkest seasons, it can be difficult to remember to give thanks to God, to remember that he is good and on our team, and God’s love will last forever. Let’s brand this verse on our hearts as we head into our season of gratitude, so we can always remember his love, mercy, and goodness to us.

### REFLECTION

- *How do you keep a grateful heart? Is it easier some days than others?*
- *On sad or tough days, can it be difficult to remember that God is good? What would you tell someone who is feeling discouraged? How could they remember to have a grateful heart?*

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### ACTIVITY

*Directions:* Play a gratitude game by writing down categories on pieces of paper and putting the slips of paper in a bowl. You can write down categories like something red, something small, something big, something unexpected. You can also come up with your own categories. Pass around the bowl to participants, one by one, and ask each person to take a piece of paper, read it aloud, and answer what they are thankful for in that category. Give everyone a chance to answer.

*Say:* There is always something to be thankful for. Let's play a gratitude game. We will pass around this bowl filled with things to be thankful for. Let's see if you can think of something you are thankful for that matches the category.

### CLOSING HYMN

"Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" – *Hymn-Sing with ElderSong, Volume 2*

### FALL SEASON BENEDICTION

See page 167.

### GOING DEEPER

Read all of Psalm 136. It is beautiful and reads like a song.