



THANKSGIVING FAMILY CHALLENGES

Instructions:

Choose at least one challenge to do during Thanksgiving week as a family, or do one per day leading up to Thanksgiving day.

1. THE THANKFUL THREAD

Create a group chat with your family and present the thankful thread challenge.

- Encourage participants to intentionally find things that they are thankful for throughout the challenge and to share them with the group chat. Make it interactive and fun with voice notes, scriptures, photos, and gifs. Spur one another on in really looking for opportunities to share God's goodness and faithfulness.
- For younger children without phones, take a pause every night before bed to ask them what they loved about their day and what made them smile.

2. BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING NIGHT

Instead of focusing on what you've received, thank God for what you were able to give this year—your time, encouragement, finances, or faith. Take some time in the evening to end your day with going around and sharing as a family.

- What are ways God blessed you to be a blessing?
- What are ways recounting is sparking you to find more ways and opportunities to give?
- End in a prayer for eyes to see opportunities for blessing.

3. KEEP SCORE

As a family take note of the little way members of your family have done "good things". Keep a record of the "rights" in lead up to the holiday.

- Get a jar or a bowl and place it in the most common room.
- Have family members write out other family members names and the "good" they did that day and fold the papers and place them in the jar.

4. GENERATIONAL PSALM AND PRAYER NIGHT

- Read one Psalm of thanksgiving together as a family (Psalms 30, 65, 100, 136 etc).
- Each person shares which verse stood out most and why.
- Close out with a time of prayer.

5. THE FAMILY STONE

We often go around the table to share what we are thankful for, but use this activity to also review the good your family members have done.

- Before the Thanksgiving meal, find some white stones and some craft paint or black sharpies, or a place card will do.
- Prayerfully come up with a word of a positive character trait for each place setting and write it on the bottom of the stone (or the place card).
 - Word ideas: Honor, integrity, grace, compassion, faith, honesty, joy, laughter, hope, fearless, encouraging, bold, wisdom, etc.
- Place the stone next to each plate randomly as part of the table settings and at the end of the meal, have each member take turns turning over their stone and reading the word.
- Take turns sharing how you believe that word is fitting for them whether by how they show it, live, or bring those things into your family.

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BONUS IDEAS:

1. DING DONG GIFT DROP

For those who love some gift giving paired with some “good” mischief.

- Bake some assorted cookies and goodies and create little gift bags with them. Add a little note that shares encouragement and sign it from your family and house number. Make sure the tag is on the front and has a visible note like: “Thankful you’re our neighbor”.
- Then pick an evening as a family to ding-dong dash drop off the cookie bags! Mom or Dad can drive the getaway car, while kids drop the gift, ring the doorbell, and dash.

2. ANONYMOUS GENEROSITY

- As a family, pick a way you would like to bless a stranger or someone in your circle. Ideas: cover their grocery bill, drop off a gift card, or leave a note of encouragement.
- Set a date to reveal your “acts of kindness” stories after a family dinner.
- Challenge question: how many ways can you come up with to bless others secretly and how often would you like to do it moving forward?

3. “IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES” GRATITUDE

Perhaps you’ve been going through a tough season or situation, so during Thanksgiving week, take some time to sit with family and reflect on the circumstances that might have been challenging and take turns answering the following questions:

- What was something difficult that you faced this year?
- What did you learn from it that helped your growth or spurred your faith?
- How can that lesson help you to extend grace and offer wisdom to others?
 - Example: “I’m thankful for that hard moment when _____ because it taught me patience and better understanding. I can learn to _____ for others who may be going through the same thing.”
- This reminds us that struggle in life is inevitable, but the character that we forge through it matters to God and strengthens us and our relationships when we learn to trust God.
- Can you find any Bible passages that speak to what God is teaching you that you can use as anchors during other difficult times?

4. THE TESTIMONY TABLE

- Each person shares one “God story” from the year—something they prayed for, received, or learned. Write each on slips of paper and store them in a “Jar of Praise” for next year’s Thanksgiving.

5. TREE OF THANKSGIVING

Create a visual where you can record answered prayers and gratitude together during Thanksgiving and even into the Advent season.

- Draw a large tree on a poster board and hang where it is visible to the family.
- Cut out “leaves” on colored construction paper or find “leaf shaped” cutouts at a local craft store or online.
- As a family, brainstorm answered prayers or things you are thankful for and write a word or sentence on each leaf corresponding to that prayer or gratitude element.
- Pin the leaves to the tree and throughout the holiday season, keep adding leaves.
- Choose a night to read them all together and end the night in a time of prayer, thanking God for all He has done.