



FREE FOR SUNDAY AND SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS

Teacher starter kit

9 object lessons you can teach in about ten minutes, 4 Bible word searches with answer keys, and a coloring page. Print as many copies as your class needs.



What's inside

OBJECT LESSONS

1. Bread of Life Object Lesson: Five Barley Loaves (John 6:1-14, 35)
2. Christmas Object Lesson: The Manger in the House of Bread (Luke 2:1-20; Micah 5:2; John 6:35)
3. Forgiveness Object Lesson: The Big Debt and the Little Debt (Matthew 18:21-35)
4. God Is Love Object Lesson: The Flashlight and the Mirror (1 John 4:7-19)
5. Mustard Seed Object Lesson on Faith (Matthew 13:31-32; Matthew 17:20)
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8. Salt and Light Object Lesson for Kids (Matthew 5:13-16)
9. Thanksgiving Object Lesson: The Firstfruits Basket (Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Luke 17:11-19)

BIBLE WORD SEARCHES

1. Books of the Bible Word Search + answer key
2. Christmas Bible Word Search + answer key
3. Feeding the 5,000 Word Search + answer key
4. Thanksgiving Bible Word Search + answer key

COLORING PAGES

1. Bread Day Coloring Page

Bread of Life Object

Lesson: Five Barley Loaves

"Jesus can do great things with the little we give him, and he is the bread that satisfies forever."

You'll need

- ☐ 5 small round flatbreads (pita or tortillas)
- ☐ 2 fish-shaped crackers
- ☐ A paper lunch bag
- ☐ A basket
- ☐ Extra crackers or bread to share (check allergies first)

Ages

Preschool (3-5), Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

Get ready

Put the five flatbreads and two fish crackers in the paper lunch bag. Keep the basket of extra crackers out of sight.

Teach it

Hold up the lunch bag.

"Somebody packed this lunch for a boy about your age. Let's see what's inside."

Take out the bread and the fish one at a time and count them out loud with the kids: five loaves, two fish.

"Now let's count how many people are in this room."

Count together. Then ask: "Could this lunch feed all of us?" Let them laugh at the idea.

"One day, more than five thousand people followed Jesus up a hillside. They were hungry, and they were a long way from any town. Jesus's friend Andrew found a boy with a lunch just like this one. He said, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these among so many?' (John 6:9)"

Tell the rest of the story from John 6:10-13 in your own words: Jesus had everyone sit down on the grass, gave thanks, and handed out the food. Everyone ate as much as they wanted, and the disciples gathered **twelve baskets** of leftovers.

Now bring out your basket of extra crackers and share them around while you talk.

Did you know?

In Jesus's day, bread was the main food. Historians think it made up around half of everything an ordinary person ate. Loaves were small, round and flat, baked by slapping dough onto the hot inside wall of a clay oven.

John says the boy's loaves were **barley**. Barley was the cheaper grain, the bread poorer families ate. This wasn't a fancy picnic. It was an ordinary kid's ordinary lunch, and he gave all of it.

The big turn

The next day the crowd came looking for Jesus again, hoping for more bread. Jesus told them:

"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."
(John 6:35)

Hold up one flatbread.

"You ate breakfast this morning, and you'll be hungry again by lunch. Bread fills us up for a few hours. Jesus is saying he is the kind of bread that fills the part of us food can't reach."

Talk about it

1. What did the boy give Jesus? Was it a lot or a little?
2. Why do you think Jesus used the boy's lunch instead of making food appear from nothing?
3. What is something small you could give Jesus this week (your time, a kind word, your help)?
4. What do you think Jesus meant when he called himself "the bread of life"?

Pray together

"Jesus, thank you for giving us everything we need. Help us give you what we have, even when it feels small. Thank you for being the bread of life. Amen."

Take it further

- **Preschool:** Let each child hold a flatbread and count to five with you. Then color the [Bread Day coloring page](#).
- **Elementary:** Give small groups a paper bag and ask them to draw what they could "give Jesus" this week inside it.
- **Preteen:** Read John 6:26-35 together. Why was the crowd following Jesus the next day, and what did he want them to understand instead?

Christmas Object Lesson: The Manger in the House of Bread

"God's Son came as a real baby to an ordinary home, and the baby in the feeding trough grew up to be the bread of life for everyone."

You'll need

- ☐ A loaf of bread, or a few rolls or pitas
- ☐ Shredded paper, raffia or a handful of dry oats (the hay)
- ☐ A clean dish towel or old T-shirt cut into long strips (or a roll of gauze or crepe paper)
- ☐ A loaf pan, shoebox or small baking dish (the manger)
- ☐ A baby doll, or a wooden spoon with a face drawn on it
- ☐ Bread or crackers to share (check allergies first)

Ages

Preschool (3-5), Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

This **Christmas object lesson** takes kids inside a village house in Bethlehem, where Mary laid her newborn son in the animals' feeding trough. It uses a loaf of bread, a loaf pan and a few strips of cloth, takes about 12 minutes, and works on its own or as the hands-on part of your kids' Christmas Bible lessons in December.

Get ready

Put the loaf of bread where kids can't see it. Fill the loaf pan with shredded paper or oats. Cut or tear the towel into three or four long strips. Clear a table: for this lesson the tabletop is the family's living floor, and the floor beside it is where the animals sleep.

Teach it: the house of bread

Bring out the bread and hold it up.

"Who likes bread? Fresh bread, warm bread, bread with butter? Today we're going to a town whose name means bread."

Read Micah 5:2:

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, being small among the clans of Judah, out of you one will come out to me who is to be ruler in Israel."

"In Hebrew, the language of the Bible, Bethlehem is *Beit Lechem*. *Beit* means house. *Lechem* means bread. Bethlehem means **house of bread**. It was a little farm town, and hundreds of years before Jesus, God promised that a great ruler would be born there."

Set the bread aside. You'll need it again.

Teach it: the manger

Hold up the loaf pan full of hay.

"This is from Bethlehem too. What do you think it is?" (A bed? A box? A bread pan?)

"It's a **manger**. That's an old word for a feeding trough, where animals eat their dinner. Who eats out of a manger?" (Cows, donkeys, sheep.)

Read Luke 2:4-7. Joseph went to Bethlehem because he came from King David's family, and Mary went with him.

"She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a feeding trough, because there was no room for them in the inn."

"God's own Son, the King, and his first bed was the animals' dinner dish."

Did you know?

In Jesus's day, many village families lived in **one big room**. Most of the room was a raised floor where the family cooked, ate and slept. At one end, a step or two lower, was a space where the donkey, a cow or a few sheep were brought in at night, to keep them safe and to keep the house warm. The manger might be a **stone trough** or a hollow at the edge of the family's floor, so the animals could reach their hay. Archaeologists have found stone mangers built into much older Israelite houses, and Kenneth Bailey, a scholar who lived in the Middle East for decades, described village homes still built this way in modern times.

Show it with the table: the manger sits on the table's edge, and the "animals" sit on the floor below.

And the inn? The word Luke uses is *kataluma*. Later in his Gospel, Luke uses the same word for the **guest room** where Jesus ate the Last Supper (Luke 22:11). When Luke means a roadside inn, in the Good Samaritan story, he uses a different word (Luke 10:34). So many scholars think "no room" meant the guest room was already full, and Mary had her baby in the family's main room, beside the animals. Others aren't so sure. A very early Christian writer, Justin Martyr, wrote around AD 150 that the birth happened in a cave near the village. Either way, Luke tells us the part that matters: **Jesus's first bed was a feeding trough**.

Teach it: the swaddling cloths

Hand a child the baby doll and the cloth strips. Help them wrap the baby snugly, around and around.

"Mary wrapped Jesus in strips of cloth like this. Every mother in Bethlehem did the same for her baby. It wasn't fancy. It was just what you did for a newborn."

An old Jewish book called the Wisdom of Solomon has the great King Solomon saying he was wrapped in swaddling cloths too, because no king ever came into the world any other way.

Lay the wrapped baby in the manger. Read Luke 2:12, the angel's words to the shepherds:

"This is the sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth, lying in a feeding trough."

"Shepherds were working people who smelled like sheep. A king in a palace might have scared them away. But a baby in a feeding trough, the kind of bed any poor family might use? They could walk right in. Jesus came to ordinary people first."

The big turn: bread in the manger

Put the loaf of bread next to the manger.

"Let's put it all together. A baby was born in the **house of bread**. His mother laid him in a **feeding trough**, the place where hungry animals came to eat."

Read John 6:35, from when Jesus was grown up:

"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."
"Bread keeps your body alive for a day. Jesus came to give us life with God that lasts forever. Christmas is when God's Son came to be with us, as a real baby, in a real house, ready to feed the whole world."

Talk about it

1. What was the strangest thing about where Jesus slept on his first night?
2. Why do you think God chose a plain village house instead of a palace?
3. The shepherds hurried to see Jesus. Who could you tell about him this Christmas?
4. Bread is something you need every day. How is Jesus like that?

Pray together

Break the bread (or open the crackers) and pass it around. Before anyone eats, pray:

"God, thank you for sending Jesus as a real baby to a real family. Thank you that he came for ordinary people like the shepherds, and like us. Jesus, you are the bread of life. Help us come to you every day. Amen."

Take it further

- **Preschool:** Act it out. Kids sit on the floor as the sheep and donkeys while one child "wraps" the baby and lays it in the manger. Then everyone tiptoes up the "steps" to see.
- **Elementary:** Pair this with the [Christmas Bible word search](#). Ask kids to find the words that came from this lesson: manger, Bethlehem, shepherds, baby.
- **Preteen:** Read John 6:30-35 and the [Bread of Life object lesson](#). The crowd wanted bread from heaven like the manna. Ask: why would Jesus call himself bread instead of something grander?

Sources

- Kenneth E. Bailey, ["The Manger and the Inn: A Middle Eastern View of the Birth Story of Jesus"](#), Presbyterian Outlook (2006)
- Stephen C. Carlson, ["The Accommodations of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem: Κατάλυμα in Luke 2.7"](#), New Testament Studies 56 (2010)
- Ian Paul, ["Once more: Jesus was not born in a stable"](#), Psephizo
- ["Iron Age Pillared House"](#), Biblical Archaeology Society
- Sandra L. Richter, ["Christmas decorations, anyone?"](#), from *The Epic of Eden*
- Justin Martyr, [Dialogue with Trypho, chapter 78](#) (around AD 150)
- [Wisdom of Solomon 7:4-5](#)

Forgiveness Object Lesson: The Big Debt and the Little Debt

"God has forgiven us a debt we could never pay, so we forgive others."

You'll need

- ☐ A big jar or bowl full of coins (or play money)
- ☐ Three or four single coins
- ☐ Two volunteers

Ages

Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

Get ready

Fill the big jar with as many coins as you can. Keep a few single coins in your pocket. Choose two volunteers: the **King's servant** and the **friend**.

Teach it

Read Matthew 18:21-22 first.

"Peter asked Jesus, 'How many times do I have to forgive someone? Seven times?' Peter thought seven was very generous. Jesus said: not seven times, but seventy times seven. Then he told a story."

Give the big jar to your first volunteer.

"This servant owed the king ten thousand talents. That's more money than he could earn if he worked every single day for hundreds of years. He begged the king for more time. And the king did something amazing: he forgave the whole debt."

Take the jar back with a big flourish: **"Forgiven! All of it!"**

Now hand your second volunteer two or three coins.

"That same servant walked outside and found a friend who owed him a hundred denarii, about a hundred days' pay. That's real money, but compared to the jar, it's tiny."

Have the first volunteer (gently, playfully) demand the coins back.

"The friend begged for more time, the same way the servant had begged the king. But the servant refused, and had his friend thrown in prison until he paid."

Pause and ask: **"What do you think of that?"**

Did you know?

In Jesus's time, a **denarius** was a silver coin, and a day's work in a vineyard could be paid with one (Matthew 20:2). A **talent** was a huge amount of silver, usually reckoned at around 6,000 denarii. That's roughly twenty years of work for one talent. The servant owed ten thousand of them.

Jesus's listeners would have gasped at that number. It's like saying someone owed a billion dollars.

The big turn

Point to the jar.

"Jesus says this is us. Every wrong thing we've done is a debt we could never pay back. And God, like the king, has forgiven it all through Jesus."

Point to the few coins.

"When someone wrongs us, it's real and it hurts. But next to what we've been forgiven, it's a handful of coins. That's why we forgive."

Read Ephesians 4:32: "And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God also in Christ forgave you."

Talk about it

1. Why was it wrong for the servant to demand the coins back?
2. Does forgiving someone mean what they did was okay? (No. It means we let God handle it and don't hold it against them.)
3. Is there someone you find it hard to forgive?
4. How does remembering the big jar help us forgive?

Pray together

"God, thank you for forgiving us more than we could ever pay back. When someone hurts us, help us forgive them the way you forgave us. Amen."

Take it further

- **Elementary:** Give each child a coin to keep in their pocket all week as a reminder to forgive.
- **Preteen:** Read the end of the parable (Matthew 18:32-35) together. Why does Jesus end with such a serious warning?

God Is Love Object Lesson: The Flashlight and the Mirror

"Love starts with God. He loved us first, and we love other people by passing his love on, the way a mirror passes on light."

You'll need

- ☐ A flashlight (a phone light works)
- ☐ A square of aluminum foil for each child, smoothed flat
- ☐ A small hand mirror
- ☐ A room you can make fairly dark

Ages

Preschool (3-5), Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

This God is love object lesson uses a flashlight and a mirror to show kids what 1 John 4 means: love starts with God, he loved us first, and our love for other people is his love bouncing off us. It takes about ten minutes and works with preschoolers through preteens.

Get ready

Find a spot where you can dim the lights or close the blinds. Before class, practice shining the flashlight onto the mirror so a bright spot bounces onto the wall or ceiling. Smooth out a square of foil for each child.

Teach it: can a mirror shine?

Turn the lights down and hold up the mirror.

"This mirror is going to light up the room. Ready?"

Hold it up proudly. Nothing happens. Wait a few seconds.

"Hmm. Why isn't it working?"

(Usually: "It's not a light!") Switch on the flashlight and shine it onto the mirror. A spot of light jumps onto the wall.

"Now it shines. But did the mirror make that light?"

Let them answer. The mirror only passes on light it gets from somewhere else.

Read 1 John 4:7-8:

"Beloved, let's love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. He who doesn't love doesn't know God, for God is love."

"John says love comes from God, the way this light comes from the flashlight. God doesn't just do loving things. God *is* love."

The big turn: he loved us first

Shine the flashlight around the room so it lands on each child for a moment (keep it away from eyes).

"Did you do anything to earn that light? No. It just came to you."

Read 1 John 4:9-10:

"By this God's love was revealed in us, that God has sent his only born Son into the world that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins."

"God loved us first, before we ever loved him back. That's what John 3:16 says too: 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only born Son.'"

Now hand the mirror to a child and shine the flashlight on it. Help them aim the bounced light at a friend.

"Look where the light went. It came from the flashlight, hit the mirror, and landed on your friend. That's how God's love works. When you share, forgive, or sit with the kid who's alone, that's God's love bouncing off you onto somebody else."

Read 1 John 4:11 and 19:

"Beloved, if God loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another... We love him, because he first loved us."

Did you know?

In Bible times, most mirrors were not glass. They were discs of polished metal, usually **bronze**, and they had to be polished often to keep them shiny. Exodus 38:8 says the bronze washing basin at the Tent of Meeting was made "out of the mirrors of the ministering women." A metal mirror gave a dimmer, blurrier picture than ours, which is why Paul could say "we see in a mirror, dimly" (1 Corinthians 13:12) and everyone knew what he meant.

There's also an old story about John, the friend of Jesus that Christians have long credited with this letter. Jerome, a Bible scholar writing about three hundred years later, said that when John was very old in Ephesus he had to be carried to church, and every time he would say only one thing: "Little children, love one another." When people asked why he kept saying it, he answered that it was the Lord's command, and if they did only that, it was enough (Jerome, Commentary on Galatians 6:10). We can't be sure it happened exactly like that, but it sounds a lot like 1 John.

Talk about it

1. Could the mirror light up the room by itself? Where did its light come from?
2. God loved us first. What did he do to show it before we did anything?
3. Who is someone you could shine God's love on this week? How?
4. What makes it hard to love some people? What could help?

Pray together

Hand each child a foil square. Shine the flashlight on each one as you pray:

"God, thank you that you are love, and that you loved us first. Shine your love on us, and help us pass it on to (let kids say a name). Amen."

Take it further

- **Preschool:** Give each child a foil square to hold while you shine the light on it. Say together, "God loves me first." Then they point their light at a friend: "God loves you too."
- **Elementary:** If you have two or three hand mirrors, try bouncing the light from one mirror to the next and around a corner. Every mirror passes the light along, and none of them makes it. Ask: who passed God's love on to you?

- **Preteen:** Read Romans 8:38-39 and list everything Paul says can't separate us from God's love. Then have each student add one thing they worry might, and talk about why Paul says "nor any other created thing" covers it too.

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Mustard Seed Object Lesson on Faith

"Faith doesn't have to start big. When we trust God with a little faith, he grows it."

You'll need

- ☐ A jar of mustard seeds (spice aisle)
- ☐ A picture of a large mustard plant
- ☐ A small pot of soil
- ☐ A sticky note for each child

Ages

Preschool (3-5), Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

Get ready

Pour a few mustard seeds into each child's palm, or onto a sticky note so they don't scatter. Have the pot of soil and the picture ready.

Teach it

"Look closely at what's in your hand. How big is it? Could you lose it? Could you even find it if you dropped it on the carpet?"

Let kids react. Then hold up the picture of a full-grown mustard plant.

"This is what that tiny seed turns into."

Read Matthew 13:31-32:

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took, and sowed in his field, which indeed is smaller than all seeds. But when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches."

Did you know?

The people listening to Jesus knew mustard well. In his day, mustard was one of the flavors people cooked with, along with dill and cumin. Farmers and cooks would all have pictured that tiny seed. Jesus taught with things his listeners had in their kitchens.

The big turn

Later, Jesus's disciples couldn't do something they had tried to do, and they asked him why. Jesus told them that even faith as small as a mustard seed could move a mountain, and that nothing would be impossible for them (Matthew 17:20).

"Jesus didn't say, 'You need GIANT faith.' He said a seed-sized faith is enough to start, because God is the one who makes it grow."

Plant the seeds in the pot together. Explain that you'll watch them grow over the next few weeks.

Talk about it

1. How did the tiny seed become a big plant? Did the seed do it by trying really hard?
2. What is something you're worried about or need help with right now?
3. What would it look like to trust God with that, even with a little faith?
4. How can we help each other's faith grow?

Pray together

"God, sometimes our faith feels tiny. Thank you that you can grow it. Help us trust you with the big things and the small things this week. Amen."

Take it further

- **Preschool:** Tape one mustard seed to a card and let kids draw a giant plant growing out of it.
- **Elementary:** Each child writes one thing they want to trust God with on a sticky note and "plants" it in a class jar.
- **Preteen:** Compare Matthew 13:31-32 and Matthew 17:20. One is about God's kingdom and one is about our faith. How are they connected?

Object Lesson About Trusting God: Let Down the Net

"Trusting God means putting our whole weight on what he says, even when our own understanding says it won't work."

You'll need

- ☐ A sturdy chair
- ☐ A mesh produce bag (or a colander) for the net
- ☐ A big bowl of fish-shaped crackers, hidden under a dish towel
- ☐ A blue towel or blanket for the lake
- ☐ Extra crackers to share (check allergies first)

Ages

Preschool (3-5), Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

This object lesson about trusting God takes about ten minutes and uses a chair, a mesh bag and a bowl of fish crackers. Kids see the difference between saying you trust something and putting your weight on it, hear how Peter let down his net after a long, empty night (Luke 5:1-11), and learn to trust in the Lord with all their heart (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Get ready

Spread the blue towel on the floor. That's the lake. Lay the empty mesh bag on it. Hide the bowl of fish crackers under a dish towel nearby, and put the chair where everyone can see it.

Teach it: the chair

Point to the chair.

"Who thinks this chair can hold me?"

Most hands go up. Now stand in front of it and bend your knees, hovering just above the seat with your legs shaking.

"Okay, I believe this chair will hold me. Am I trusting the chair?"

(Usually: "No! Sit down!") Sit down and lift your feet off the floor.

"Now I'm trusting it. Saying I believe in the chair didn't do anything. Trust is when you put your whole weight on it."

Teach it: the empty net

Hold up the empty mesh bag.

"This is Peter's net. Peter was a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, and he had been out on the lake all night long. Guess how many fish he caught."

Turn the bag upside down and shake it. Nothing.

Tell Luke 5:1-4 in your own words. Peter and his partners were back on shore washing their nets. Jesus climbed into Peter's boat, taught the crowd from the water, and then said, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

"Now, Jesus grew up as a carpenter (Mark 6:3). Peter was the fisherman. Who do you think knew more about fishing?"

Let them answer. Then read Peter's reply:

"Master, we worked all night and caught nothing; but at your word I will let down the net." (Luke 5:5)

Pull the towel off the bowl and pour the fish crackers into the net until they spill over the sides.

"The net filled up so full it started to break. They called their friends in the other boat, and they filled both boats so full they began to sink."

Did you know?

Fishing on the Sea of Galilee was **night work**. One of the main nets, the trammel net, was set in the dark, because in daylight the fish could see the linen netting and swim around it. When Jesus found Peter, the night was over and the nets were being washed (Luke 5:2).

So Jesus wasn't only asking Peter to try again. He was asking a tired, expert fisherman to go back out at the wrong time of day and get his clean nets wet all over again. In 1986 a drought uncovered a real fishing boat from around that time in the mud of the lake, about 27 feet long and 7.5 feet wide, the kind of boat Peter would have used. Read more in [Fishing on the Sea of Galilee](#).

Trust in the Lord, not your own understanding

Sit back down in the chair and lean back.

Read Proverbs 3:5-6 (WEB British Edition):

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

"Peter's own understanding said, 'There are no fish today.' He knew a lot about fishing, and he still put his weight on what Jesus said. Trusting God doesn't mean you stop thinking. It means that when your worry and God's word disagree, you lean on God's word."

Point back to the overflowing net.

"And Peter's path did get straight. That same day he left everything and followed Jesus (Luke 5:11)."

Talk about it

1. What's the difference between saying the chair will hold you and sitting in it?
2. Peter was tired and had caught nothing all night. Why do you think he let down the net anyway?
3. What is something you're worried about right now that you could trust God with?
4. When is it hard to trust God instead of leaning on your own understanding?

Pray together

"God, sometimes our nets feel empty and we don't understand what's happening. Help us trust you with all our heart and lean on what you say. Thank you that you are strong enough to hold us. Amen."

Share the fish crackers.

Take it further

- **Preschool:** Let each child take a turn sitting in the "trust chair" and saying, "I trust God." Then let them scoop crackers into the net with you.
- **Elementary:** Try a trust walk. One partner closes their eyes and the other guides them across the room with words only ("three steps forward, turn left"). Clear the floor first. Afterward, ask: what made it easier to trust your guide?
- **Preteen:** Read John 21:1-14, another empty night and another full net. What's the same as Luke 5, and what's different? Then talk about Proverbs 3:6: what does it look like to "acknowledge him" in school, friendships and screens?

Object Lesson on Prayer: The Lord's Prayer in a Lunch Bag

"Jesus taught us to talk to God like children talk to a loving father, and to trust him for what we need today."

You'll need

Ages

Preschool (3-5), Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

- ☐ A paper lunch bag
- ☐ A family photo (or a quick drawing of a family)
- ☐ A name tag or sticky note with your name on it
- ☐ A paper crown
- ☐ One flatbread or one slice of bread
- ☐ A coin
- ☐ An oven mitt
- ☐ Extra bread or crackers to share (check allergies first)

This object lesson on prayer walks kids through the Lord's Prayer one line at a time, with an everyday object for each line pulled out of a lunch bag. Along the way they find out why "daily bread" mattered so much to families in Jesus's day, and that prayer is talking to a Father who already knows what they need (Matthew 6:8).

Get ready

Put the photo, name tag, crown, bread, coin and oven mitt in the lunch bag, in that order from bottom to top so the photo comes out first. Write the six lines of the prayer on a board or a sheet of paper if your kids can read.

Teach it: how not to pray

"Jesus's friends watched him pray all the time. One day one of them said, 'Lord, teach us to pray' (Luke 11:1). Before Jesus taught them what to say, he told them what *not* to do."

Read Matthew 6:7-8:

"In praying, don't use vain repetitions as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their much speaking. Therefore don't be like them, for your Father knows what things you need before you ask him."

"Prayer isn't magic words, and it isn't about being loud or long. It's talking to someone who already knows you. So Jesus gave them a short prayer. Let's open this bag and see how it goes."

Teach it: one object for each line

Pull the objects out one at a time. Read each line from Matthew 6:9-13, then say a sentence or two about it.

1. **Family photo.** "Our Father in heaven." Jesus told us to talk to God as our Father. In his own prayers he called God "Abba" (Mark 14:36), the everyday Aramaic word for father in a family.
2. **Name tag.** "May your name be kept holy." God's name is special. We say it with love and respect, and we ask that everyone would.
3. **Crown.** "Let your Kingdom come. Let your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth." God is King. We're asking for his good way to happen everywhere, starting with our house and our class.
4. **Bread.** "Give us today our daily bread." Not a whole year of bread, just today's. We ask God for what we need, and tomorrow we ask again.
5. **Coin.** "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors." When we do wrong, it's like owing a debt we can't pay. God forgives us, and he asks us to forgive other people too.
6. **Oven mitt.** "Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." An oven mitt keeps your hand safe from something that would burn it. We ask God to keep us away from things that would hurt us or pull us toward doing wrong.

Hold up the crown again for the last line: "For yours is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen."

Did you know?

Daily bread was a real, everyday worry. Bread was the main food in Jesus's world. Food historians estimate it made up somewhere between half and three-quarters of what an ordinary person ate. And many workers were hired one day at a time. In one of Jesus's stories, a vineyard owner agrees to pay "a denarius a day" and pays everyone "when evening had come" (Matthew 20:2, 8). God's law even said to pay a poor worker before sunset, because he is counting on it (Deuteronomy 24:15). For a family like that, a day's wages bought a day's bread. When Jesus taught them to pray "Give us today our daily bread," he was talking about tonight's supper.

People prayed at set times of day. Daniel knelt and prayed "three times a day" (Daniel 6:10), and Psalm 55:17 says "Evening, morning, and at noon." In Acts, Peter and John walk to the Temple "at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour" (Acts 3:1), around three in the afternoon, and Peter goes up on a flat rooftop to pray "at about noon" (Acts 10:9). An early Christian handbook called the Didache, probably written within a century of Jesus, quotes the Lord's Prayer and then says to pray it three times a day.

Talk about it

1. Jesus told us to call God "Father." What does that tell you about how God listens?
2. Why do you think Jesus taught us to ask for today's bread, not a whole year's worth?
3. Which line of the prayer is easiest for you to pray? Which one is hardest?
4. What is one thing you could talk to God about every day this week?

Pray together

Hand the six objects to six kids. Pray the Lord's Prayer together slowly, and have each child hold up their object when you reach their line. Share the bread or crackers afterward.

Take it further

- **Preschool:** Make up a hand motion for each object (arms around yourself for "Father," hands on your head for the crown, rubbing your tummy for bread) and pray it with motions.

- **Elementary:** Make a "morning, noon and night" card for the fridge. In each box, kids write or draw one short prayer: a thank-you in the morning, a help-me at noon, a sorry or a goodnight in the evening.
- **Preteen:** Compare Matthew 6:9-13 with Luke 11:1-4. What's the same and what's different? Then have each student rewrite one line in their own words for their own week.

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Salt and Light Object Lesson for Kids

"Jesus's followers make the world better, like salt, and show God's goodness, like light, through the way they live."

You'll need

- ☐ Plain, unsalted popcorn or crackers
- ☐ A salt shaker
- ☐ A battery tea light (or a small lamp)
- ☐ A bowl or basket big enough to cover it

Ages

Preschool (3-5), Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

Get ready

Put a little unsalted popcorn in two bowls. Salt one bowl. Switch on the tea light and hide the basket nearby.

Teach it: salt

Give each child a piece from the **unsalted** bowl.

"How does it taste?" (Usually: "Boring!")

Now give them a piece from the salted bowl.

"What changed? Just a tiny bit of salt made a big difference."

Read Matthew 5:13: "You are the salt of the earth."

"Jesus said his followers are like salt. When you're kind, honest and helpful, you make your family, your class and your team better, the way salt makes popcorn better."

Did you know?

In Jesus's day there were no fridges. Salt seasoned food, and it also **kept fish and meat from going bad**. The lakeside town of Magdala, near where Jesus taught, was famous for salting fish so it could be carried far away.

So when Jesus called his friends "salt," his listeners would have thought of two things: making food better, and keeping good things from going bad.

Teach it: let your light shine

Turn off the room lights (or close the blinds) and hold up the tea light.

"In Jesus's day, houses had small windows. At night, a clay oil lamp was the only light in the whole house."

Now cover the light with the basket.

"Would anybody do this? Light a lamp and then hide it?"

Read Matthew 5:14-16:

"You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill can't be hidden. Neither do you light a lamp and put it under a measuring basket, but on a stand; and it shines to all who are in the house. Even so, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Lift the basket off and set the light up high.

"Jesus says your kindness isn't supposed to be hidden. When people see the good things you do, they get a glimpse of how good God is."

Talk about it

1. What did a little salt do to the popcorn? What could a little kindness do in your class?
2. Why would hiding a lamp under a basket be silly?
3. What is one way you can "shine" at home this week?
4. Is it harder to be salt and light at school or at home? Why?

Pray together

"God, thank you for making us salt and light. Help us make the people around us glad, and help our kindness point them to you. Amen."

Take it further

- **Preschool:** Let kids take turns covering and uncovering the light while everyone shouts "Let it shine!"
- **Elementary:** Make a "salt and light" list on the board: one thing that makes a place better (salt) and one thing that shows God's love (light).
- **Preteen:** Talk about what makes salt "lose its flavor" (Matthew 5:13). What might make a Christian's kindness lose its flavor?

Thanksgiving Object Lesson: The Firstfruits Basket

"Everything good we have comes from God, and thankful people stop, turn around and tell him so."

You'll need

- ☐ A basket
- ☐ Fruit from Bible lands (grapes or raisins, figs or fig bars, a pomegranate or apple, olives, dates)
- ☐ A strip of string or ribbon
- ☐ 10 paper people (or 10 clothespins with faces drawn on)
- ☐ A paper fruit shape or sticky note for each child, and markers
- ☐ Extra raisins or grapes to share (check allergies first)

Ages

Preschool (3-5), Elementary (6-10), Preteen (10-12)

This Thanksgiving object lesson on thankfulness comes in two parts. First kids fill a harvest basket the way Israelite farmers brought their first fruit to God (Deuteronomy 26), then a ten lepers object lesson with paper people shows the one man who turned back to say thank you (Luke 17:11-19). Want it on paper? This thankfulness object lesson is also in the [free printable teacher kit PDF](#).

Get ready

Put the fruit in the basket. Tie the string loosely around one bunch of grapes (or one fig). Line up the ten paper people on a table across the room, and keep the paper fruit shapes and markers handy.

Teach it: the basket

Hold up the basket.

"This is a harvest basket. A long time ago, before there were grocery stores, families grew almost everything they ate. What would happen if the figs didn't grow, or the grapes dried up?"

Let kids answer. (No snacks, no lunch, no money.)

"So when the first fruit of the year finally got ripe, it was a big deal. And God gave his people a special way to celebrate."

Read Deuteronomy 26:2 and 10:

"...you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you shall bring in from your land that the LORD your God gives you. You shall put it in a basket... Now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, LORD, have given me."

Take the fruit out one piece at a time and name it. Point to the grapes with the string around them.

"The farmer didn't wait to see how much he would get. He gave God the very first fruit. It was his way of saying, 'All of this came from you.'"

Did you know?

A Jewish writing called the Mishnah, written down around AD 200, describes how this worked near the time of Jesus. A farmer walked into his field, and when he saw the first ripe fig, grape cluster or pomegranate, he **tied a reed string around it** and said, "Let these be firstfruits."

Later, whole villages traveled up to Jerusalem together. An **ox walked in front with its horns covered in gold** and a crown of olive leaves on its head, and a flute played the whole way. Rich families carried baskets covered in silver or gold. Poor families carried baskets woven from willow branches. Both kinds of basket were welcome.

At the Temple, everyone carried their own basket on their shoulder, even King Agrippa. Then they said the thank-you words from Deuteronomy 26 out loud.

The ten lepers object lesson: the one who came back

Point to the ten paper people.

"Here's another story about thank-you, from when Jesus was grown up."

Tell Luke 17:11-19 in your own words. Ten men had a skin disease called leprosy. They had to live away from everyone else, so they stood far off and shouted, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" Jesus told them to go and show themselves to the priests, the people who could say they were well again. **On the way, all ten were healed.**

Walk all ten paper people across the table toward "the priests." Then stop and pull one back.

"One of them looked down and saw his skin was healed. He turned around, ran back shouting praise to God, and fell down at Jesus's feet to say thank you."

Read Luke 17:17-18:

"Weren't the ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there none found who returned to give glory to God, except this stranger?"

"All ten got the same gift. Only one came back. The nine weren't bad people. They were just in a hurry and forgot. Being thankful means stopping and turning around to say it."

Talk about it

1. Why do you think the farmer gave God the first fruit instead of the leftovers?
2. All ten men were healed. What made the one who came back different?
3. What is something good God has given you that's easy to forget to say thank you for?
4. Who is one person you could "go back" and thank this week?

Pray together

Hand out the paper fruit shapes. Each child writes or draws one thing they're thankful for, then puts it in the basket. Hold up the full basket and pray:

"God, everything in this basket came from you. Thank you for (let kids call out what they wrote). Help us be like the one who came back, and remember to say thank you every day. Amen."

Take it further

- **Preschool:** Share the raisins or grapes. Before each child eats, they say one thing they're thankful for. Count the paper people together: ten went, one came back.
- **Elementary:** Make a class "firstfruits" basket that stays out until Thanksgiving. Add one new thank-you each week.
- **Preteen:** Read Deuteronomy 26:5-11. The farmer tells Israel's whole story (slavery, rescue, the land) before he gives his basket. Have each student write a short "my story" thank-you: three things God has brought them through.

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Books of the Bible Word Search

MEDIUM WORD SEARCH

Name _____

"Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105

U	U	W	B	T	Q	W	V	S	Y	P	H
Z	L	C	M	C	J	J	I	T	Y	S	E
J	E	X	O	D	U	S	H	C	P	A	X
O	Y	J	Y	S	E	X	L	R	A	L	D
N	J	K	V	N	V	W	X	W	C	M	Q
A	O	U	E	I	G	K	F	R	T	S	L
H	H	G	Q	R	O	M	A	N	S	H	P
H	N	J	L	G	R	D	X	F	B	I	X
M	A	T	T	H	E	W	M	R	K	V	Y
J	O	B	F	B	V	I	A	U	M	Z	Q
R	T	X	K	P	Y	N	R	T	Z	D	W
D	V	E	L	U	K	E	K	H	S	K	S

☐ Genesis

☐ Exodus

☐ Psalms

☐ Jonah

☐ Matthew

☐ Mark

☐ Luke

☐ John

☐ Acts

☐ Ruth

☐ Job

☐ Romans

Books of the Bible Word Search

ANSWER KEY



12 words · Medium: adds diagonals

Christmas Bible Word Search

MEDIUM WORD SEARCH

Name _____

"For there is born to you today, in David's city, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

P J Z A R R J F T L R J
G B E T H L E H E M B M
S H E P H E R D S E A A
K E C S O F O U D S B R
D M M R I K S Y O Z Y Y
U A S N Z E G L O R Y H
T N P K J W W H S N R Y
T G T E N W A F A N S N
C E Z D A B N R V T T V
H R H J N C G F I O A X
J O S E P H E D O X R E
G K V L X Y L Q R O A G

☐ Jesus

☐ Mary

☐ Joseph

☐ Manger

☐ Angel

☐ Star

☐ Baby

☐ Shepherds

☐ Bethlehem

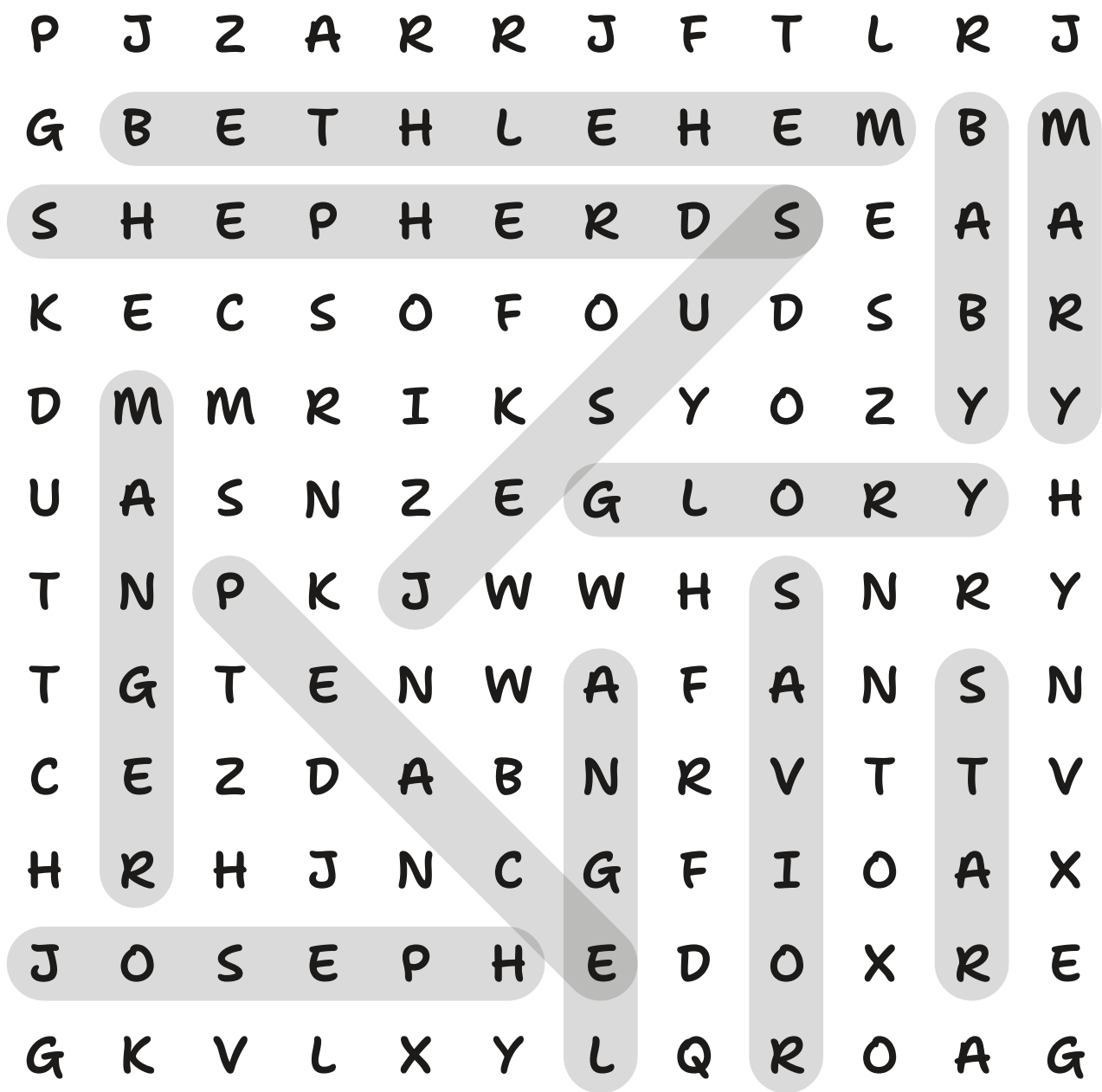
☐ Savior

☐ Glory

☐ Peace

Christmas Bible Word Search

ANSWER KEY



12 words · Medium: adds diagonals

Feeding the 5,000 Word Search

MEDIUM WORD SEARCH

Name _____

"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will not be hungry." John 6:35

B	B	V	M	H	G	R	A	S	S	I	P
L	K	M	F	I	E	L	G	J	Z	A	T
G	L	J	P	L	R	Y	Q	S	N	R	W
I	F	E	H	L	B	A	S	K	E	T	O
V	C	S	I	S	B	A	X	W	X	J	F
E	R	U	L	I	K	P	N	F	L	H	I
T	O	S	I	D	Y	Z	U	D	N	W	S
H	W	J	P	E	T	H	E	E	R	H	H
A	D	F	I	V	E	L	O	A	V	E	S
N	K	B	A	R	L	E	Y	Q	V	S	W
K	O	T	W	E	L	V	E	O	C	T	L
S	X	D	O	G	L	Q	R	G	Q	H	E

☐ Jesus

☐ Five loaves

☐ Two fish

☐ Barley

☐ Basket

☐ Andrew

☐ Philip

☐ Crowd

☐ Hillside

☐ Grass

☐ Give thanks

☐ Twelve

Feeding the 5,000 Word Search

ANSWER KEY



12 words · Medium: adds diagonals

Thanksgiving Bible Word Search

MEDIUM WORD SEARCH

Name _____

"In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus toward you." 1

Thessalonians 5:18

V G G L A D S U Z G V I
A I I E A S R F D I S X
D V G F E I M I F Q H Z
P E G A T N D I D J E H
A T O R T G O V N S E W
S H O N D E S S I X P B
T A D K G H S A J O Y Z
U N S C O U R T S F C N
R K V D P P N M E S G D
E S E P X T D J U G Y S
T H A N K S G I V I N G
R M Z H B L E S S E Z G

☐ Give thanks

☐ Praise

☐ Joy

☐ Sing

☐ Glad

☐ Sheep

☐ Good

☐ Bless

☐ Thanksgiving

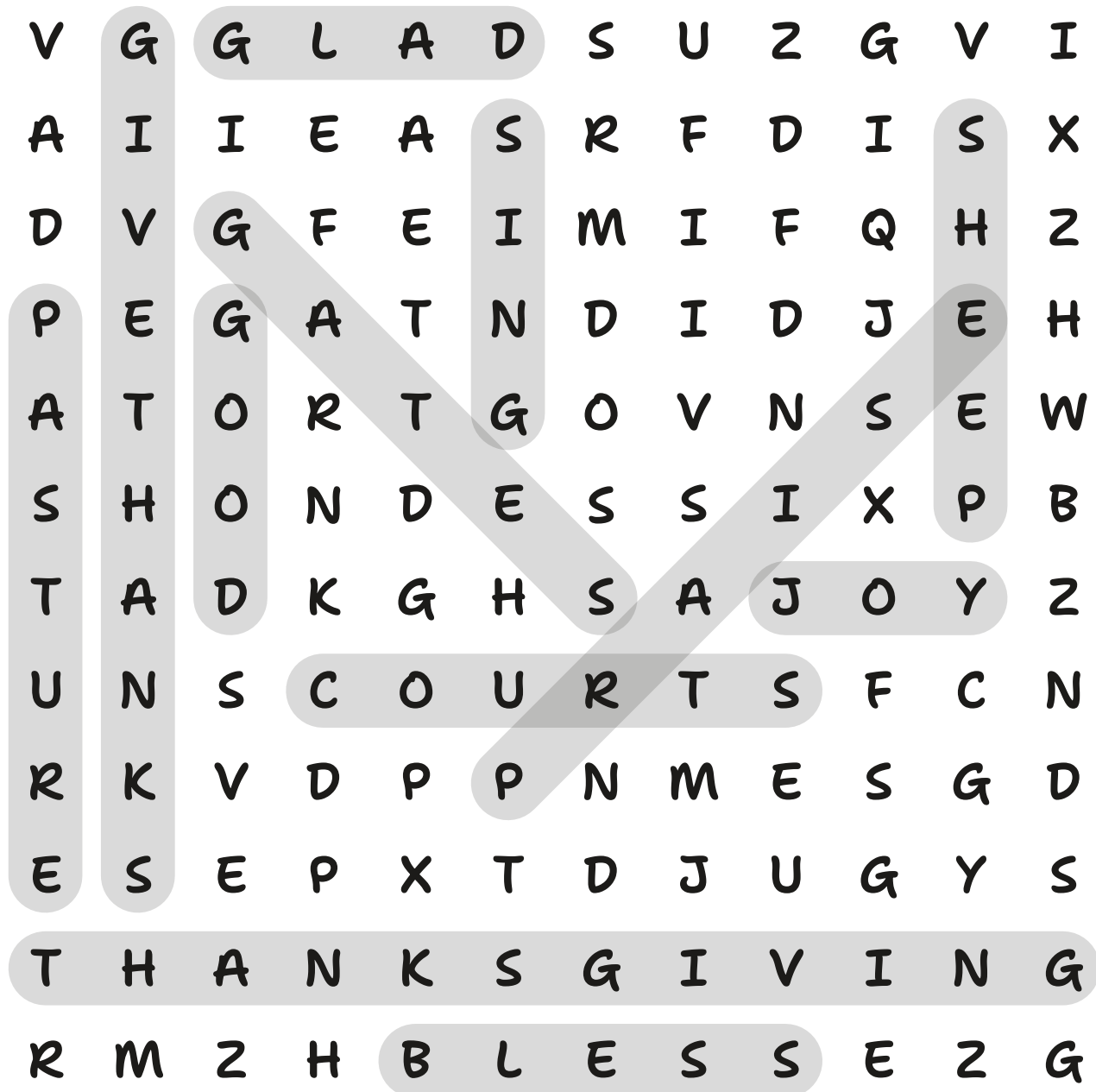
☐ Gates

☐ Courts

☐ Pasture

Thanksgiving Bible Word Search

ANSWER KEY



12 words · Medium: adds diagonals

GOOD NEWS DOODLES



In Jesus's day, bread was half of everything people ate.