

## PRACTICE GRATITUDE AS A FAMILY

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At the age of eleven, I was a bit dramatic. I didn't get the part of Annie in our community theater's production of *Annie*. Instead, I was playing Pepper, a supporting role. And I was crushed. I felt that the sun would *not* come out tomorrow. For days, I moped around the house, occasionally shedding a tear when I was reminded of my failure. But being the supportive parents they were, my mom and dad found a way to cheer me up. They suggested that instead of focusing my energy mourning the part I *didn't* get, I should celebrate the part I had and give it my all. They reminded me that God gave me some really great gifts, and he gave me this opportunity to have fun in the role I was playing.



Life as a kid isn't easy. I'm reminded of that every week when I work with kids at our church. I'm sure you're reminded of that as you interact with your kids. But we can encourage our kids to adopt a more positive attitude by looking at life in a positive way. It doesn't mean lying to ourselves or being fake. It just means that we try to see the good in every situation.

Try these exercises to practice gratitude as a family. It will help your kids see the sun behind the clouds, and it may help you do the same.

### Read about it!

The book of Psalms is full of expressions of gratitude. Read [Psalm 89](#) as a family. As you read, point out that the author is being very real. He doesn't sugarcoat the truth or hide the bad. The psalmist tells of God's goodness, but he also talks about the trouble he is in. He tells the whole truth, and that reveals exactly the God that he is grateful for.

### Think about it!

As a family, make a list of the things that you're thankful for and put it on your refrigerator. Read the list and keep adding to it every day. You may realize that even thinking about gratitude can lead you to live a life that is more focused on praising and thanking God.

### Sing about it!

Find some worship songs about gratitude and print out the lyrics. Play the songs in your house and sing along as a family. We're commanded to sing to the Lord, and you'll find a special joy when you sing as a family with grateful hearts.

Here are some song suggestions:

"Gratitude" by Brandon Lake

"Thank You" by Jonathan David Helser

"I Thank God" by Maverick City Music & Upperroom

Remind your kids that though we can't always change our situations, we can change our attitudes. Gratitude is like a kaleidoscope. When we look at life through the lens of gratitude, it changes the way we see the

world. We see brightness, color, and beauty that we didn't notice before. And when we're feeling down, an attitude of gratitude can help us realize that God has given us a lot to be grateful for. As a family, you'll find that gratitude leads us to praise and give thanks to the God who loves us so much.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Cultivating Contentment: The Gratitude Challenge](#).

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