

LWMLC Children's Message 2021

Today we are talking about gifts. Who here likes to get a gift? *(let kids raise their hands)* What are some of the times when you get gifts? *(birthday, Christmas, Easter?, graduation...)* Who do you get gifts from? *(family, friends...)* What should you do after you get a gift? *(Say "Thank you," write a thank you note)*

Did you know you get gifts every day – even when it's not your birthday, or Christmas, or... *(use an example from what a child said before)*? God gives us His heavenly gifts each day. What are some of those gifts? *(life, food, water, air, shelter, clothing, protection, help, faith, love, strength, salvation...)* And just like we say "thank you" to those who give us earthly gifts, we pray to God and say "thank you" for His gifts too. In fact, we can do one more thing to say "thank you" to God for His everyday gifts – we can use what He has given us to help and serve someone else.

In order to help us see how we can say "thank you" to God and serve Him by serving others, I brought a heart. When we think of a heart we think of love, and because God loves us so much in sending His Son Jesus to save us from our sin, we want to love God back and love others too. So here are some ways we can love and serve God for being such a great, loving, gift-giving God.

(Hold up heart, point to each word or phrase, and give examples of how we can serve others in God's Name in each of these words.)

But there's a problem. You and I can't do these things on our own. We are sinners who disobey God and don't say "thank you" for everything God gives us. Sometimes we are selfish with our gifts and we don't want to use them to serve God and someone else. We need God's forgiveness and help.

Jesus helped us by being born in Bethlehem to teach us about God and His plan to save us from our sin. He then died on a cross and shed His blood to pay for our sinful disobedience to God. His blood now covers our sins and washes them away so we can be forgiven. In faith, He lives in our hearts to give us His strength so we can serve God and others all of these ways and so many more.

(Fold two red heart halves over the words.)

Because Jesus lives in our hearts and His shed blood covers our sins, it is now our honour to serve Him. That means we are so proud and happy to have Jesus in our hearts and lives that we want to love and serve Jesus just like He does us. With Jesus working in us and through us, we can make someone else's life better just like He does for us by using the gifts He gives us.

Let us pray: *Dear God, thank you for sending us Your gifts every day – especially the gift of forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life in Jesus. Help us to use those gifts to serve someone else. It is our honour to serve others in Your Name. Amen.*

(As an added bonus, give each child a gift from LWMLC and ask them to use it in service to God.)

Heart Instructions

Cut out two identical hearts from some sturdy cardboard and write the words on one of them exactly as shown below.



Cut the other heart in half vertically and then remove enough from each half so that when folded over the first heart, the word "honour" appears. Colour the halves red to symbolize Jesus' blood. Attach the two halves at points A and B and fold them behind the first heart at the start so they are out of sight.

