Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

How do you choose thanks?

“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”

What does God say?

“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.”

Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

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Teaching Objectives

for use in evaluations

1. **Practice actively looking and listening for things to be thankful for both inside and outside the gym.**
    a. Begin each class with students sharing something they were thankful for this week **outside of the gym**. *(Students will be given a weekly thankful diary page. Coaches are encouraged to fill these out as well to lead by example and encourage participation.)*
    b. End each class by sharing something they were thankful for **during their class.**
    c. Saying a genuine “thank you" to at least two people during class.

2. **Help students connect complaining to unhappiness and thankfulness to happiness.**
    a. When a student begins to complain, ask, “Are you happy or unhappy right now?”
    b. “What can you do to help yourself become happier?”
    c. Use the **Grumbling >>> Thankful** chart as a guide. The suggested bullet points can be read by the student, asked by the coach, or stated as a fact by the coach.

3. **Students will learn practical ways to choose thankfulness by using the Grumbling >>> Thankful chart during class time.**

*Don’t confuse a genuine injury with grumbling! There may be a time later to discuss things they learned and give thanks - but not now.

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How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

2023 Spring

THANKFULNESS

March 6 - May 31

Closed:

April 7-8 (Easter Break)

May 21: Starwatch Student Show

March 2023

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2023

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	~~7~~	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2023

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Story: The Beautiful Scar

Main Points Each Week:

Lesson 1: I experience happiness **after** I choose thankfulness.
Lesson 2: A thankful mindset sees what others miss.
Lesson 3: A thankful mindset sees what others miss.
Lesson 4: Thankful people see beauty in the ugly.
Lesson 5: A thankful heart believes God is in control.
Lesson 6: Thankful people care about others and want to help them.
Lesson 7: I will stop and think about what is good when I feel grumpy and choose thanks.
Lesson 8: Finding thankfulness may take a lot of effort *and* belief in God’s goodness.
Lesson 9: Finding thankfulness may take a lot of effort *and* belief in God’s goodness.
Lesson 10: When I’m thankful, I’m telling God that I believe He can turn bad things into victories.
Lesson 11: When I choose thankfulness, I’m better able to see my situation the way God sees it.
Lesson 12: I experience happiness **after** I choose thankfulness.

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: "I Choose Thanks"

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
"I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."	"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2

Week 1: March 6-11 (No story)

1. **Intro:** How many of you want to enjoy a happy life? Do you know anyone who *doesn't* want to have a happy life? This season we're going to learn the secret to a happy life. There's one thing that will make the difference between a happy life and an unhappy life. Any guesses what that might be?
    a. *It's thankfulness. If you choose to be a thankful person, even when bad things happen, you're choosing a life of happiness.*

2. **Teach and repeat the declaration, verse, and sign language *several times.***

3. **Lesson 1: I experience happiness *after* I choose thankfulness.**
    a. **What is thankfulness?**
        i. Thankfulness is being aware of the good I have been given.
            1. I use my senses: eyes, ears, touch, smell, taste to *notice* the good around me.
            2. I use my brain to *think about, understand, and focus on* the good in my life.
        ii. Thankfulness is something I **choose**. I can always choose to be thankful or unthankful.
    b. **What does our declaration mean?**
        i. Our declaration reminds us how to practice choosing thankfulness.
        ii. **Pause.** We need to slow down, stop our hurrying, and use our senses to observe.
        iii. **Remember.** Think carefully. Look over your life for the good God has put in it.
        iv. **Enjoy.** God has given you many good things. Have you taken time to enjoy them? Or are you thinking about what you don't have?
        v. **Gifts God has given.** Many good things you have in your life you have *not worked for*. They're gifts from other people and God. Remembering these free gifts should make us thankful. Things *we did work for* are also gifts since God gives us the ability to do work!
        vi. **Today.** It's not helpful to worry about tomorrow or to wish you could change the past. Instead, we should think about the good things we value in our lives today.
    c. **Choosing to be thankful is sometimes very hard!** But it **is** a choice. By choosing to make thankfulness greater than the bad things happening in our life, we can experience happiness.

4. **Application:** This season, we're going to practice looking and listening for things to be thankful for both inside and outside the gym.
    a. We'll begin each class by sharing something you were thankful for this week **outside** the gym.
        i. We're going to create a weekly thankful diary. *(show diary page and explain.)*
    b. We'll end class with everyone sharing something you were thankful for **during your class.**
    c. And I want everyone to say "thank you" to at least two people during class for something they helped you with or something kind they said.

5. **Practice declaration, verse, and sign language.**

Repeat together: **I experience happiness *after* I choose thankfulness.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 2: March 13-18

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** What is the character quality we’re studying this season? *(Have students share their thankful diary entries.)*
   - **a.** Our story this season is titled *The Beautiful Scar.* It's about learning to be thankful even when bad things happen in our lives.
3. **Lesson 2: A thankful mindset sees what others miss.**
4. **Listen to Chapter 1 of story:** *“Evacuate!”*
5. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class.)**
   - a. Why is the Matson family forced to leave their house immediately?
     - *i. A firestorm has broken out and is racing toward their property.*
   - b. What happens when Wayne says he’ll get the horse trailer ready?
     - *i. His dad says there’s no time - just let them go.*
     - *ii. He argues, but his dad opens the gate himself and lets them out.*
   - c. Where does the family go?
     - *i. Florence Elementary School, the temporary shelter for evacuees.*
   - d. How does Wayne respond to his dad’s prayer, thanking God for their safety?
     - *i. He’s so angry he’s ready to explode..*
     - *ii. He doesn’t think God is at all good and wants nothing to do with Him.*
6. **Truth:** God tells us in the Bible* to, *“Give thanks in every situation because this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”* *(coach: notice it says “in”, not “for” every situation)*
7. **Application:**
   - **a. Introduce the Grumbling >>> Thankful Chart.**
     - *i. Explain how you will use this in class to help them focus on what is good so they can change their grumbling into thankfulness and feel happier.*
8. **Wrap Up:** Jack Matson focused on what he did NOT lose - *his family* - and was very thankful. Wayne focused on what he DID lose - *his horses* - and became angry. You will always have a choice as to how you respond to unpleasant things that happen to you. One leads to joy and contentment, the other leads to sorrow and anger. Choose wisely!

Repeat together: A thankful mindset sees what others miss.

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

*1 Thessalonians 5:18 CEB

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: "I Choose Thanks"

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
"I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."	"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2

Week 3: March 20-25

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** Who remembers what thankfulness is?
   i. *Thankfulness is being aware of the good I have been given.*
   ii. *What happened this week that you were thankful for?*
3. **Lesson 3: A thankful mindset sees what others miss.**
4. **Short review:** Wayne Matson and his family just barely escaped an explosive firestorm. Jack, Wayne's dad, released Scar and Beauty, Wayne's dearly loved horses, in hopes that they could escape. They throw bags of supplies in the truck and the family of four races down Grizzly Run to Florence Elementary School, the temporary shelter. As Jack prays, thanking God for His goodness and the family's safety, Wayne is fuming with anger. The family has just lost everything - including his precious horses - and he sees no goodness in God at all. He decides He wants nothing to do with God.
5. **Listen to Chapter 2 of story:** *Memories*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class.)**
   a. How does Wayne respond to his dad's prayer? (of thanking God for their safety)
      i. *He's shocked that his dad could thank God when they have just lost everything.*
      ii. *He doesn't believe God is at all good and storms from the room.*
   b. If your family's house and all you owned was just destroyed by a fire or tornado, do you think you would be like Jack and thank God? Or like Wayne and be angry?
   c. What did Wayne and his dad see when they peered over the edge of the road?
      i. *A pack of wolves chasing two horses.*
      ii. *One wolf leaped on the back of a horse and wounded it.*
   d. What did the Bitterroot Humane Society tell Jack when they called him?
      i. *They found the horses and took them to a vet and thanked him.*
7. **Application:**
   a. What does our bible verse say we should *always* be doing?
      i. *We should always be watchful and thankful.*
   b. To be watchful means to be alert and to look and listen closely to what's around you, not just glance at things. *(Show Suppl. 1)*
      i. Are these kids being watchful? *(No)*
      ii. Are they missing anything? *(Answers)*
         1. *(If no one sees the money tree, point it out.)*
         2. *Can they be thankful if they aren't looking carefully for good things around them?*
         3. *Thankful people **look** for the good around them. They see things others miss.*
         4. *Today in class, be watchful and look for good things. I want to hear what you found at the end!*

Repeat together: **A thankful mindset sees what others miss.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 4: March 27 - April 1

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in**: Students share their thankful diary entries. *(Coaches - start it off with your own thankful story if no one shares.)*
3. **Lesson 4: Thankful people see beauty in the ugly.**
4. **Short review:** While in the parking lot of the school, Wayne thinks back to when he was 5 years old. He and his dad were loading wood into the truck on a trail near a rocky drop off. They heard barking below and witnessed two horses being chased by a wolf pack. One was attacked, leaving a painful wound. Jack notified the animal shelter when they got home.Two days later they notified him that they had found the lost horses and were now in foster care.
5. **Listen to Chapter 3 of story:** *Scar and Beauty*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class.)**
    a. How did little Wayne end up the happy owner of the two horses?
        i. *Wayne visited them every week and when they were finally ready to be adopted, he became the new owner.*
    b. What problem did Wayne have after he brought them home?
        i. *He couldn’t tell them apart! They looked exactly alike.*
    c. How was Wayne finally able to tell one horse from another so he could name them?
        i. *He discovered a scar on the rump of one, which he then named Scar.*
    d. Why did Wayne’s dad suggest the other horse should be named Beauty?
        i. *Because God had made something beautiful happen out of a very bad, ugly situation.*
        ii. *The two horses were almost killed by wolves, but they were found by Jack and Wayne and now they had a good home and Wayne had two beautiful horses.*
    e. Did little Wayne think the horse’s scar was ugly? *(No right answer.)* What did his dad say about the scar?
        i. *“Even a scar can be beautiful to those who understand.”*
    f. Now, it’s 7 years later. Do you think Wayne remembers what his dad said about bad situations?
        i. *He’s only seeing what is happening right now. He’s choosing to grumble and be angry and isn’t even trying to see anything good.*
7. **Application:**
    a. This week, something will happen you really don’t like and you’ll feel like complaining.
    b. Take out your diary, look over the categories, then **choose** something to be thankful about.
    c. Look for beauty in the ugly, be thankful, then see if your grumbling begins to change to a happier mindset. Tell us about it next week. I’ll do the same!

Repeat together: **Thankful people see beauty in the ugly.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: "I Choose Thanks"

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
"I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."	"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2

Week 5: April 3-8

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** Students share their thankful diary entries.
3. **Lesson 5: A thankful heart believes God is in control.**
4. **Short review:** Wayne visits the two horses every week for eight months then becomes the new owner. The horses look exactly alike so Wayne doesn't know how to name them. He discovers a scar on the rump of one horse and decides to name him Scar. His dad suggests naming the other horse Beauty because God had turned a very dangerous situation into something beautiful. These two horses were being chased by hungry wolves, but were now in a loving home with a good owner. But now, seven years later, Wayne cannot see anything good and refuses to even try.
5. **Listen to Chapter 4 of story:** *Just Give Me My Horses Back*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class.)**
    a. What happened to Pastor Shane when the fire broke out?
        i. *He lost his ranch; he let his cattle and mules go; he had no time to gather any supplies and barely escaped an explosion.*
    b. Did Pastor Shane *feel* like thanking God or preaching that morning? *(No)* But what did he do?
        i. *He opened his bible anyway and read:* "*Giving thanks is a sacrifice that truly honors Me.*"
    c. Is Shane sure he has faith and trust in God? *(No)* How can he find out?
        i. *By being tested! This fire is a BIG test since he has lost all he owns!*
    d. What does Pastor Shane pray for?
        i. *He asks God to make them all watchful, thankful, and to lead them into victories.*
    e. What is Wayne's reaction to the pastor's sermon?
        i. *"Just give me my horses back." He still sees no good in any of this.*
7. **Application:**
    a. What are some good things that Wayne could be thankful for?
        i. *His family is safe; the church people who provide food and other needed things; neighbors, so he's not all alone*
    b. What is something you're having trouble with right now?
        i. *a skill? bad grade? a mad friend?*
    c. In whatever trouble you are having right now, what can you thank God for?
        i. *A coach who helps me with a skill; parents and teachers who help me improve my grade; remember the fun times with this friend and ask God for wisdom to fix things.*
8. **Wrap Up:** God is *always* with us and in control! It's like a coach who tells you to do a new hard and scary skill you don't want to try. But they know you are ready and able. They have done this for many students and know how happy you'll be afterward. They push you to do it. You must believe they know what they're doing and that you'll be better and happier afterward. This is what God does for us.

Repeat together: **A thankful heart believes God is in control.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

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“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 6: April 10-15

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** Students share their thankful diary entries.
3. **Lesson 6: Thankful people care about others and want to help them.**
4. **Short review:** Shane is the pastor at Morning Star Church. He, too, lost his property in the fire and doesn’t *feel* like thanking God. But he *chooses* to do so anyway, testing his own faith. He encourages everyone to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and to believe God will bring victories from this tragedy. Wayne still refuses to be thankful and only wants his horses back.
5. **Listen to Chapter 5 of story:** *The Wilson Ranch*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class.)**
   a. Why did Curtis want to help Wayne?
      i. *He heard him mumble about his horses and could tell he was angry.*
      ii. *He wanted to help him see God’s goodness in this tragedy.*
   b. Where do they go everyday now?
      i. *To Wilson’s ranch to take care of horses who belong to the people staying at the school.*
   c. What changes happened as Curtis and Wayne spent time together everyday?
      i. *They became good friends; Curtis taught Wayne a lot about horses; Wayne was in a better mood.*
   d. What did Curtis pray for each night?
      i. *For God to help Wayne see the daily blessings all around him.*
      ii. *He thanked God for bringing Wayne into my life.*
   e. Where are Curtis and Wayne going now?
      i. *To Curtis’s home because his road is now open.*
7. **Application:**
   a. Our declaration and verse tell us to pause, remember, and pray.
   b. Follow the example of Curtis tonight and every night. Pause, remember, and pray.
   c. The bible says, *“I thank God every time I remember you.”* Pause and thank God for the special people in your life tonight and every night!
8. **Wrap Up:** Being thankful is the result of being watchful. Make watchfulness a habit! And thank God for what you see.

Repeat together: **Thankful people care about others and want to help them.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 7: April 17-22

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** Students (and coaches) share their thankful diary entries.
3. **Lesson 7: I will stop and think about what is good when I feel grumpy and choose thanks.**
4. **Short Review:** Curtis is a little-known church member also living at the school. He hears Wayne grumble about his horses after Pastor Shane’s sermon. Wayne’s parents are thrilled that Curtis wants to help. Curtis invites Wayne to help care for the evacuees' horses at the Wilson ranch. He and Curtis become fast friends as they visit the ranch daily. Though Wayne’s mood improves, he sinks into dark silence each night during family prayer. Curtis is also praying each night. He’s thanking God for Wayne and praying that he will see the daily blessings around him.
5. **Listen to Chapter 6 of story:** *A World Full of Night*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class.)**
   a. How did Curtis and Wayne react differently when they saw the boulder blockade?
      i. *Curtis was thankful they didn’t crash into it.*
      ii. *Wayne just saw it as a nasty roadblock they couldn’t drive around.*
   b. What was the scenery like once they turned the corner?
      i. *Beautiful green forest that had not been touched by the fire.*
   c. Why did Wayne miss so much of the beauty as they walked toward Curtis’s house?
      i. *His anger at God drove him into a dark mindset so he couldn’t think about anything else.*
7. **Truth:** Listen to this verse from God’s word: *“Brothers and sisters,* ***continue to think about what is good*** *and worthy of praise. Think about what is true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected.”**
8. **Application:**
   a. Try this: Close your eyes. Think about something that you really don’t like to do and tend to complain about. Maybe a chore, homework or even conditioning here in the gym. *(let them think)* How do you feel?
   b. Now think about something good. Maybe friends, pets, the new skill you just got, good food! *(think)* How do you feel now?
   c. Lastly, try to think about both of them *at the very same time*. *(think)* Can you be both grumpy and happy at the same time?
   d. Life is full of choices. Choose to stop, remember, and enjoy the good gifts around you!

Repeat together: **I will stop and think about what is good when I feel grumpy and choose thanks.**

Hand out diary page after class

COACHES: MID-SEASON CHECK-UP

Have you asked any parents about their child’s growth in the area of thankfulness? Are they aware of the diaries that are being sent home each week? Parents I need to connect with:

Can you clearly identify any progress your students have made in achieving the objectives? Do any still need extra attention? What can you do to help them along?

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*Philippians 4:8 ERV

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Week 8: April 24-29

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** Students (and coaches) share their thankful diary entries.
3. **Lesson 8: Finding thankfulness may take a lot of effort *and* belief in God’s goodness.**
4. **Short review:** Curtis has been released to return home. He and Wayne drive through burnt forest but turn a corner into a green haven untouched by fire - and almost crash into a boulder blockade! Curtis thanks God they didn’t run into it, but Wayne just sees it as another thing to grumble about. As they walked, the scenery was beautiful, but Wayne slipped back into a state of anger at God as he thought about the fire. He never noticed the meadow, the elk, or even the bald eagle fly overhead. Wayne lived in a world full of night.
5. **Listen to Chapter 7 of story:** *Sam and Pappy*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class)**
    a. How did Curtis get to be so good with horses?
        i. His grandpa began teaching him when was only three years old.
    b. What question did Wayne ask Curtis after he told him his story?
        i. “If God is so good, why did He let that fire happen and take my horses away after He gave them to me?”
    c. Why didn’t Curtis answer Wayne’s question?
        i. Wayne’s story reminded him of another story in his past.
    d. When Curtis hurried to the pasture after he heard frightened whinnies, what did he see and do?
        i. Wolves surrounded his horses; he screamed and opened the gate to let them out; ran into the house
7. **Application:**
    a. Thankfulness doesn’t always change our situation immediately, but it helps us stay cheerful and hopeful as we wait for a change.
    b. We can either grumble and feel miserable (and make others miserable) as we wait. Or we can look for God’s hidden gifts along the way that help to change us into better people.
    c. Today is the day to be watchful and thankful for God’s goodness!
    d. Practice being watchful. Before we start our first event, I want everyone to share one thing you’re thankful for today.

Repeat together: **Finding thankfulness may take a lot of effort *and* belief in God’s goodness.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

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“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 9: May 1-6

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** Students (and coaches) share their thankful diary entries.
3. **Lesson 9: Finding thankfulness may take a lot of effort *and* belief in God’s goodness.**
4. **Short review:** Curtis told Wayne his grandpa began teaching him about horses when he was only three years old. As Wayne told the story of how he got Scar and Beauty, Curtis listened carefully. It reminded him of his own story about his horses Pappy and Sam that he got from his grandpa when he was 14. During a very dry summer a hungry pack of wolves entered the pasture where Pappy and Sam were, ready to attack them. He had to open the gate so his horses could try to escape.
5. **Listen to Chapter 8 of story:** *Chasing Wolves*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class)**
    a. How did they finally scare the wolves away?
        i. *Curtis threw rocks in front of the leading wolf then they all scattered*.
    b. What did Curtis see on the back of Pappy? *(A big cut)*
    c. Why does Wayne stare at Curtis?
        i. *They both wonder if Scar and Beauty were originally Curtis’s horses!*
    d. What happened to Curtis’s dad as they waited for the horses to return?
        i. *He slipped and fell off and broke his hip. He wouldn’t be able to work for 6 months.*
    e. What did Curtis do after the humane society called him?
        i. *He yelled at God, blaming Him for ruining his dad's life and taking his horses away.*
    f. How did Curtis’s dad respond to his terrible situation?
        i. *He found things to be thankful for even in his pain.*
7. **Application:** Curtis was 14 when all this happened in one day! Imagine yourself as Curtis.
    a. How would you feel? *(wait for answers)*
    b. Can you find *anything* to be thankful for?
        i. *(Let kids respond first.) Curtis saved his horses before the wolves attacked them in the pasture; they just happened to have a load of riverstone in the pickup; they were able to drive the wolves off the road to let the horses escape; Dad was still alive and would recover pretty well.*
8. **Lesson Wrap Up:**
    a. You *always* have a choice as to how you respond to problems in your life. God says, “IN *everything* give thanks” because it will open our eyes to see the good gifts God has hidden in a bad situation. It will protect us from living a dark, lonely life. But - it may take effort to find them!

Repeat together: **Finding thankfulness may take a lot of effort *and* belief in God’s goodness.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 10: May 8-13

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** Students (and coaches) share their thankful diary entries.
3. **Lesson 10: When I’m thankful, I’m telling God that I believe He can turn bad things into victories.**
4. **Short review:** Curtis was telling his story about his horses, Pappy and Sam. He explained how he and his dad fought off a pack of wolves who were chasing his horses by hurling rocks off the truck as they caught up with them. Pappy had received a deep cut, though Curtis had not seen the actual attack. The wolves scattered and the horses took off. While waiting for them to return home, Curtis’s dad broke his hip which meant he could not work for six months. Curtis had to give up his horses for adoption. He sank into an angry darkness and blamed God.
5. **Listen to Chapter 9 of story:** *Thankfulness Is the Cure*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class.)**
   a. What important things did Pastor Shane do to help Curtis to let go of his anger?
      i. *He prayed - a lot!*
      ii. *He explained that anger is like darkness so we can’t see any good around us. It separates us from God and others.*
      iii. *Thankfulness opens our eyes so we can see many good things.*
   b. What did Curtis tell Wayne to start doing after Wayne said he still didn’t have his horses back?
      i. *To start thanking God for all the blessings they’ve enjoyed since they moved into the school and believe God’s not finished yet.*
   c. What did Wayne realize had happened by holding onto ungratefulness and anger?
      i. *It did nothing to help bring his horses back and only wore him out.*
   d. What does Wayne do for his very first attempt at being thankful?
      i. *He thanks Curtis for being such a good friend.*
7. **Application:**
   a. Does complaining solve your problems? Does it make you feel better? What does it do to you and others?
      i. *It never solves problems. It only causes you to sink into a self-centered world of loneliness. It pushes others away.*
   b. How is thankfulness the cure?
      i. *It helps chase bad feelings away. It draws us closer to God and others. It opens our eyes to see the good gifts God has given us in the midst of the bad things that happen to us in life.*
8. **Wrap Up:** You are the only one who can choose how you will respond to the many bad things that happen in life. Your choice will determine if you will live a happy life or a miserable life. Learn from Wayne’s bad choices so you won’t suffer like he has!

Repeat together: **When I’m thankful, I’m telling God that I believe He can turn bad things into victories.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 11: May 15-20 (Last chapter. Week 12 is review)

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**
2. **Lead-in:** Students (and coaches) share their thankful diary entries.
3. **Lesson 11: When I choose thankfulness, I’m better able to see my situation the way God sees it.**
4. **Short review:** Pastor Shane helped Curtis to let go of his anger by praying a lot and explaining that anger is like darkness so we can’t see any good around us. It separates us from God and others. Thankfulness opens our eyes so we can see many good things. Curtis told Wayne to start thanking God for all the blessings they’ve enjoyed since they moved into the school and believe God’s not finished yet. Wayne realized that holding onto ungratefulness and anger did nothing to help bring his horses back and only wore him out. He thanks Curtis for being such a good friend.
5. **Listen to Chapter 10 of story:** *Beauty for Ashes*
6. **Questions (Choose one or more that best fits your class.)**
   a. How did Wayne feel when they found Shane’s mules?
      i. *He was glad, but then began to feel disappointed and discouraged.*
   b. What did Curtis say when he saw the disappointment on Wayne’s face?
      i. *“Now is not the time to sink back into anger. It's a time for faith.”*
   c. What did Wayne realize had happened by holding onto ungratefulness and anger?
      i. *It did nothing to help bring his horses back and only wore him out.*
   d. What was the big lesson Wayne learned as they walked home after finding the horses?
      i. *That by refusing to thank God for <u>anything</u> good, he had missed <u>everything</u> good, which plunged him into his dark world.*
   e. What will the scar on his horse remind him to do?
      i. *To be thankful every day - even in the midst of troubles.*
7. **Application:** Always remember: Thankfulness is a **choice.**
   a. Psalm 118 says, “*This is the day the Lord has made. We **<u>will</u>** rejoice and be glad in it.”*
8. **Lesson Wrap Up:**
   a. Thankfulness is stronger than anger, complaining, greed, selfishness, worry, fear and more.
   b. Thankfulness is a gift from God we can use everyday to keep us close to Him and others. It’s the secret to a happy life!

Repeat together: **When I choose thankfulness, I’m better able to see my situation the way God sees it.**

Hand out diary page after class

Planning:

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 12: May 22-27

1. *Take a few minutes to discuss if keeping a thankful diary helped them become more aware of all the good they have around them. Ask if anyone experienced what Wayne did in the story - that something bad actually turned into something good once he began to practice thankfulness.*

2. **Season Review**
   Senior Supplements for Lesson 12.

3. **Practice declaration & verse together**

4. **Lesson 12: I experience happiness <u>after</u> I choose thankfulness.**

5. **Today is a review day.** Let’s see what you remember from the story by playing “**Who Said It?”**
   I’ll read the sentence on each of these cards. Raise your hand if you know who said it.
   If you’re right, you can take the card and place it on the correct pile. If not, I’ll call on someone else.

   Repeat together: **I experience happiness <u>after</u> I choose thankfulness.**

Please take a few minutes to fill out this short survey.

Name_____ On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate the effectiveness of the Grumbling >>> Thankful chart as a useful tool to help students shift their mindset? Add a specific example below. This helps us make CT better. Give this to Rebecca before week 1 of next season. Thank you!

1 2 3 4 5

Spring 2023 CT Sr Version: “I Choose Thanks”

How do you practice thankfulness?	***What does God say?***
“I pause to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today.”	“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

Week 12B: May 30-June 3 (Closed for Memorial Day and 6/1 Staff Training)

**This week is extra and is another review. You’ll be recording answers. You can either set up your phone in one place and record the whole time or if another coach is present, they can either record the whole thing or each question and answer separately. Take part in the discussion by answering some of the questions too.

1. **Practice declaration & verse together**

2. **Today is another review day.** I’m going to be recording us as we talk about what we’ve learned. I’m sure your parents would like to hear what you’ve learned this season!

3. **Questions**
    a. What was your favorite part of the story?
    b. Name some things that make you feel like grumbling.
    c. How do you feel when you start to grumble?
    d. What happens to you when you only think about all the bad things that are happening in your life? *(Reminder if needed: Ask,* “What happened to Wayne because of his grumbling?”)
        i. His grumbling led him into a dark, lonely, angry life without any joy.
    e. What can you do to change those grumbly feelings?
    f. What does it mean to be watchful?
    g. How does being watchful help you be more thankful?
    h. What’s the secret to enjoying a happy life?
    i. What did you learn from keeping your thankful diary?

Repeat together: **I experience happiness <u>after</u> I choose thankfulness.**

You may take your diary pages off the wall after class if you’d like to keep them.