



LEADER GUIDE

Unit 2: Speak Up
Lesson 1: Praise and Thanksgiving

OVERVIEW

UNIT OVERVIEW

Lesson 1: Praise and Thanksgiving

DISCIPLINE: Prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving

KEY VERSES: 1 Samuel 2:1-3; Acts 17:25; Psalm 100:4

Lesson 3: Needs

DISCIPLINE: Prayer of Requests

KEY VERSES: Matthew 7:7-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:17;
1 Chronicles 4:9-10

Lesson 2: Confession

DISCIPLINE: Prayer of Confession

KEY VERSES: Psalm 51:1-12; Romans 6:23-24; Psalm 38:18

Lesson 4: Presence

DISCIPLINE: Being Present with God

KEY VERSES: Matthew 6:9-13; Genesis 3:8; Micah 6:8

LESSON 1 OVERVIEW

God is worthy of our thanks and our praise.

Through the “Speak Up” series, your preteens will learn a pattern of prayer following the design of the Israelite’s Tabernacle. This pattern is based on the book “Prayer Thru the Tabernacle” by Jon Courson. We HIGHLY recommend this short read for leaders to accompany this series.

The Tabernacle was a meeting place for God and his people. Similarly, prayer is a place where we meet with God. How were the people instructed to begin their journey at the Tabernacle? Psalm 100:4 instructs us to “Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!”

Today we will start our pattern of prayer in the same way, with thanks and praise. It’s a great way to get our hearts and minds relating to God in a true and correct way before we go any farther on our journey of prayer.

LESSON 1 LEADER DEVO

Read: Psalm 100:4

I’ve come to realize that selfishness is one big issue in my life. When I’m honest with myself, I notice that I consider myself to be the center of my universe.

Stop for a minute and consider all the things you felt you deserved this week. What if, during the next week, we both committed to starting the day with praise and thanksgiving? What if, when we noticed we were acting a little entitled, we stopped and thanked Jehovah-Jireh for what he has given us and praised him for who he is? Do one thing that will remind you to thank and praise God. (*e.g., turn a pocket inside out, tie a shoe in a funny way, write a ‘p’ and a ‘t’ on your thumbs, etc.*) Start the habit right now.



SCHEDULE

Lesson 1: Praise and Thanksgiving



01 WARM-UP

10 min

Preteens will play an Opening Game and get a brief overview of today's lesson topic.

Today's Opening Game: Straw Praise



02 M.A.P.

10 min

Preteens will read through a passage of Scripture on their own. They'll consider what stands out to them from the passage and why it stands out to them. They'll also be given time to talk with God about the passage.

Today's Passage: 1 Samuel 2:1-3



03 DISCOVER

20 min

Preteens will learn about spiritual disciplines that will help them draw closer to God. They'll discover the Biblical basis for these disciplines, the purpose and benefit of these disciplines, and the reasons why Christians have practiced these discipline throughout history.

Today's Discovery: Approaching God Appropriately



04 QUEST

10 min

Preteens will move into action as they practice different ways that they can grow in their own personal relationship with Jesus.

Today's Quest: Prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving



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NOTE: Highlighted words indicate supplies to prepare. These are also listed in the ADMIN GUIDE.

[Slide01 Speak Up]

[Slide02 Straw Praise]

[AUDIO 01 Opening Game]

- 1) Split your group into two teams (boys vs. girls, 6th grade vs. 5th grade, etc.).
- 2) For each round, have two players from each team come to the front of the room.
- 3) Choose a team to go first. One member of the team will draw a **Speak Up Praise Card** from the pile, and put a **straw** in his or her mouth.
- 4) This person now speaks the compliment on the Speak Up Praise Card to his or her partner. (S)he will have a slight problem 'speaking up' because all the words must be spoken through a straw.

Leader's NOTE: They must have their lips completely around the straw (no biting it and talking around the straw). If the speaker talks around the straw, that team loses the round. Also, there's no holding the straw with a hand. If the straw is dropped, the round is automatically lost.

- 5) The teammate must repeat back exactly what he or she hears. Even if it's a complete guess, contestants must repeat something back.
- 6) If the guess is correct, that team gets a point. Otherwise, tell the audience what the compliment or praise actually was and have a laugh. You can also award a point for the closest guess if both teams are incorrect.
- 7) Go back and forth between teams until all cards have been read. After each round, have two new preteens from each team come forward.
- 8) The team with the most points wins! If both teams have the same amount of points at the end, both teams win.

[Slide 03 Speak Up]

Today we begin a new unit here in Step Up that's called "Speak UP."

When somebody says, "Speak up," it usually means he or she wants you to speak louder. It can also mean that somebody just wants you to say SOMETHING. Like you're sitting there and you have an idea, but you're not sharing it. In those situations, somebody might look at you and say, "Speak up."





"Speak up" can mean to speak louder, but it can also mean to speak more. Do you know that God wants us to speak up?

Check out this verse. It's one of the Bible's shortest verses.

[Slide 04 1 Thessalonians 5:17]

"Never stop praying."

In other words, God is saying "SPEAK UP!" It's hard for most people to imagine praying continually. It's hard for a most people to imagine praying for more than just 2 minutes, honestly.

Over the next few weeks, we're going to be learning a pattern of "speaking up" that can help you pray without stopping for 30 or 40 minutes easily.

[Slide 05 Pattern of Prayer]

Also, during "Speak UP," we're going to be looking in the Bible to see how some of God's people prayed. This will help us see some things about God and how we can talk to him, too.



**[Slide 06 MAP]**

During M.A.P. time during the Speak UP series, we're going to be reading a prayer from the Bible each week.

If you don't have a Bible, that's ok. We have these print outs that you can use.

Check out this video, and then you'll each have an opportunity to go through the three steps of M.A.P. on your own. After the video, we'll see what Bible verses we're going to be reading. Today, we'll be reading the prayer of a woman named Hannah.

OK. Check out this video.

[VIDEO 01 MAP 1]**[Slide 07 MAP 1 Samuel 2:1-3]****[AUDIO 02 MAP Time]**

(After the video/instructions, hand out MAP Cards to preteens who didn't bring a Bible. Also, give each preteen a pen/pencil and a highlighter.)

Give preteens time to complete M.A.P. as explained in the video. When it looks like most preteens are done, you can have preteens describe what they highlighted and wrote in their Bibles – or on the M.A.P. Cards– either in Small Groups or with the whole group.)



**[Slide 08 Speak UP]**

Before we get started with today's lesson about prayer, let's make sure we understand the difference between praise and thanksgiving.

[Slide 09 Praise vs Thanksgiving]

Praise is when we compliment somebody. It's when we say something about someone who we think is good or awesome or cool. For instance, I might say, "You're so smart, [preteen name]" or "You have a really nice smile, [preteen name]." That's praise.

Thanksgiving is when we thank somebody. It's when we show appreciation to somebody for something he or she has done. It's when we say, "Thank you." For instance, I might say, "Thank you for helping me wash my car, [preteen name]" or "I really appreciate how you were so kind to my sister, [preteen name]."

Let's have a little competition. First, you'll need to put **a yellow and pink sticky notes** on the backs of your hands. Put the yellow one on the back of your left hand and the pink sticky note on your right hand. When you have both stickies in place, stand to your feet and get ready for our competition. The competition begins in 40 seconds.

[VIDEO 02 40-Second Countdown]**[Slide 10 Praise vs Thanksgiving]****[AUDIO 03 Game Music]**

Here's the way the competition works. I'll make a statement; it will be either praise or thanksgiving. If you think it's praise, raise the hand with the pink sticky on it into the air. If you think it's thanksgiving, raise the hand with the yellow sticky into the air. There's no switching. Once you start to raise a hand into the air, **YOU CAN'T SWITCH**.

(Practice a few times, saying "praise" or "thanksgiving" and making sure everybody knows which hand to raise.)

After each statement, I'll tell you the correct answer and everybody who chose the correct answer will earn one point. Everyone with the most points after 7th round will be our big winners. To make this more interesting, let's play with our eyes closed. Close your eyes and get ready. *(Play the game using the following list.)*

Round 1: You are wonderful. (Praise)

Round 2: Thank you for being my friend. (Thanksgiving)

Round 3: I appreciate that you gave me a cookie. (Thanksgiving)





Round 4: I like the way you dress. (Praise)

Round 5: You are so strong! (Praise)

Round 6: You create amazingly beautiful drawings. (Praise)

Round 7: I'm grateful for the way you talk to me. (Thanksgiving)

Everybody have a seat. Hold on to those sticky notes for a little later on. We aren't done with them yet.

I think you're getting the idea. **Praise** means we're saying that we think something about the person is great. **Thanksgiving** means we're thanking him or her for something.

There's a difference between praise and thanksgiving, and now that you understand the difference, it's time to us to discover something about prayer. Let's go!

Leader Tip: *If you are going to have the preteens hold their own copy of the tabernacle map, now would be a good time to hand it out along with a pen/pencil.*

A few thousand years ago, Moses was the leader of the Israelites, God's chosen people. Moses had an amazing encounter with God on a mountaintop. You can find the mountain on a map of the Middle East: it's called Mount Sinai.

Up on the mountain, God gave Moses instructions for how to build a special place where God would meet with his people. God's directions were precise, even down to the exact size of the furniture and types of materials to use for everything.

Since the Israelites were traveling, this place of meeting would have to be something they could take with them and set up wherever they ended up camping out. It was like a gigantic tent that could be taken down and set up wherever they went.

This special place where God would meet with his people was called "The Tabernacle" and it looked like this (refer to the large Tabernacle map). Everybody say, "Tabernacle." (TABERNACLE) The Tabernacle was a place where God's people could come to meet with him.

[Slide 11 Space]

The Tabernacle was where people would go to meet with God. Prayer is the same thing. It's where we go to meet with God.

This month, we're going to make a connection between the Tabernacle and our prayer times.





We're going to go on an imaginary journey through the Tabernacle this month, looking at eight different parts of the Tabernacle along the way. At the same time, we're going to use those eight different parts of the Tabernacle to help us talk about prayer. It will be a journey that will guide us toward an encounter with the Creator of the Universe.

Our first stop on this journey is the gate. (*Write "#1" on the large Tabernacle Map using a Sharpie. See the slide for the location of this.*)

[Slide 12 Gate]

This is the way that the Israelites would enter the Tabernacle. Think of it like the door of this room. Even though it's a big space inside this room, everybody must come through the same tiny space to get in here – the doorway.

To enter the Tabernacle, people came through the gate. Everybody's first experience as they entered the Tabernacle was coming through the gate. As soon as people stepped into the gate, they'd come to the second stop on our journey.

[Slide 13 Courtyard]

This is the Courtyard. The Courtyard was a wide-open space where people could come and wait before going on to the more interesting parts of the Tabernacle. (*Write "#2" in the Courtyard on the large map.*)

People were coming to the Tabernacle to have an encounter with God. It's not like they were going to see the dentist or visiting a park. They were coming into the gates and entering the courtyards on their way to having an encounter with God, the Creator of the Universe.

What kind of attitude do you think would be appropriate for people to have as they entered the gates and came into the courtyards? (*Take responses. You aren't looking for specific answers here; just engagement.*)

Check out this verse from Psalm 100.

[Slide 14 Psalm 100:4]

Read it out loud on the count of 3. 1...2...3. (*Read verse.*)

This verse is talking about how we should approach God. The attitude we should have is one of giving thanks and praise to him. Approaching God like this is right and good. God is a great provider. He gives and gives and gives. Without God, we'd have nothing.





Jehovah-Jireh is a name for God that reminds us that he is a great provider! When we pray, if we want to talk to God, we should begin our prayer time with an attitude that helps us remember that God is Jehovah-Jireh, that he provides us with everything we need. Like the Bible says, he gives us life and breath and everything else.

We need pray, let's have an attitude that helps us remember what our relationship to him is.

If we forget who God is – that he is the one who gives us life and breath and everything else – we might talk to him with a wrong attitude.

Let's say I was invited to go to the President's office. When I go in, I start off the conversation with "Yo, Joey. Wassup, bro?" I probably wouldn't get far in our conversation before he had me removed.

God has invited us into his presence. He has invited us to come to him in the amazing journey called prayer.

Let's start the journey of approaching God by remembering who he is. Praise and thanksgiving toward God can help us to do that. Let's read all of Psalm 100, because it really can help us to get a good idea of who we are, who Jehovah-Jireh is and the appropriate way to come toward him.

[Slides 15-17 Psalm 100]

Wow. I could read that Scripture every morning to help me approach God and life with the right attitude.

I think we're getting the idea. We aren't going to talk any more about this. Instead, we're going to practice doing it. We've learned the first two steps on our journey of prayer. Now it's time to actually do it. It's time for today's Quest.





For today's Quest, we're going to pray in two different ways. By the end of this series, we'll have eight different ways that we can pray. Let's look at the first two that we're going to be practicing today.

[Slide 18 Steps 1 and 2]

Step 1: Thank God. **Step 2:** Praise God. *(Point to the #1 and #2 on the large map as you continue.)*

We're going to (#1) enter the gates with thanksgiving and (#2) go into his courts with praise. We've got six more steps that we'll be looking at over the next couple of weeks, but for today, we're just going to do the first two: thank God and praise God. This is a great way to start off every time we come to God in prayer.

To help us remember these first two steps, put the sticky notes on the back of your hands again, and repeat after me:

1. *(Hold up the yellow sticky note)* Enter the gates with thanksgiving.
2. *(Hold up the pink sticky note)* go into his courts with praise.
3. *(Clap hands together and clasp as you close your eyes and bow your head.)*

(Repeat these steps a few times until everybody can say it together with you.)

On the two walls of this room, you see boards that say "Thank God" and "Praise God" at the top.

Station 1. Thanksgiving: In just a moment, NOT YET, your leaders are going to make sure you have a pen/pencil. On the yellow sticky note, write a thank you to God. It can be as simple as "God, thank you for giving me life." Then walk over to the "Thank God" poster and stick it up on the wall. BUT, as you are walking, think about what you wrote, and say it over and over in your mind. As you're walking, thank God for the thing you wrote. You can do it silently in your head – God hears our thoughts. OR you could Speak UP and say it out loud. *(Demonstrate what this can look like.)*

Leader Tip: *If it would make sense for your environment, make a door into the "Thank God" station, and even have the preteens walk through the door as they thank God.*

Station 2. Praise: Now after you get over here to the "Thank God" wall, you'll see that there are piles of pink sticky notes. Once you've placed your yellow sticky note up on the "Thank God" wall, take one of these pink sticky notes, or use the one that you have from earlier and write a praise to God.

Remember, a praise is a COMPLIMENT about God. For example, I could write, "God, you are powerful" or "God, you know everybody on Earth." Remember, with a praise you're telling God why you think he's so awesome! Once you write something down, you'll walk to the "Praise God" wall either praising God out loud or in your head. *(Demonstrate this.)*





Over here, there are **piles of yellow sticky notes**. So, once I put my pink sticky note of praise on this wall, I can pick up a yellow one and write another note of thanks to God and start over again. We'll just keep walking back and forth, praising and thanking God.

We're going to do this for five minutes. Remember the verse that we looked at during the beginning of service told us to never stop praying. How many of you think you could do this activity for five minutes without stopping? *(Look for response.)*

Does everybody understand how this is going to work? *(Clarify as needed.)* Good.

Then it's time for you to Speak UP.

[AUDIO 04 Prayer Time]





ADMIN GUIDE

Unit 2: Speak Up
Lesson 1: Praise and Thanksgiving

SUPPLIES

Lesson 1: Praise and Thanksgiving



01 WARM-UP

10 min

- Set of **Speak Up Praise Cards** (*place in a hat or in a pile on a table.*)
- At least 8 straws



02 M.A.P.

10 min

- Highlighters for each preteen
- Pens for each preteen
- **MAP Card** for each preteen (*copy on cardstock*)



03 DISCOVER

20 min

- Bible
- 1 Pink and 1 Yellow Sticky note per preteen and leader
- Large Tabernacle Map (*displayed in the front of the room. You can enlarge the one in the Printables section, or create your own on a poster board.*)
- Large Sharpie, to write on the Tabernacle Map displayed in the front of the room
- *Optional:* Copy enough **Tabernacle Maps** for each preteen to have his/her own to use throughout this series. For this option, you'll need pens or pencils as well.



04 QUEST

10 min

- Make one wall into a "Thank God" wall, and the other wall into a "Praise God" wall. You can do this by using a large piece of butcher paper with the words written at the top, or (if your walls are smooth enough that Sticky notes will stick to them) simply create signs to label each wall. Because you'll use these two walls throughout this series, you might want to spend some time to make nice signs or posters for these stations.
- Pile of pink sticky notes, placed at the "Thank God" wall
- Pile of yellow sticky notes, placed at the "Praise God" wall. In addition, equip your leaders with yellow sticky notes so they can hand these out to preteens at the beginning of the Workshop.
- Pen for each preteen

NOTE: For this series, you'll continue to add to the Quest items each week. Next weeks' Quest will use all of these items plus new ones.

NOTE: Within the leader guide, supplies are **highlighted** so you can understand how they'll be used and prepare accordingly.

NOTE: Supplies on this page that are written in a **bold font** can be found in the *Printables* Section.



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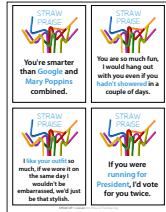
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PRINTABLES

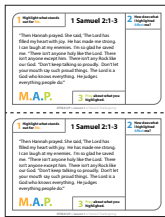
Lesson 1: Praise and Thanksgiving



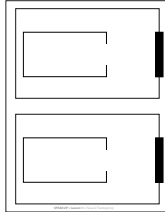
Straw Praise Cards



MAP Card (1 Samuel 2:1-3)



Tabernacle Map



STRAW
PRAISE



**You're smarter
than **Google** and
Mary Poppins
combined.**

STRAW
PRAISE



**You are so much fun,
I would hang out
with you even if you
hadn't showered in a
couple of days.**

STRAW
PRAISE



I **like your outfit so
much, if we wore it on
the same day I
wouldn't be
embarrassed, we'd just
be that stylish.**

STRAW
PRAISE



**If you were
running for
President, I'd vote
for you twice.**

STRAW
PRAISE



If you got really famous, I would be the very first member of **your fan club.**

STRAW
PRAISE



Unicorns and **tacos** are pretty awesome... and so are you.

STRAW
PRAISE



You're so smart, you probably already knew that I was going to say this.

STRAW
PRAISE



Your soccer skills are better than a monkey and a kangaroo on a motorcycle combined.

1 Highlight what stands out for **Me.**

1 Samuel 2:1-3

2 How does what I highlighted **Affect** me?

"Then Hannah prayed. She said, 'The Lord has filled my heart with joy. He has made me strong. I can laugh at my enemies. I'm so glad he saved me. "There isn't anyone holy like the Lord. There isn't anyone except him. There isn't any Rock like our God. "Don't keep talking so proudly. Don't let your mouth say such proud things. The Lord is a God who knows everything. He judges everything people do.'"

M.A.P.

3 **Pray** about what you highlighted.

SPEAK UP > Lesson 1 > Praise & Thanksgiving

1 Highlight what stands out for **Me.**

1 Samuel 2:1-3

2 How does what I highlighted **Affect** me?

"Then Hannah prayed. She said, 'The Lord has filled my heart with joy. He has made me strong. I can laugh at my enemies. I'm so glad he saved me. "There isn't anyone holy like the Lord. There isn't anyone except him. There isn't any Rock like our God. "Don't keep talking so proudly. Don't let your mouth say such proud things. The Lord is a God who knows everything. He judges everything people do.'"

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SPEAK UP > Lesson 1 > Praise & Thanksgiving

