

A SPECIAL KIND OF BLESSING

Blessed is the one who is kind to the needy.

—Proverbs 14:21

INTRODUCTION

God wants his children to be thankful during Thanksgiving and all year long. And we have a lot to be thankful for! Every day, God blesses us in many ways. It wouldn't be hard, at any moment of any day of the year, to think of many things for which we can be grateful. God loves to bless us, and he loves it when we feel gratitude in our hearts and say, "Thank you, Lord!"

There's something else that God wants from us too. He wants us to express our gratefulness in a way that goes beyond just saying thanks. In Matthew 10:8, Jesus said, "Freely you have received, freely give." God wants us to respond to his generosity toward us by being generous to others! The great thing about this is that when we are generous to others, we receive one more blessing from God. It's a unique blessing that we can only *get* by *giving*.

Today's devotion is based on Proverbs 14:21, which says, "Blessed is the one who is kind to the needy." The devotion is called "A Special Kind of Blessing."

DEVOTION

A cold wind was blowing as Natasha and her parents entered the soup kitchen. It was a place that offered free meals to poor people in the city.

Natasha's dad found the woman in charge of volunteers. "Welcome!" she said. "Hang up your coats and step behind the counter, and I'll show you how you can help."

Soon Natasha was spooning out mashed potatoes to people who came in for food. When they thanked her, she smiled. "You're welcome. Happy Thanksgiving, and God bless you!" Serving them made her feel warm inside.

Later she took a break to eat. She sat with a girl named Clara, who'd come through the line with her mom. Clara gratefully said grace, and they all dug into the food, talking and laughing. To Natasha, turkey never tasted so good.

There are many types of blessings you can be thankful for on Thanksgiving Day—and all year round. But there's one special blessing you only get by being kind to the poor. It's the joy and satisfaction God puts in your heart as you help people he loves. That's what Jesus meant when he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Think of ways to reach out to needy people throughout the year. God will be pleased, and he'll bless you for your kindness.

WORDS TO TREASURE

Whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

—Proverbs 14:31

QUESTIONS

1. What are some ways that you can reach out to needy people all through the year? Spend some time brainstorming to come up with a list.
2. Have you ever experienced the joy and satisfaction that God puts in a person's heart when he or she helps people in need? What is it like? Try to explain it so that other kids who have never experienced it will understand. Maybe you can inspire them to reach out to needy people and experience that special blessing for themselves!
3. What is the difference between the joy of giving and the joy of receiving? Why is one better than the other? Do you agree with Jesus that it's better to give than to receive? If not, why not? Is it possible that your motivation for giving, or the amount of sacrifice you have to make in order to give, could affect the amount of joy you receive from giving?
4. Which is easier to do: give some money to a charity or go to a charitable organization and volunteer to serve the needy? Which do you think would bring you a greater blessing? Why?
5. How does helping people in need make us more like Jesus? Do you think that becoming more like Jesus is part of the special blessing that God gives to those who are kind to the needy? Why or why not?

Consider spending some time playing a game or doing an exercise to help children memorize the "Words to Treasure" Scripture verse.