A Night to Remember – Go Public – by Marcy Lytle

We recently had three kids in our family experience baptism, and I heard someone say the oldest had been bold with his faith at school. In other words, he wasn't ashamed of his faith or his God. He went public. So what if this month, the month of Thanksgiving, we talked with the kids about going public in lots of practical ways, so that our little light shines just a bit brighter, instead of hiding it under a bush?

Preparation: This lesson is just interaction with the whole family as we learn what it means to go public this November, in everything and in every say. Have available a few toys, and sit in a circle as a family.

Let's talk about what it means to go public. When we love Jesus, we don't need to be ashamed or hide our love for Him. Some may not agree or understand our faith, but it's totally okay to "go public" with our faith, as we walk with Christ.

It's the month of Thanksgiving. What about giving thanks for our food in public restaurants? Do we bow our heads as a family and give thanks to God for the good food we're about to eat, or do we just do this at home, or not at all? Is it enough to just be thankful in our hearts, or do we need to say it out loud? Lots of families differ on this practice, don't they?

Here are some every day examples of going public with our faith:

On the playground – being kind and sharing our space, and toys, is a way to let others know we value them. (Let the kids practice sharing a toy and talk about how it's hard to do this – especially if it belongs to us!). In Galatians 5, kindness is listed as one of the fruits of the Spirit.

Being kind is going public with our faith.

At school – when the teacher is talking we can sit up and listen, and obey. Hebrews 13 tells us to have confidence in our leaders and in Proverbs 4 it says to keep hold of instruction. (Let one child be the teacher as he/she talks to the family who acts as the children. Ask one child to talk and move around instead of listening.) How does it feel when you're talking and the person you're talking to isn't listening?

Listening to good instruction is going public with our faith.

At home – we can say thank-you each time someone in the family gives us a compliment, or when Mom or Dad makes a meal or takes us places. Thanksgiving is all about remembering to notice all the things in our lives that are good and from above, and to voice our thanksgiving. (Go around the family and give thanks for something about family.) I Thessalonians 5 says to give thanks in everything! Doesn't it feel good to be thanked for a job well done?

Giving thanks out loud is going public with our faith.

When someone is hurting – we can pray for that person and give them a hug and tell them, "Jesus loves you." Sometimes, that's all someone needs to hear. Think about when you're hurting and how good it feels to have someone pray for you, or hold you until the pain stops. Galatians 6 says to carry others burdens to the Lord, and that's what we do when we pray. (Ask if anyone needs prayer, and pray for that person as a family.)

Praying for a friend is going public with our faith.

Visiting friends – we can clean up anything we mess up, we can tell them thank you for having us over, and we can even take a gift if we want to, to show them we appreciate their hospitality. When people show us hospitality it means they are kind to us. We should then also be kind to them. I Peter 4 says to offer hospitality without grumbling. Can anyone give an example of being nice at someone's house but then grumbling about it? (Let them answer). Maybe they serve a meal we don't really like, but we can still thank them for making it for us and try our best to taste and enjoy.

Being hospitable is going public with our faith.

Finally, Psalm 100 tells us to make a joyful noise, all the earth! This means we are to rejoice and be glad because Jesus loves us and has forgiven us, and give us eternal life with him. It's a joyful and glad thing to be known by Jesus and have him as our Savior and Lord. And sharing our faith with those we know is making a joyful noise for all to hear the Good News! (Turn to each other and say with a big smile, "Jesus loves you, and so do I!")

Sharing the good news is going public with our faith.