

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of December 8-14, 2024

“THE LIFE OF GRATITUDE”

GETTING STARTED

To the facilitator: Use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

Think of a time when you forgot to say thank you to someone – maybe a relative who sent you a gift, a favor offered by a friend, or a simple act of kindness by a stranger. Why didn't you bother to say thanks?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

1. How would you define thankfulness? Search for Bible verses that say something about how we are to express our thanks to God. Which of these verses are true of you? Which ones do you find difficult to do?

2 Sam 22:49-51, 1 Chr 16:34, Ps 75:1, Ps 118:21, Ps 138:8, Ps 139:14, Isa 21:1, Isa 25:1, Matt 15:36, Rom 6:16-18, 1 Cor 15:56-58, Eph 5:20, 1 Thes 1:1-3.
2. From the patriarchs to the apostles, the people in the Bible found many occasions to thank God. Look up some of the verses below and write a brief description of why they were thankful to the Lord.

2 Sam 22:49-51, 1 Chr 16:34, Ps 75:1, Ps 118:21, Ps 138:8, Ps 139:14, Isa 21:1, Isa 25:1, Matt 15:36, Rom 6:16-18, 1 Cor 15:56-58, Eph 5:20, 1 Thes 1:1-3.
3. Does God need to hear us say thank you? How do we benefit from the spiritual practice of expressing our thanks to God?
4. Read Luke 17:11-19. Think about the day when these 10 men realized they had been afflicted with leprosy. What kind of thoughts do you think crossed their minds regarding their future and their family? What did the lepers expect Jesus to do for them in verse 13? Think of as many reasons as possible as to why the nine Jews did not come back to thank Jesus. Are these excuses familiar to you personally?
5. How would you answer the three rhetorical questions that Jesus posed in Luke 17:17-18?

6. Why do you think giving thanks in all circumstances is described as part of God's will for us? Can you recall a time when you gave thanks in a tough situation? How did it change you or affect those around you?
7. Share to the group something that happened to you recently that you are thankful to the Lord for.

NEXT STEPS

Even though you may not feel thankful, you can be thankful.

- I will express my gratitude to God.
- I will trust that in whatever circumstances, God is working; hence, I can be thankful.
- I will give thanks not just for the gift but for the Giver.

Don't forget to:

- Go through the devotionals every day this week.
- Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God's Word.

CLOSING THE SESSION

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray for a grateful heart that recognizes God's blessings even in the smallest things, and for eyes to see his goodness in all circumstances and to respond with thanksgiving.
- Pray for relationships to grow with other Christ-followers, that you will encourage and care for one another.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends, and loved ones.
- Pray for protection, provision, healing and comfort for everyone who's going through physical, emotional, mental and spiritual pain.

BIBLE READING GUIDE

December 9	1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
December 10	Lamentations 3:21-25
December 11	Luke 17:11-19
December 12	Psalms 138:1-8
December 13	Deuteronomy 9:1-6
December 14	Psalms 37:1-8
December 15	Luke 1:26-38