

Grateful, Week 1

Small Group Discussion Guide, week of Nov. 1st

NOV 1ST SERMON SUMMARY

GRATEFUL FOR GOD

We all know we should feel grateful; the challenge is to genuinely, continually, feel grateful, regardless of the situation (Ps. 100:1-5, 1 Thes. 5:16-18).

Why is it important to be grateful? When we are grateful ...

- **We bless God.** Our gratitude demonstrates that we understand and embrace who God is. We see God and what He's like, and that blesses Him. (Psalm 100:4-5, Rev. 4:8-11)
- **We are blessed.** The more grateful we are, the more we benefit in peace, contentment, satisfaction, joy, etc. (Phil. 4:4-7)
- **Others are blessed.** We're better to be around when we are grateful and in a good mood. Gratitude flows from the heart and we share it and show it. (Phil. 4:4-5)

How do we become more grateful? The more we think about and remember what God has done, the more gratitude we will have. The challenge is to think about: when will I pause to think about God's blessings? (Phil. 4:8-9, Psalm 66:1-5, Psalm 105:1-5).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

I. INTRODUCTION: Share briefly about your family's Thanksgiving traditions.

II. THINK AND REFLECT.

1a. When you realize that Thanksgiving is coming soon, what does that make you think about?

- If it makes you think about being thankful, what comes to mind that you are thankful for?
- If it makes you think about something else, what feelings (positive or negative ones) come up in you? Why?

Read Philippians 4:4-9 (below):

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. **9** Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

2. List the key points of the passage. What does Paul tell (command) the believers to do in:

- verse 4:
- verse 5:
- verse 6:
- verse 8:
- and, what is the result of doing it, in verse 7, 9:

a. Describe what a person would be like if he/she followed those commands.

b. How would that person feel blessed?

c. How would that person bless God? Bless others?

3a. Read verse 8 slowly again, and pause to let it sink in. What thoughts come to mind?

b. How does thinking about excellent and praiseworthy things bring peace?

c. Why do you think we don't do this more often, or more continually?

d. What difference would it make for us if we would think in this way continually? Share an example, if you can.

4a. How does thinking about God and what He has done help us become more grateful?

b. Share a specific quality about God or something He has done in your life that causes you to well up with gratitude.

III. PERSONAL APPLICATION (Choose 1 of the following if time is limited)

5a. Would you consider yourself to be a grateful person? Why or why not?

b. How would you like to grow in being more grateful?

6. The challenge is not so much what to think, but when will you do it? How can you be more intentional about pausing to think about God's blessing?

7. What specific challenges do you face in becoming a more grateful person?