

Gratitude • Life Group Curriculum

Introduction:

Over the course of our lives, we will experience highs and lows. As we navigate the mountains and valleys it can be easy to lose perspective. Even the most successful and prosperous among us can feel unsatisfied, always striving for just a little more. This perspective isn't unique to the good times in our lives. During life's difficult season, we can also lose focus with hopes that a change of fortune will bring satisfaction and contentment.

This series is a call to embrace the perspective of gratitude. Finding gratefulness in what God provides regardless of our circumstance.

WEEK 1: Gratitude in Worship

Psalm 100

A good song triggers deep emotions and helps express ideas that are difficult to form into words. For 3000 years, the lyrics of Psalm 100 have resonated with the people of God. Psalms has provided a united way to express our gratitude back to God through corporate worship. Throughout Scripture we can find examples of people gathered in community to worship with gratitude for deliverance, provision, and praise. This week let's take a deep dive into Psalm 100 to discover an even deeper expression of corporate worship and gratitude.

- 1.** Share with your life group a time when worshipping with other believers was an encouragement/powerful experience and how it made you feel.
- 2.** In verse 3, how does the psalmist encourage us to view ourselves? Why does this give you hope?
- 3.** In verses 4 and 5, how does the psalmist guide us to enter into the Lord's presence and why?
- 4.** Read Psalm 107:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Colossians 3:15-17 - why is it necessary to incorporate gratitude in worship?
- 5.** Discuss with your Life Group the key takeaways.

WEEK 2: Grateful Through it All

Psalm 107: 1-9, 22

Gratitude does not require blind positivity. Life is full of difficult and painful experiences. As followers of Jesus, our joy doesn't come from having positive circumstances in our lives, but from a deep confidence that no matter how challenging our life might be, God never abandons us. Instead, He works through our hardships to bring us holistic redemption. Psalm 107 reminds us that even though you feel as if you are wandering in a desert, alone in the darkness, or floating along in a stormy sea, we can have confidence in the steadfast love of God.

1. What specific reason(s) does the psalmist give us in verse one to offer thanks to the LORD?
2. What's the difference between the reasons to give thanks in verse one compared to the reasons in verse two?
3. When do you find yourself giving thanks to God: when you're in a very comfortable, trouble-free season of life, or in a time of pain, difficulty, or trial?
4. During which of these seasons do you typically pray more?
5. Do you experience the same joy when praying to God during a more difficult season as when praying during a more comfortable, trouble-free period? Is your joy dependent on the ratio of positive circumstances to difficult or trying ones?
6. Upon what fact or circumstance do you depend on to see yourself through life's most difficult moments?

WEEK 3: Internalized Gratitude

Psalm 103:1-6, 20-22

“Bless the Lord, O My Soul” is a beautiful song lyric but what does it really mean to express deep internalized gratitude to the Lord? Psalm 103 gives us a framework to recognize our deep inward need for redemption and appreciate the holistic reconciling work of our Savior.

1. In these verses, is the psalmist talking to the Lord, or to himself, or both? Do you sometimes need to stop and refocus on the Lord from the depths of your soul?
2. What “benefits” or blessings come to mind when you read verse 2 and are urged to “forget not all his benefits”?
3. When we reflect on God’s forgiveness for all our sins, we usually look to Jesus’ death on the cross. Consider the fact that the psalmist didn’t know of Jesus’ death on the cross, yet he was assured of God’s forgiveness. Where did his assurance come from?
4. Do you see God as the one who “heals all your diseases,” or modern medicine, or something else? Explain.
5. Share a time when you felt like you were in “a pit” and He brought you out of it.
6. Explain what you think it means that He “satisfies [us] with good so that [our] youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”
7. If the Lord “works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed,” should we do likewise? If so, who is “oppressed” and how should we respond?
8. What are some practical ways to prevent ourselves from forgetting the things God has done in our lives?