

Session 4: Thanksgiving

Session Guide

Teaching Notes

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7, NASB)

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NASB)

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name (Hebrews 13:15, NASB)

1 Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. 3 Know that the Lord Himself is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. 4 Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name. 5 For the Lord is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting And His faithfulness to all generations. (Psalm 100:1-5, NASB)

Personal Reflection Exercise

Pause: Take a moment to pray and reflect on what you've just learned.

Respond: Spend some time alone (we suggest at least 15 minutes) to work through the following questions at your own pace—either in your personal journal or through the Online Discipleship website.

(1) Pray the following Psalm as an expression of gratitude to God:

1 Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. 3 Know that the Lord Himself is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. 4 Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name. 5 For the Lord is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting And His faithfulness to all generations. (Psalm 100:1-5, NASB)

(2) Make a list of 25 things you are thankful for—they can be big or small, any kind of gratitude toward God is worship!

(3) For you personally, what can make it challenging for you to express gratitude to God?

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(4) Psalm 107:1 says, "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." How has God been good to you and shown you love?

(5) Thankfulness is the recognition of a gift. In your opinion, why is humility a requirement for being thankful? How does thankfulness fight against envy and jealousy while building contentment?

(6) Read the following scripture and answer the question below:

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:15-17)

What role does giving thanks play in this passage? How does thankfulness relate to peace, relationships with others, and worshipping God?

(7) Psalm 118:21 says, "I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation." Describe a recent time when God answered one of your prayers and gave you help for something you couldn't handle on your own.

(8) Read the following scripture and answer the question below:

21 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? 25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Romans 7:21-25)

As members of God's family, we have access to God's power, and through that, true life change is possible. Describe a time when God helped you with an internal struggle. How might you give thanks to him for that help?

Is there anything else you've heard God say? Anything else you need to reflect on through writing?

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All Scripture is taken from New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.