



The Benefits of Gratitude – Week 1

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Overview

In this first message of our new series, *Thank You Note*, we will learn how to be thankful in everything and discover the power of gratitude. We will also discuss how having a positive, thankful attitude is an important aspect of healthy living.

Discussion Questions

Gratitude is defined as the positive emotion of appreciation or thanks. It affirms our dependence on God and appreciation of others. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** says, **“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”** Our perspective, or view of life, determines our continual attitude of gratitude. However, there are three attitudes that can steal our gratitude:

Pride	A Critical or Complaining Spirit	Familiarity
With this kind of attitude, we feel we have no one to thank but ourselves.	Instead of feeling grateful, this person always finds something to complain about. When they look at life, they always look at what’s wrong.	Familiarity keeps us from being grateful because we take things for granted.

- Do you recognize any of these “gratitude stealers” in your life? Discuss how each can be remedied to allow an attitude of gratitude.

Three Benefits of Gratitude

- 1. Gratitude increases our personal happiness and productivity.**

Most of us think that our happiness is determined by our circumstances, but really, our happiness is determined by our attitude and our perspective which is how we see things.

Paul wrote in Philippians 4:4: “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say it rejoice.” He learned to thank God in every circumstance and situation because true happiness is determined by our perspective and gratitude in life and not by our circumstances and environment.

Questions to ask ourselves to test whether we are a grateful person

A. Which do you tend to talk about more—blessings or disappointments?	B. Are you content with what you have or dissatisfied and wanting more?	C. Do you express thanks to others when they help you, or do you just take them for granted?	D. Would those closest to you say you are a thankful person?
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2. Gratitude shifts our perspective.

As gratitude pours out of our lives, it should include two things: thankfulness to God for the blessings and thankfulness to God in the burdens.

- What are some relationships and situations in your life in which you know you need to be more thankful? Make a list and determine what you will say and do to show gratitude.
- There is a difference between being thankful for difficult circumstances and being thankful in difficult circumstances. Why do you think being thankful in them allows God to use them for His greater good?

3. Gratitude enhances our relationships.

Paul began most of his letters in the Bible with thankfulness. He made sure that he let the people he was in relationship with know he was thankful for them. Imagine how much better our relationships would be if we did the same.

- Give three examples of how we can practically improve all of our relationships with gratitude.

Life Challenge

This week, take time to share a heartfelt thank you. Thank those around you for the value they have placed in your life. Write a note, call that person, journal what you're thankful for. Write a list of things you're grateful for. Pray and express your gratitude to God.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for encouraging us with this message about gratitude! We ask that You reveal any way within us that does not line up with Your Word and Your heart as it concerns an attitude of gratitude. Show us the relationships and circumstances in which we need to be thankful. We love You, Lord, and our hearts are filled with thankfulness for You! Amen. Pray for the specific needs for the group.