

2022 Community Groups

WEEKLY GUIDE

May 8 - Community Guide

As we continue in the sermon series, Five Good Fights, we focus this week on fighting for Gratitude. God has done so much for us and it is good and fitting for us to respond to those gifts with an expression of gratitude. It is easy to dwell on the disappointments of life, but it is a fight worth fighting to live a life filled with gratitude.

Community Prayer:

Lord, We are grateful to you for all you have done for us. You have given us access to every good thing and it is only through you that we have life. Help us to live in such a way that our attitude is shaped by gratitude. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen

Opening Thoughts:

On Sunday we celebrated Mother's Day.

1. What did you do to observe Mother's Day?
2. If you are a mom, what is something you treasure about being a mother?

Exploration:

According to research done by the University of Texas, the most effective way to cultivate joy in our lives is to practice gratitude. The key word here is practice. It's not just about *feeling* grateful, it's about developing an observable practice. So often we think that joy makes us grateful, when in reality it's gratitude that brings joy.

Don't you just love it when the world discovers something that the church has known for centuries? God's people have always practiced gratitude through festivals, feasts and through regular rhythms of praise and worship. This is one of the reasons we spend significant time in our gatherings in worshiping together as a community. We remember and celebrate together the greatness of God!

3. What are some things that you are grateful for and why?



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Read the following passages aloud:

Luke 17:11-19

4. What stands out to you from this passage?

Jesus entered a village and ten lepers approached him, keeping their distance. This is because leprosy is a contagious skin disease that causes the loss of sensation, muscle paralysis of hands and feet, disfigurement, and blindness may occur. The skin is covered in lesions that result in decreased sensation to touch, temperature, or pain. They don't heal. Leprosy is a serious, contagious and life altering disease that had no cure at the time. And there were laws that governed how a person with this kind of condition would live.

Leviticus 13:45-46

According to the law, people with leprosy had to live alone and could not be near other people.

5. What do you think would be the most difficult part of being completely isolated from other people for a prolonged period of time?

There are many people in our culture who feel lonely and isolated for many different reasons.

6. Who are the people you know who have isolated themselves because of their life struggles? What could you do to help them?



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In the story, there are ten lepers who all cry out to Jesus together. They became their own community because they shared the same disease.

7. Can you think of any groups who gather together because of their pain and dysfunction? Why do you think this happens?
8. Have you ever found yourself in a group like this? If so, share what it was like.

In verse 13 & 14 when the lepers cry out to Jesus, we see that Jesus not only heard them, but he saw them and responded to their cries. He told them to go and show themselves to the priest before they were healed. While they were on their way, they realized that the healing had happened.

9. Have you ever experienced healing; physically, emotionally, relationally? If so, share about that experience.

One of the ten lepers realized that he had been healed and turned back to give thanks to God.

10. Why do you think nine of the lepers just moved forward without expressing their thanks to God?
11. What are the things in your life that only God could get the credit for?
12. How do you practice the discipline of gratitude in your daily life?

In verse 19 Jesus tells the one who returned to "Get up and go your way; your faith has made you well." In the verses before it says that all 10 of the lepers were cleansed, but here we see a different word used to describe a deeper healing for the one who returned, it is the Greek word, 'sozō' which means "made whole".



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13. How would you describe the difference between being cleansed and being made whole?

“Gratitude is a loving and thankful response toward God for his presence with us and within this world. Though “blessings” can move us into gratitude, it is not at the root of a thankful heart. Delight in God and his good will is the heartbeat of thankfulness.”

~Adele Calhoun

Take some time to think about the things you are grateful to God for providing. Spend the last few moments together offering prayers of thanksgiving and gratitude to God.

The Takeaway:

The most effective way to cultivate joy in our lives is to practice gratitude.

Jesus sees people who are hurting and moves toward them to meet their needs.

When faith is followed by action there is a deeper level of healing.

