

Talk About It

Small Group Discussion Guide

5 Words to Change Your Life

November 2-5, 2023

Start Talking

When do you typically decorate for Christmas? Has that changed since you were young?

Main Idea

We are starting a new teaching series this week called "5 Words to Change Your Life". This week, we will look at GRATITUDE! It may come more naturally to some, but most of us have to work at gratitude. Life's circumstances and our innate selfishness can often derail the free flow of gratitude from our hearts. Sometimes, when things go well, it goes to our head. When things go bad, it goes to our heart. Biblical gratitude is the intent behind our actions—a positive response to experiencing God's presence, blessings, and grace in a heart-impactful way. Gratitude shows in how we live. It has the potential to empower or harm our witness for Christ, enhancing or tarnishing how others see Jesus and our relationship with Him. Gratitude turns what little we have into abundance, changes our perspective of this broken world, and translates into hope for others. It helps us recognize the Source of the blessings in our lives and Who to thank for them. It may not always be that simple to practice, but the more we do, the more it permeates our life, glorifies our Savior, and makes Him attractive to others! So, let's dial in and hear what the Object of our gratitude says about how it can change your life!

Personalize It

1. What is gratitude—an action, an emotion, a life view, all of the above, or something else?
2. When is it easiest to show gratitude—in good times or bad? Is genuine gratitude therapeutic? Why or why not?
3. "Witnesses are not judge and jury for those who don't know Jesus. They are voices proclaiming how Jesus has changed their lives!" How does gratitude glorify Jesus and empower your witness for Him? Does that elevate the importance of gratitude for you?
4. Does your heart lean more toward gratitude or discontent? Would those around you agree? How does gratitude insulate us from negative thoughts and emotions?
5. How often do you thank God for your life, salvation, and daily life with Him? Can we become people of gratitude with practice, or are we just who we are?

Let's Do It! Commit to a step and live it out this week!

1. People think, "Is Jesus real, and can I trust Him?" And then you walk in. Pay attention to how you enter rooms this week. Will others see someone who carries the hope that flows from a heart of gratitude to Christ, or will they see someone who carries their problems and the weight of the world? Hope enters the room when gratitude does. Practice gratitude before you enter others' presence.

2. Reflect on the past few weeks. Have you taken others for granted (like the 9) more than expressing gratitude (like the 1) to those who regularly bless your life? Think of 3 things you may be taking for granted that you can express gratitude for and decide how you will express it. The closer someone is to you, the more impact gratitude can have.
3. Who is the most gracious person in your life? How does it feel to be around them? Are you the "most gracious person" in anyone else's life? Can you be? Think of 3 (or more) people you can pour out your gratitude this week.

Let's Pray

Father, thank You, thank You, THANK YOU for Your great love for us! That You would pay for our sins at the cost of Your son on the cross is almost unfathomable. We can never fully repay You for that, nor do You expect us to. But help us become people of gratitude so that the sweet fragrance of Your love might carry into the room when we do, pointing to You, our Savior and our hope! Help us always to be like the one who returned, praised Your name, and fell at Your feet, recognizing that we have been cleansed by You, redeemed by You, and continue to receive blessing upon blessing from You. Let us never miss the chance to pause and thank You—for who You are and for all You have done—and continue to do—in our lives! We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Key Scriptures

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT)

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

Psalms 100:4 (NLT)

Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name.

Philippians 4:6 (NLT)

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

Colossians 3:15 (NLT)

And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

Colossians 3:17 (NLT)

And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

Luke 17:11-19 (NLT)

As Jesus continued on toward Jerusalem, he reached the border between Galilee and Samaria. As he entered a village there, ten men with leprosy stood at a distance, crying out, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" He looked at them and said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy. One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, "Praise God!" He fell to the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And Jesus said to the man, "Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you."