

November 27, 2022
Gratitude: Week 2

Psalm 92:1-2 (NIV)

It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night...

Leviticus- God commanded that the people offer a sacrifice of Thanksgiving EVERY morning and EVERY night so the people would not forget to be Thankful!

Question: How many had the thought, at some moment over Thanksgiving, "You can pick your Friends, but unfortunately, you can't pick your Family?!"

Getting to the place where we don't need anything or anybody... we're Self-Sufficient!

I define a Blessed person as one who has everything that they NEED.

They might say, "We're financially blessed." Meaning, we're financially independent. They don't need more money. They've got all that they need.

Self-Sufficient?

- Maybe it's a Time/Goal issue?
- Maybe we don't want to be disappointed by people?
- Maybe it's a fear of risk and being hurt?

At one time, everyone would sit on their front porch and chat with all their neighbors while they walked up and down the sidewalk!
And then someone invented AC and the garage door opener, and that changed everything!

We can live this Bi-Polar experience of going through life being outwardly blessed, and yet inwardly wanting to feel independent, not wanting to NEED people.
But here's some truth...

I. We are all BLESSED with a Need

From the very first person who was ever created, and every person who has ever lived, God has BLESSED all humanity with a NEED.

God has blessed us with the NEED of needing each other.
God created you to need Him, and to need each other.

Ephesians 2:19,21 (TLB)

Now you are no longer strangers to God and foreigners to heaven, but you are members of God's very own FAMILY, citizens of God's country, and you belong in God's

household with every other Christian... We who believe are *carefully joined together* with Christ as parts of a beautiful, constantly growing temple(family) for God.

Those of us who are believers, God created you with a NEED, and that is... to be an active part of His family. You are to be joined together, DEPENDING on one another; and yet, for so many of us, our goal is to be *Independent*.

In actuality, when God created us He created us to be DEPENDENT, dependent on HIM and dependent on HIS PEOPLE (one another).

Jesus was asked this question, "Of all the Commandments (the 10 in stone, the other 600+)... What are the important ones?"

Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV)

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all of your soul and with all of your mind.' This is the first and greatest command. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

- A. One way we do that at ReaLife is by blessing needy families in our community during the holidays.
- B. Another way is blessing our ReaLife family when they are in need!

At ReaLife, we call that doing Life Together, and the best way of doing that is in a Life Group!

We purposely connect to other believers. We open up His word together. We celebrate with those who are celebrating. We hurt with those who are hurting, and we commit to be a functioning part of the family of God. God created us with this NEED, and one of the best ways we meet it is through Serving in a Ministry or attending a Life Group.

Let me give you a couple of Visuals so we can unpack this a little further!

II. You need a Spiritual Family with Refrigerator Rights.

Let's say someone comes over to my house that I don't know very well. Where do you think I'll meet with them?

So, let's say I'm in there with a person I'm just getting to know and they just get up without even telling me, walk across my house, go into the kitchen, and start making a sandwich!

What do you think I am going to do?

When people come to our house for Life Group, they don't even ring the bell or wait for me to come to the door! They just come in!

Acts 2:44-46 (TLB)

And all the believers met together *constantly* and shared everything with each other, selling their possessions and dividing with those in need. They worshiped together regularly at the Temple each day, met in small groups in homes for Communion, and shared their meals with great joy and thankfulness...

You may have friends, but how many “Refrigerator Friends” do you have?!

III. Kick up your Feet friends!

Romans 15:7 (NIV)

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

There’s usually two kinds of homes:

- The kind you take your shoes OFF, and...
- The kind you can leave your shoes ON!

But there’s a further step... the kind where you can kick your feet up!

2 Samuel 9:13 (NIV)

And Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king's table; he was lame in both feet.

He was a KICK UP FRIEND of the King for the rest of his life!