

# Small Group Guide: A Grateful Mission

Based on Isaiah 12 & Matthew 28:19-20

## Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

**Icebreaker Question:** Share about a time when someone's generosity or kindness made a significant impact on your life. How did it make you feel?

## Key Takeaways from the Sermon

### 1. Gratitude as Motivation for Mission

- Our thankfulness for salvation should motivate us to share Christ with others
- We are ambassadors for Christ, sent with His authority and power
- The Gospel is the foundation of all our gratitude

### 2. Acts of Service and Generosity

- True religion involves caring for those in need (widows, orphans, the marginalized)
- When we withhold our needs, we rob others of the blessing of serving
- Small acts of kindness can have eternal significance

### 3. Impact on the World (The Ripple Effect)

- One act of generosity can lead thousands to Christ
- We may never know the full impact of our obedience until heaven
- Isaiah's response: "Here I am, send me" came from gratitude for forgiveness

### 4. Sustaining the Mission

- Prayer and gratitude sustain our mission

- God multiplies what we offer Him (feeding of the 5,000)
- Worship in difficult circumstances opens prison doors (Paul & Silas)

## Discussion Questions

### Section 1: Understanding Gratitude (15 minutes)

1. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:20** - What does it mean to be an "ambassador for Christ"? How does this identity change how you approach daily life?
2. Pastor Jeff said, "If we're not grateful for our salvation, then we're selfish, bitter, angry, depressed." Do you agree? Why does gratitude have such power over our emotions and attitudes?
3. Share your testimony briefly: When did you come to know Christ, and what are you most grateful for about your salvation?

### Section 2: Generous Living (15 minutes)

4. **Read James 1:27** - The sermon mentioned that sometimes we don't ask for help because of shame or pride. Why is it difficult to receive help? How does refusing help rob someone of a blessing?
5. Pastor Jeff shared the question: "Do you know the love of God?" instead of "Do you know Jesus?" Why might this be a more effective conversation starter? How could you use this in your interactions?
6. Discuss the "Helping Hands" ministry concept. What needs do you have that you've been hesitant to share? What skills or resources could you offer to help others?

### Section 3: The Ripple Effect (15 minutes)

7. **Read Isaiah 6:1-8** - Isaiah's response to being cleansed was immediate: "Here I am, send me!" What holds us back from having this same attitude?

8. The sermon illustrated how one person's kindness could lead to thousands coming to Christ. Have you ever witnessed or been part of such a "ripple effect"? Share that story.
9. Where has God placed you right now (neighborhood, workplace, family, etc.) to be light? What specific opportunities do you have this week?

#### **Section 4: Sustaining the Mission (15 minutes)**

10. **Read John 6:11** - In the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus "lifted his eyes to heaven" and blessed what was given. How does starting with gratitude change our perspective on what we have to offer?
11. The sermon mentioned tithing and generosity even when finances are tight. What fears or objections come up for you around financial generosity? How have you seen God provide when you've been faithful?
12. **Read Acts 16:25-34** - Paul and Silas praised God in prison, and it led to the jailer's salvation. When have you seen worship or gratitude in difficult circumstances lead to breakthrough?

## **Practical Applications**

### **This Week's Challenge: Choose One**

#### **Option 1: Gratitude Practice**

- Each day this week, write down 3 specific things you're grateful for related to your salvation
- Share one of these with someone who doesn't know Christ

#### **Option 2: Acts of Service**

- Identify one person in need (in your church, neighborhood, or community)

- Meet one specific need this week (meal, help with a task, financial gift, etc.)
- Sign up for the Helping Hands ministry or Local Compassion opportunities

### **Option 3: Ambassador Living**

- Ask someone this week: "Do you know the love of God?"
- Be prepared to share your brief testimony of how God has shown His love to you
- Pray daily for opportunities to be light where God has placed you

### **Option 4: Generous Giving**

- If you don't currently tithe, take a step of faith this week
- Give to a missionary, local ministry, or someone in need
- "Lift it to heaven" in prayer and watch how God provides

### **Group Challenge**

- As a group, identify one local need you could meet together in the next month
- Plan a specific date and action (serve at a shelter, help a family, support a community event, etc.)

## **Prayer Focus (10 minutes)**

### **Pray together for:**

1. **Grateful hearts** - That God would deepen our gratitude for salvation
2. **Open eyes** - To see the needs around us and opportunities to serve
3. **Boldness** - To be ambassadors who represent Christ well
4. **Generosity** - To trust God with our time, talents, and treasure
5. **Ripple effects** - That our small acts of obedience would have eternal impact

**Pair up and pray specifically:**

- Share one area where you struggle with gratitude or generosity
- Pray for each other to experience breakthrough this week

**Closing Thought**

*"Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." - Colossians 3:17*

**Remember:** You don't have to have all the answers. You don't have to be a theologian. Just be willing, be grateful, and let God use your simple obedience to change the world.