

Giving Thanks

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What is one thing you are thankful for today?
2. Who is someone you know who is particularly good at communicating gratitude? What is it about them (and what they do/say) that brings them to mind in response to this question?

Read the following passage: Psalm 107:1-3.

Gratitude is a normal and healthy practice for all of us. Psalm 107 describes the account of various groups that had returned from Babylonian captivity and how God met them within their pain and calls them to give thanks to God on the other side of their deliverance. By application this Psalm also calls us to trust God in the midst of pain and hardship and to live lives of gratitude to God who not just does good but *is good*.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. The Psalms show us how to engage with God at an emotional level. Author C.S. Lewis said this of the Psalms: “The most valuable thing the Psalms do for me is to express that same delight in God which made David dance.” What do you think about the expressions of emotions described in Psalm 107 and throughout the book of Psalms more broadly?
2. We see a call to express gratitude here in Psalm 107. Would others describe you as a person whose attitude and speech is marked by gratitude? Why or why not? What could you do to cultivate a heart and habit of expressing gratitude to God and to other people?
3. Our words are an overflow of our hearts. Consider what the following passages say about our words and discuss the impact of words. Matthew 15:11; James 1:2-6.
4. We almost never fully see or understand what God is doing in the moment. Sometimes in hindsight we gain a better understanding of what God was doing through a difficult situation in our lives. Read Genesis 50:20 and discuss the benefit of a long term perspective and trust in God made a difference in life of Joseph.
5. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 tells us to “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” What are some practical steps you can take to integrate rejoicing and prayer more consistently throughout your day-to-day life.

6. Read Psalm 103:1-2. David gives the example here of calling his own soul to praise God. Discuss what it would look like to call your own soul to worship God even when you may not feel like it in the moment! Why could this be a beneficial thing to do?

Pray