



Your group matters.

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Icebreaker -

*A food most people like, but you don't is...\**

1. Pastor Tom says, "Gratitude is so important to God because He tells us that it is to be the primary motivation behind everything in our lives." What other forms of motivation have replaced gratitude in your life, and what effect have those had?
2. Read [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#) and [Ephesians 5:20](#). Pastor Tom mentions how, "Practicing gratitude is a spiritual activity. It focuses our hearts and minds on God and His purposes for our past and not just our pain and struggle." How does gratitude change your perspective on old hurts as well as current struggles?
3. Read [Philippians 4:6-7](#). As a small group, what next steps can you take to cultivate an environment of peace, prayer, and thanksgiving with one another to counteract the continual work of anxiety in your lives?
4. [Philippians 4:6-7](#), says peace is like a soldier standing guard over our hearts and minds. What is the best way to describe the current state of your heart and mind? What are you doing to ensure that they are not left unguarded and simply drifting through life?
5. Reflect on a deep hurt, worry, or struggle are you facing. Write down 3 things you are grateful for in the situation and share it with your group. How did this simple practice change your view of your situation?

Day One: [Luke 12](#)

Day Two: [Exodus 6](#)

Day Three: [Ephesians 5](#)

Day Four: [Revelation 13](#)

Day Five: [Songs 2](#)

*This Personal Guide has been adapted from  
Professor Grant Horner's Bible Reading System.*

## PERSONAL GUIDE

*\*This week's Icebreaker provided courtesy of the Sauk Rapids' Nash Small Group.*



# RIVERSIDE CHURCH



# Gratitude ADJUSTMENT

**"Gratitude Makes Me Healthier" (Part 1)**

NOV 5, 2023 Pastor Tom Lundeen

MYRC.CHURCH



## "Gratitude Makes Me Healthier" (Part 1)

Pastor Tom Lundeen

...gratitude isn't intended by God to just be a one day a year event \_\_\_\_\_ into a small part of feasting and football games. It's \_\_\_\_\_ by our Creator to be a "365 days a year" experience and attitude that shapes and molds our lives in extraordinary ways. There are at least \_\_\_\_\_ verses in Scripture that reference in some way gratitude and thanksgiving.

Gratitude is so important to God because He tells us that it is to be the primary \_\_\_\_\_ behind everything in our lives (note [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#) and [Ephesians 5:20](#)). And gratitude matters so much because God \_\_\_\_\_ it with blessings and benefits.

Today, let's discover how gratitude helps us \_\_\_\_\_ negative emotions in healthier ways. Gratitude helps us:

### 1. Deal with the \_\_\_\_\_ from Our Past (note [Philippians 1:1-3](#))

Note [Acts 16:6-10, 13-39](#)

Paul could have easily viewed his experience in Philippi as a frustrating \_\_\_\_\_ after beginning with such an exciting vision. And yet, Paul looks back at his experiences in Philippi with \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

Note [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#); [Ephesians 5:18-20](#)

Practicing gratitude is a \_\_\_\_\_ activity. It focuses our hearts and minds on God and his \_\_\_\_\_ for our past, and not just our pain and struggle.

Note [2 Corinthians 8:1-5](#)

Practicing gratitude gives us spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ surgery... Gratitude also helps us:

### 2. Process Today's \_\_\_\_\_ with Thankful Prayer (note [Philippians 4:6a](#))

We are living in a time where worry and anxiety \_\_\_\_\_ our culture...

*Don't worry, be happy* \_\_\_\_\_.

We have to \_\_\_\_\_ worry with something else (note [Philippians 4:6](#)).

It's actually not \_\_\_\_\_ to just stop worrying...from a human perspective.

*We may be freed from all burdensome care and feverish \_\_\_\_\_ because we may refer all our distresses and problems to God in prayer.* (Martin)

*Anxiety and prayer are more \_\_\_\_\_ to each other than fire and water.* (Bengel)

Note [Philippians 4:7](#)

Thankful prayer is the \_\_\_\_\_ to personal peace, a peace that only God can give (*transcends all understanding*).

\_\_\_\_\_ = soldier standing guard.

*God's protective custody of those who are in Christ Jesus extends to the \_\_\_\_\_ of their beings and to their deepest intentions.* (Gaffin)

### What's my gratitude adjustment?:

- \_\_\_\_\_ is catching up to God's truth about how gratitude can help us be emotionally healthier.
- Research has shown that practicing gratitude can reduce \_\_\_\_\_, depression, and anxiety, and improve sleep quality, self-esteem, and overall happiness.
- When we express gratitude, our brains release dopamine and serotonin...these \_\_\_\_\_ can help us feel happier, more content, and less stressed.
- [Psalm 75:1, NLT](#) - We thank you, O God! We give thanks because you are near. People everywhere tell of your wonderful deeds.
- [Colossians 4:2, NCV](#) - Continue praying, keeping alert, and always thanking God.

Tell someone about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey! Let us know, too, and fill out our connect card (digital\* or hard copy). \*MYRC.LINK/CONNECT or text **riverside** to **94000**



**SMALL GROUP**  
guide on the back



## "Gratitude Makes Me Healthier" (Part 1)

Pastor Tom Lundeen

...gratitude isn't intended by God to just be a one day a year event squeezed into a small part of feasting and football games. It's designed by our Creator to be a 365 days a year experience and attitude that shapes and molds our lives in extraordinary ways. There are at least 400 verses in Scripture that reference in some way gratitude and thanksgiving.

Gratitude is so important to God because He tells us that it is to be the primary motivation behind everything in our lives (note 1 Thessalonians 5:18 and Ephesians 5:20). And gratitude matters so much because God rewards it with blessings and benefits.

Today, let's discover how gratitude helps us navigate negative emotions in healthier ways.  
Gratitude helps us:

### 1. Deal with the Pain from Our Past (note Philippians 1:1-3)

Note Acts 16:6-10, 13-39

Paul could have easily viewed his experience in Philippi as a frustrating failure after beginning with such an exciting vision. And yet, Paul looks back at his experiences in Philippi with thankfulness to God.

Note 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:18-20

Practicing gratitude is a spiritual activity. It focuses our hearts and minds on God and his purposes for our past, and not just our pain and struggle.

Note 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

Practicing gratitude gives us spiritual Lasik surgery...  
Gratitude also helps us:

### 2. Process Today's Worries with Thankful Prayer (note Philippians 4:6a)

We are living in a time where worry and anxiety permeates our culture...  
*Don't worry, be happy* doesn't work.  
We have to replace worry with something else (note Philippians 4:6).

It's actually not possible to just stop worrying...from a human perspective.  
*We may be freed from all burdensome care and feverish anxiety because we may refer all our distresses and problems to God in prayer.* (Martin)

*Anxiety and prayer are more opposed to each other than fire and water.*  
(Bengel)

Note Philippians 4:7

Thankful prayer is the avenue to personal peace, a peace that only God can give (*transcends all understanding*).

Peace = soldier standing guard.

*God's protective custody of those who are in Christ Jesus extends to the core of their beings and to their deepest intentions.* (Gaffin)

#### What's my gratitude adjustment?:

- Science is catching up to God's truth about how gratitude can help us be emotionally healthier.
- Research has shown that practicing gratitude can reduce stress, depression, and anxiety, and improve sleep quality, self-esteem, and overall happiness.
- When we express gratitude, our brains release dopamine and serotonin...these chemicals can help us feel happier, more content, and less stressed.
- Psalms 75:1, NLT - We thank you, O God! We give thanks because you are near. People everywhere tell of your wonderful deeds.
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