

DISCUSSION GUIDE



July 27/30, 2017


An Overflowing Life


BIG IDEA: A grateful heart creates an overflowing life

GROUPS VISION

We believe life transformation happens when we engage with other people, with Jesus as our focus, and take next steps together. A next step is where we Ask, Listen, and Respond to take any action that advances our journey with Jesus.

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KEY VERSE

One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him.

Luke 17:15-16

POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

Set aside time this week to remind yourself what God has done for you. He found you, healed you, cleansed you and gave life to you. Thank God for His love and grace.

Do you have a story of someone taking a next step?

Share with us at
groups@valleycreek.org

MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

The key to living a full life is gratitude. When we are grateful for where we've been and where we are, we position ourselves to get where we are going. **(Luke 17:11-19)**

Five thoughts on why gratitude matters:

1. **Gratitude is a response to God's grace.** Jesus is always looking for people on the fringe and going places we tend to avoid, to heal and restore. **(Luke 17:15-16)** Jesus gave the men with leprosy a next step for them to walk out. Simple obedience always brings significant breakthrough. Leprosy is a picture of sin, a physical picture of a spiritual truth, a disease of the soul. We were dead, lost, broken and dirty; now we are alive, found, healed and cleansed. When we lose sight of where we have been, we lose sight of where we are going. **(Ephesians 2:1-5, Luke 19:10, John 15:16)**
2. **Gratitude keeps us humble.** Often we take credit for God's work in our lives. Lack of gratitude makes us independent instead of God-dependent. We have nothing without the grace of God. **(James 1:17, John 3:27, Deuteronomy 8:18)** Gratitude is always expressive, external and uncontrollable; otherwise it's just a nice thought. Gratitude is humility expressed, acknowledgment that we need God and others in our lives. Gratitude is worship, which means giving thanks to God and elevating Him in our lives. **(James 4:6)** Grace makes us humble, and humility allows us to receive grace.
3. **Gratitude builds our faith.** When we thank God for what He has done, we connect God to the good things in our lives. We need to remember God's faithfulness yesterday because it gives us the faith we need for today. **(Hebrews 11:1)** When we don't give thanks, we are in agreement with the kingdom of darkness, and doubt is birthed in our hearts. **(Romans 1:21-22)** If Jesus is our master when we're in need, He shouldn't become irrelevant when we have plenty.
4. **Gratitude is the pathway to encounters with God.** All the men with leprosy were healed, but only one had an encounter with Jesus. God's goodness is always an invitation to press into His presence. **(Psalm 100:4)** Gratitude opens our eyes to His presence in our lives. **(Luke 24:30-31)** We want to lean into the heart of God, not just receive from the hand of God.
5. **Gratitude gives us a healthy heart.** God asks us to give thanks for our good, not His. **(Psalm 136:1 NLT)** Gratitude reminds us that God is good and allows His love to cast out our fear. Gratitude anchors our hearts in the goodness of God, and a grateful heart lives a victorious life. **(Luke 17:19)** Gratitude doesn't change our circumstances. It changes our perspective and turns our focus toward God. **(Psalm 23:5)**

DISCUSSION

1. What are some simple everyday things we can be thankful for but we tend to take for granted? (See point #1)
2. Who are some people you are grateful for? How can you express your gratitude to them this week? (See point #2)
3. How does gratitude change our perspective and anchor us to God's goodness? (See point #5)
4. **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? What is your next step?**