



THE GRATITUDE EFFECT

How Thankfulness Changes the Way I Experience Life

Opening Thoughts

We spend enormous amounts of energy trying to discover the parts of God's will **He hasn't** _____, while sometimes ignoring the parts of God's will **He** _____.

1. Gratitude changes what I _____.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; Romans 12:2; Philippians 4:8

You don't have to know God's plan for _____ in order to walk with God _____.

As our minds are _____, we become increasingly able to discern God's will for our lives.

We are asking: _____

God is asking: _____

What we practice _____ matters.

Gratefulness rewires your _____ to expect good things.

If you rehearse something long enough, it can begin to feel _____ even when it isn't.

Just because something inside of me is screaming, doesn't mean what it's screaming is _____.

Renewing the mind means learning to bring what I think and what I feel back underneath what is _____.

Pay attention to what you're _____ to.

Gratitude doesn't ask me to create an imaginary _____, it helps me see all of _____.

Gratitude trains me to notice the _____ that I have stopped seeing.

What am I training my mind to _____?

3. Gratitude changes how I carry my _____.

1 Thessalonians 5:18, John 11:35

Biblical gratitude never asks you to pretend that bad things don't _____.

Gratefulness carries grief to it's proper _____.

I can grieve and be _____ at the same time.

Gratitude doesn't change my circumstances. It changes how I _____.

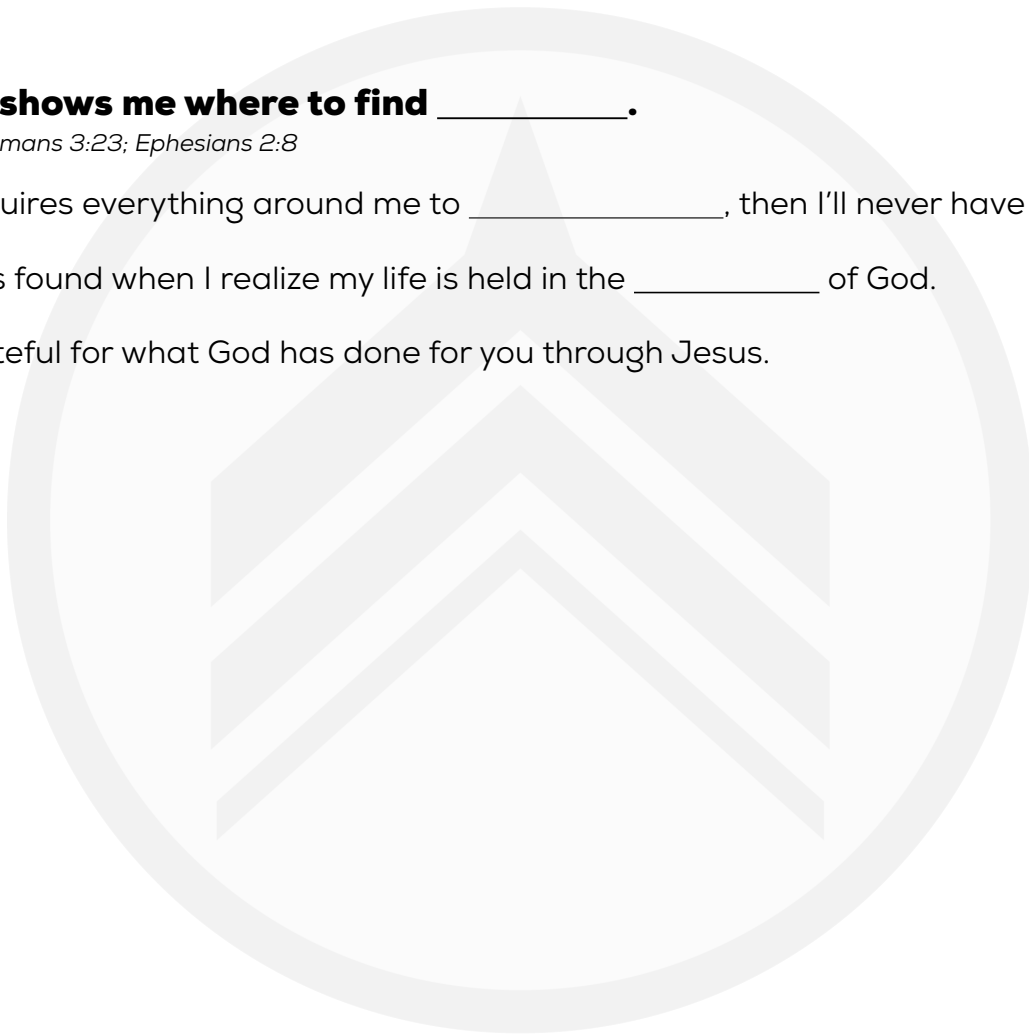
3. Gratitude shows me where to find _____.

Philippians 4:6-7; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:8

If my peace requires everything around me to _____, then I'll never have peace.

Biblical peace is found when I realize my life is held in the _____ of God.

You can be grateful for what God has done for you through Jesus.



LIFEGROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

FIRST THINGS FIRST

1. What's something in your life that you probably take for granted, but would REALLY miss if it disappeared tomorrow?

DIGGING DEEP

1. Read **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18**. Paul says, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances." What do these three commands have in common? Why do you think Paul puts them together?
2. Read **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18** again. How might this passage change the way we think about finding and living in God's will?
3. Read **Romans 12:2**. What connection does Paul make between the **renewing of our minds**, personal transformation, and our ability to discern the will of God? What might a "renewed mind" look like in everyday life?
4. Read **Philippians 4:8**. Notice that Paul begins with "whatever is true." Why is that important? How is intentionally thinking about what is true, honorable, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy different from simply trying to "think positive"?
5. Compare **1 Corinthians 8:7–12**, **Titus 1:15**, and **1 Timothy 4:2**. What do these passages teach us about the conscience? How does this help explain why our thoughts and feelings need to be brought back under the truth of God's Word?
6. Read **John 11:32–36**. Jesus knew Lazarus was about to be raised, yet He still wept. What does this tell us about grief? How does Jesus' response challenge the idea that strong faith means ignoring or quickly "getting over" our pain?
7. **Jeremy said:** "I can grieve and be grateful at the same time." Read **1 Thessalonians 5:18** carefully. Why is the distinction between giving thanks **IN** all circumstances and giving thanks **FOR** all circumstances so important? How can gratitude and genuine grief exist together?
8. Read **Philippians 4:6–7**. Trace Paul's progression from **anxiety** → **prayer** → **thanksgiving** → **peace**. What does Paul promise will change in this passage—and what does he never promise will change? What does that teach us about where biblical peace actually comes from?

TAKE IT HOME

1. **What am I training my mind to notice?** Think honestly about the past week. Have you been rehearsing what is wrong, what you're missing, what you fear—or what is true and worthy of gratitude?
2. Is there a painful circumstance in your life where you need to stop pretending it doesn't hurt, but also begin recognizing: **"This pain is real, but it isn't the whole story"**?
3. What is one specific thing you can practice this week to cultivate gratitude?
4. Finish together by answering this question: Apart from your circumstances, what has God already given you in Jesus that you can be grateful for today?

LIFEGROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 9, 2026

Building & Property Expansion Update

- New Kid's Wing Currently Under Construction
 - \$30,000 given for Construction
 - \$12,000 given for flooring
- Future Plans
 - Permanent Stage to replace temporary stage in worship center
 - Conversion of hallway classrooms into larger LifeGroup rooms
 - New Carpet in New Worship Center
 - New Chairs in New Worship Center (old chairs to be used in LifeGroup Rooms)

Coming Events

• Kickoff Week



LifeGroup Kickoff Week Sunday night of Open House is also "Kickoff Week" for our LifeGroups. If you are not a part of one of these special groups, now is the time to sign up! See the information tables to get an updated list of available groups and sign up today! **Scan the QR to sign up online!**



AWANA Kickoff is Wednesday, August 12 at 6:30p! This will be the funnest night of your kid's school week! This exciting club will challenge your kids to learn Scripture and hear truths from God's Word in an exciting atmosphere with games, prizes and chances to earn bucks to buy more prizes! **Scan the QR to sign your kids up today!**

• Missions Month - September 2026 - "Make Heaven Crowded"

- Each week Jeremy will bring a message about our responsibility and privilege to get the gospel around the world and we will be joined by missionaries each week for you to meet and greet!
- **Fall Family Fun Day** will be Sunday, September 27. We will have family games and other activities outside after the second service with our Chili Cook-Off. All money raised at the Chili Cook-Off will benefit our missionaries that visit during the month!
- **Faith Promise Sunday** is also September 27. We will celebrate all that God did in the last year with our missions giving and make our new Missions Commitments for the next 12 months. Pastor Mick Bowen from Knightdale, NC will be our speaker.

• Deaf Outreach Movie Night - Friday, September 4 / 6:30-8p

- This special Deaf Missions film presentation of Jesus at 6:30pm is designed first and foremost for the deaf community as an experience in their language, their culture, their world. We also hope this night creates a welcoming space for those in the deaf community across our area to step into Grace Church for the first time, knowing this event was created with them in mind. Concessions will be available. Come be part of something meaningful. Bring someone with you.

• Monroe County Fall Festival, September 10-12

- We are seeking volunteers who would wear a Jesus Period Shirt and represent Grace Church to the community at our booth. To volunteer, please fill out a connect card and on the backside under "sign me up for" write "Fall Festival". We will be in contact with you.