Life Group Notes & Discussion Guide for November 15th
"Preparing Our Hearts for Thanksgiving"
"This is the Day the Lord Has Made; Let Us Rejoice and Be Glad in It"

Sermon Text: **Psalm 118:19-29;** New Testament Text: **Romans 6:16-18;** Gospel Text: **Mark 12:28-31.** Read **Psalm 118:19-29**, then answer the questions that follow.

1. Read **Psalm 118:19.** When the psalmist says, "***Open to me the gates of righteousness,"*** to what is he referring?

2. Why does the psalmist wish to enter?

3. Read **Psalm 118:20.** Now read **John 10:7.** Explain how Jesus ultimately serves as the ***gate for the righteous.***

4. Read **Psalm 118:21.** For what is the psalmist most thankful?

5. Read **Psalm 118:22.** To what is the psalmist prophetically pointing in this verse?

6. Who often referred to himself in the New Testament with this verse of scripture?

7. Read **Psalm 118:23.** Why does the psalmist call this ***marvelous?***

8. Read **Psalm 118:24.** If we are walking with the Lord, why should we be able to ***rejoice and be glad in any day—no matter what that day might bring?***

9. Read **Psalm 118:25.** Why is this verse always an appropriate verse to pray?

10. Read **Psalm 118:26.** To whom is the first line of this verse referring?

11. Explain what the second line of this verse means.

12. Read **Psalm 118:27.** To what is this verse prophetically pointing concerning the Messiah?

13. How will God ***make his light shine upon them?***

14. Read **Psalm 118:28-29.** How could doing what these two verses proclaim greatly increase our understanding of God's greatness & love for us?

Discussion Guide for Your Life Group Meeting

I. At your Life Group meeting, first read **Romans 6:16-18** aloud. It can be helpful to have several people each read one verse from their Bible. This helps people feel involved and can also introduce some interesting discussion if several translations are used. After reading the passage discuss it. If you are having trouble stimulating discussion, you can try asking some of the following questions:
   1. How often do you think of yourself as ***a slave to anything?***
   2. Which is easier for you to see yourself as, ***a slave of sin,*** or ***a slave of righteousness?***
   3. What motivated a slave to ***serve his or her master obediently?***
   4. What might be lacking in our lives that makes it difficult for us to be an ***obedient slave of righteousness?***
   5. How well would you say you've done in becoming ***obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching of the gospel?***
   6. How often do you think we excuse ourselves ***from obediently following Christ because of the Covenant of Grace?***
   7. How might we use God's grace ***as our motivation to obey the gospel rather than as our excuse for failing at it?***

II. Next read **Mark 12:28-31**, utilizing several group members to each read one verse aloud. After reading the passage discuss it. If you are having trouble stimulating discussion, you can try asking some of the following questions.
   1. Why do you think Jesus answered the teacher of the law with a direct quote from the ***Shema?***
   2. Of the four ways Jesus instructed us to ***love the Lord our God,*** is there one that seems easiest for you to carry out? Is there one that seems hardest?
   3. Jesus instructs us to ***love your neighbor as yourself.*** What do you think must be true before you can ***truly love yourself?***
   4. What happens at that point that ***spiritually enables us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves?***
   5. Now read **Mark 12:32-34.** How did Jesus's response bless the scribe beyond his expectations? (In other words, what truths did the scribe discover in Jesus's response that he had perhaps never understood before?)

III. Read **Psalm 118:19-29,** utilizing several group members to each read one verse aloud. After reading the passage discuss it. If you are having trouble stimulating discussion, you can try asking some of the following questions:
   1. Read **Psalm 118:19.** When the psalmist says, "***Open to me the gates of righteousness,"*** to what is he referring?

2. Why does the psalmist wish to enter?
3. Read **Psalm 118:20.** Now read **John 10:7.** Explain how Jesus ultimately serves as the ***gate for the righteous.***
4. Read **Psalm 118:21.** For what is the psalmist most thankful?
5. Read **Psalm 118:22.** To what is the psalmist prophetically pointing in this verse?
6. Who often referred to himself in the New Testament with this verse of scripture?
7. Read **Psalm 118:23.** Why does the psalmist call this ***marvelous?***
8. Read **Psalm 118:24.** If we are walking with the Lord, why should we be able to ***rejoice and be glad in any day—no matter what that day might bring?***
9. Read **Psalm 118:25.** Why is this verse always an appropriate verse to pray?
10. Read **Psalm 118:26.** To whom is the first line of this verse referring?
11. Explain what the second line of this verse means.
12. Read **Psalm 118:27.** To what is this verse prophetically pointing concerning the Messiah?
13. How will God ***make his light shine upon them?***
14. Read **Psalm 118:28-29.** How could doing what these two verses proclaim greatly increase our understanding of God's greatness & love for us?