

GIVING THANKS

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Focus Mankind was created to express love and gratitude to God. This expression of our love is worship. When we walk in obedience to God, we will then experience God's miraculous power in our lives, which will cause our hearts to have an overflow of gratitude. Worship is the outflow of gratitude.

Open Can you think of either a gift you received or something someone has done for you that made you feel grateful? Share about this experience and why it made you feel gratitude.

Read **Luke 17:11–19**

¹¹Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. ¹²Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. ¹³And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" ¹⁴So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. ¹⁵And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, ¹⁶and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? ¹⁸Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

In this story, Jesus did a miracle for the leper, and he was healed. This miracle caused the leper to express his gratitude to Jesus. When we express gratitude to Jesus, it is worship. The Bible is full of examples of the many ways people have expressed gratitude to God. Some sing, dance, bow or raise their hands, but all of them express their gratitude with a sincere heart.

Just like the leper, it is the miracles God does in our lives that stir our hearts to gratitude. God loves doing miracles for us; however, often, we don't experience these miracles because we haven't been obedient to the Lord. Jesus told the lepers to go and show themselves to the priest. It was as they obeyed and were on their way that they were healed. Likewise, there are several biblical examples of people who were told to do something and received the miracle after they took the step of obedience. Moses was told to lift his rod, and after obeying, the waters parted. The same is true in our lives—when we obey God, we then experience more miracles. When miracles happen, our hearts are full of gratitude. When we express that gratitude, we are worshipping the Lord.

Talk

1. Are you an expressive person or a more reserved person? How do you usually express thanks and gratitude to your friends and family?
2. Read Psalm 100:4. What does the Bible say about how we express our gratitude to the Lord? What are the ways you usually express your gratitude to the Lord?
3. Share something the Lord has done for you this past month. If you expressed your gratitude to Him already, share how. If you haven't shown your gratitude to the Lord yet, take time to thank God aloud for what He did.
4. Read Luke 17:11–19. Why do you think the lepers in the story were not healed until after they obeyed Jesus? Why do you think God only does miracles after we obey Him?
5. Can you think of a time God asked you to do something and after you responded in obedience, you saw God do something amazing in your life?

Live

A grateful heart comes as a response to God working in our lives. This happens after we are obedient to Him. Lead the group in a time of personal reflection. Ask the following questions: What is something the Lord has recently asked you to do? Have you been obedient to what He asked? If not, take time to repent and choose to obey what God said. When you do, you will see a miracle in your life.

This week, encourage your group members to take the time to express their gratitude to the Lord for what He has done in their lives. Make it a goal to be continually grateful for all He has done!

Pray

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your love and for all the great things You have done. Thank You for allowing us to express our praise to You. Teach us how to become open in how we express our gratitude to You and to those around us. Please show us areas in our lives where we need to be more obedient to You. Help us to know that as we are obedient, we will see Your miracles in our lives. Amen.