

Small Group Study

Our Vision

To know God and enjoy Him forever.

Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people

Discussion

Building Kingdom People: Thanking God

by Megan Wiest

Scripture

Have volunteers read the following scriptures:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

2 Corinthians 4:18

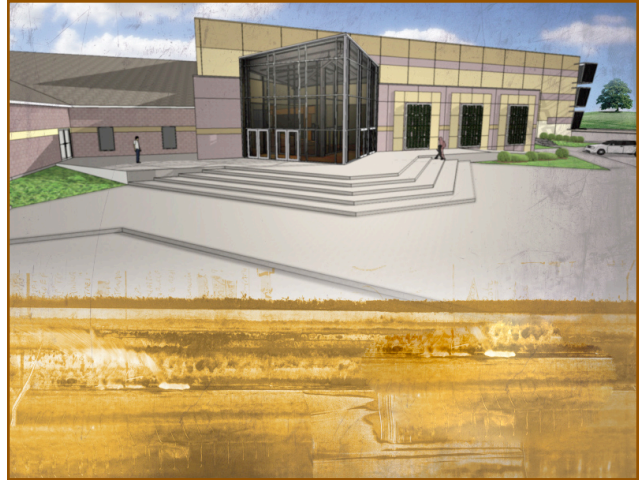
Acts 16: 22-28

Introduction

As we think of opening presents on Christmas morning our thoughts often come to the idea of thankfulness. Sometimes we open our present and we are truly thankful for what we discover inside and other times we pretend to be thankful for a gift that we really didn't want to receive. Struggling to crack a smile and eek out a thank you to tube socks, a tacky sweater or any other presents you hope come with a gift receipt is one thing. But how do we get to the point where thankfulness is the initial response for whatever life throws our way? In 1 Thessalonians 5:18 we are told to "give thanks in all circumstances." Jesus makes no exceptions for a bad day, screaming children, horrible traffic, tight finances, job loss, and loss of a loved one or even personal tragedy. Our response is greatly shaped by our perspective, thus our responsibility is to pinpoint the things in our lives that are hindering us from being thankful. When we truly begin to be thankful, it brings its own gifts: a vision of seeing or believing that God is right there in the midst of our darkness holding our hands. It brings new life, new energy, new enthusiasm, and new possibilities.

Questions

1. What is one thing you are thankful for and why?
2. What are some things that you tend to take for granted?



Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

1. What is the worst/best gift you have received?
2. What is your favorite thing about the holidays?
3. What is the thing you dislike the most about buying a gift for someone?

3. How can understanding sin and hell and grace and heaven move us to a place where we have a thankful heart?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 4:18. How can this verse help you have a different perspective on the pain and suffering we experience on earth?
5. How do you think having an unthankful heart can affect your relationship with God and loved ones?
6. Do you think God is simply asking us to be thankful or commanding us to?
7. Read Acts 16:22-28. Who would like to share a time in their life when they endured an unpleasant experience and looking back are now thankful that they were able to go through the experience? Why are you grateful for the experience?