



Warm-Up

What was your favorite part of your Thanksgiving meal?

Word

During the holiday season there is always a lot of things going on. Between Thanksgiving and Christmas it often seems to go by so quickly and before we know it the New Year is already here. In our time together we are going to slow things down and take a few minutes and talk about some things we are grateful to God for.

Read 1 Chronicles 16:34 and Psalms 100:4

- What are some things you have to be grateful for this year?

Read Ephesians 5:19-20

- In what practical ways do you personally feel you can express thanks to God?

Read Romans 8:18

1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, *"...in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* You may think, "Surely Paul made a mistake." But it wasn't a mistake. Paul suffered from a very difficult problem that he called a "thorn in the flesh." He also had been run out of town, beaten, whipped, imprisoned, betrayed by friends, left naked, cold, hungry, shipwrecked, and stoned because of his faith. Yet, Paul never stopped giving thanks. Paul said several things in his writings that really show he had the proper perspective of the burdens of life.

- How can we give thanks in the midst of difficult circumstances?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Typically around the holiday time, especially around the Thanksgiving time, we hear about the importance of being thankful. As important it is to be thankful during this time of year, God wants us to live a lifestyle of being thankful.

- How and when can we regularly express gratitude to God and in our relationships at home and at work?

Read Ephesians 1:16

In this passage Paul is thanking God for people that are in his life that God has called him to minister to, so thankful that he prays for them regularly.

- Who in your life are you most thankful for? How do you think praying for those people in your life can increase your gratitude for those God has placed in your life?

Prayer

As we have just discussed God moves in our hearts when we pray for those people that God has placed in our lives. Let's each take a minute to pray for those people.

40 Days of Relationships Prayer Initiative – Week Two

Please be in prayer for the upcoming 40 Days of Relationships series. Specifically pray:

- That we as a church body would center on the impact to those that do not know Jesus the series will have. That God would bring into the small groups the disconnected and those without a personal knowledge of Jesus.
- That each leader that hears the call to host or lead a small group would begin to pray for the potential members of their group.