

# Give Thanks: Week 1- The Prayer of Gratitude in Grace

## ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS

1. Do you feel you are a grateful person? Explain

### WORD

We are starting a series this month of October and this looks at the thanksgiving prayers of Paul's epistles and uses four different points of thanks that Paul offers to God as a way to help inspire gratitude and praise in our hearts.

Let us explore God's work of gratitude in our lives and in our hearts.

Imagine the worst church you have ever heard of or the worst one you have been to. Whatever you can imagine, this one is probably worse, and probably at the time, one of the worst churches in the New Testament. The church in Corinth, They were confused about who they were following. They were also abusing their freedom in Christ at the expense of others. Unity was an issue and drunkenness.

That's why Paul wrote the passage in 1 Corinthians 11:28 that you find often read before communion that says: *"Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord."* Because they were focusing on their upward relationship to God while neglecting their outward relationship to others.

But you see, Paul tells the Corinthians as we've read that they were enriched in every way, but they did not share what they had. They did not serve each other with the gifts that God had given them, but instead used it for selfish reasons. At the time of this letter, the Corinthian church was becoming boastful of their gifting and making a show of their knowledge and their wisdom. They were also relaxed in their beliefs, mixing their new Christian faith with practices involving other false gods; they relaxed their morals

regarding sexual activities too and in one instance were even boastful about a son who ended up getting into an sexual relationship with his father's wife.

As believers of Christ we are called to share in God`s work by using the gifts we have received to build up other believers and glorify God. We must work together through prayer to lift one another up in faithful ways so the body will work as God intends.

**1. Remain connected to Jesus who enriches us with all the spiritual gifts that we need.**

*I Corinthians 1:4-5(ESV)*

*I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—*

We can't get the spiritual gift until we are connected to Christ. That's why Paul thank God for the grace that has been given (think of the giver) in Christ. It is through a relationship with Christ that we receive a spiritual gift. It is in Christ who is the source of our spiritual gifts, our boasting is not in ourselves, but in Christ. You see the Corinthian church already had the spiritual gifts from God, but they were not using them properly because they were not connecting to the one who gave them those gifts in the first place.

**DISCUSSION**

Do you know what are the spiritual gifts given to you by God? How can you share these gifts to serve God as part of your gratefulness?

**WORD**

**2. We can always thank God knowing that if he calls us, he will equip us.**

*I Corinthians 1:6-7 (ESV)*

*6 even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Paul is already assuring them that it is Christ himself who has already strengthened them as they make their way to the finish line, or as Paul puts it, the “revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He first thanked God, giving him first the credit as the one who has given the church all of their spiritual gifts. He didn't say at this point that they were using them properly. But he did thank God for giving them. You know we could misuse the gifts we are given, but it doesn't mean that we can't still thank God for giving them.

Paul acknowledges and gives thanks for God's grace towards them in giving them these gifts. His focus is not so much on what they have done themselves, but for what God has done in them.

It was said that the “gospel is good news of what God has done; all preachers do is pass it on, bear their witness to it.”

## DISCUSSION

Are you thankful with the spiritual gifts given to you by God? In what area of these gifts you need to be equipped so that you can be fruitful.

## WORD

**3. We can celebrate God`s victory now, because He is Faithful to keep His promises**

*I Corinthians 1:8-9 (ESV)*

*8 who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Paul provides the church with an assurance that is not based on the abilities or the gifting of people, but on the gifting of God. That if you feel as if you lack in gifting, in talent, God is still calling you into partnership with His Son. And he is putting his own signature down in assuring that the work that he is calling you to do will be complete.

In essence, Paul puts all these gifts and this whole discussion under the greater hope with God and that the church has been believing in is the one who stands above all our gifting, all our abilities.

It is also a hope worth noting that Paul has assured them that the Lord will keep them strong until that great day of the Lord so that they will remain blameless before him, lacking nothing.

### DISCUSSION

What can we do to persevere as we use our spiritual gifts knowing that God is faithful and will sustain us to the end?

### **LIFE APPLICATION**

Let us remain connected with Jesus who enriches us with all spiritual gifts we need. Let us trust that if God called us to serve in every way, He will equip us. Let us celebrate with confidence that Jesus will keep his promise to preserve us as we walk with him.

Let us be grateful with the spiritual gifts God has given us and let us use them to honour Him for He is worthy of worship, adoration and glory.

### DISCUSSION

Share three things that you are grateful for this year as we celebrated Thanksgiving weekend.

### **VERSE TO MEDITATE ON**

*I Chronicles 16:34*

*“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.”*

## PRAYER

Share your prayer request and answered prayer. Pray for one another and throughout this week.



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