

Thanksgiving

Study 1

1. Who are the people you have been most thankful for over the lockdowns? Why?

Col 1:3-14

2. What are the implications of addressing our thanks to God our Heavenly Father? V3
3. Paul, the author of Colossians, expects the Colossian Christians to be thankful (See 1:12-14, 2:7, 3:15-16, 17; 4:2). Taking Paul as our example how often might we give thanks for others? V3
4. The first reason to give thanks is the faith of others. What is faith? V4, 13-14
5. The second reason to give thanks is love for others. How are Christians enabled to love each other? V4, 8 (See also I Jn 3: 23-24; Gal 5:22)
6. The third reason to give thanks is the hope available to Christians. What is it that Christians hope for? V5, 27. How is that different from our everyday hopes or expectations?
7. What are some of the challenges you find to giving thanks?
8. What is the basis for ongoing thanksgiving in the life of a maturing Christian? V9, 12

Pray together

Take time to give thanks God's work of grace in the lives of each other. You might also like to prayer this general thanksgiving prayer together:

Gracious God, we humbly thank you
For all your gifts so freely bestowed on us,
for life and health and safety,
for freedom to work and leisure to rest,
and for all that is beautiful in creation and in human life.
But, above all, we thank you for our Saviour, Jesus Christ,
for his death and resurrection,
for the gift of your Spirit,
and for the hope of glory.
Fill our hearts with all joy and peace in believing;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Study 2

1. As a church what can we be thankful for over the last year?

Col 3: 15-17

2. Peace can mean a number of things. Following on from Col 3:12-14 what is the meaning of peace in Col 3:15? (See also Eph 4:2-3)
3. How might love, peace and thanksgiving reinforce each other within the body of Christ (church)?
4. Why do we struggle to be thankful? How does the message about Jesus encourage us to be thankful?
5. What does it mean to 'let the word of Christ dwell in you richly'? [Hint: think about the terms 'dwell' and 'richly'] How might we do this as we worship together? V16
6. What is the difference between teach and admonish within the context of the church? Why should these be done with all wisdom? V16
7. Share some music that has spoken the word of Christ to you or name some music that you find helpful to express your gratitude to God?
8. How can our worship be expressed through all of life? V17 (See also Rom 12: 1; Col 3:23)

Pray together

Take time to give thanks to God for the various aspects of our church life and worship that have brought the message of Christ to us and been used in the transformation of our lives.

Pray that in their life situations each member of your group would be enabled to do everything in Christ's name and with gratitude.

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Study 3

1. Thinking of church as the people and not the building, in what ways have you seen our church grow over the years you have been attending? How have you seen God at work?

Col 1:3-14

2. Lordship is not something we often refer to in a positive sense. What does it mean to 'receive Christ Jesus as Lord'? v6
3. Why is it important to continue to live/walk in Christ? V6 (See also Col 1: 10-12)
4. What is the foundation we as individual Christians and as the church should be built on? Why is this important? V7 (See also Eph 2:20-22)
5. What are some ways you have you been strengthened/established in the faith? V7 (See also v8)
6. Thanksgiving is an important Christian discipline. Why is it key to living/walking in Christ?
7. In Colossians we are urged to give thanks joyfully, to be overflowing with thankfulness, to express our thanks together and to be devoted to prayer and thankfulness (Col 1:11b-12, 2:7, 3:15, 4:2). How can we do this authentically?

Pray together

Give thanks together that God is building you in him and strengthening your faith as individuals and as a Life Group. Pray for his grace to continue your walk of faith.