

Living God's will | 1 Thessalonians 2021 Fall #12

Tips: Even if you do not use sermon based questions for discussion in your group, you can always use one or two during your group time. Talking about the weekend sermon can encourage attendance and connection at church. You can use them as an icebreaker. Remember that discussion over the sermon is never about the personality of the preacher, but always about the content. 1 Thessalonians 5:12&13 reminds us to hold our pastors in high regard. Always steer conversations away from criticism.

Administration: This is the last toolkit until Winter Quarter begins in January.

Announcement: At the end of the quarter you want to be sure to have a conversation that reminds folks that while you don't want anyone to leave the group, God sometimes moves people in new directions. Encourage members to tell you if they will be leaving and be sure to celebrate them for all they have added. See the attached document in this toolkit for additional end of the Quarter tips.

My Story Questions

These questions help the group know one another and transition to deeper discussion. Choose one.

- 1) Tell of a Thanksgiving tradition in your family.
- 2) Tell of a trial in life that you are now thankful for.

Study Questions

These are meant for personal preparation and group discussion. Use all or pick a few to discuss.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

- 1) How are these three imperatives connected to each other and to God's will for transformation?
- 2) Which of these three comes most naturally to you?
- 3) Read Exodus 16:1-8 In what circumstance do you need to choose thanksgiving over grumbling?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:25

- 4) Paul uses the hope of eternal life to encourage thankfulness. How can counting past, present and future blessings add to thankfulness? List some from each category.
- 5) If future blessings are eternal and present blessings are temporary, which has more value to you? Which gets more of your attention?
- 6) Read these specific promises related to Christ's return: 1) the reuniting of deceased believers, 4:16 2) being in the presence of the Lord forever, 4:17, 3) escaping wrath and enjoying salvation, 5:9.
- 7) For which of these promises are you most thankful?
- 8) Read 5:11 Who can you encourage with these promises?

Read Luke 17:11-19

- 9) What is the point of this story?
- 10) Describe the posture and attitude of the man who returned to thank Jesus?
- 11) When have you been like the nine and not returned to thank God for his blessings?

Responding to Jesus

Offer these questions for personal reflection before your group prayer time.

- 1) Ask God, "Where am I being ungrateful?"
- 2) Ask God, "Open my eyes to the past, present and future blessings you have provided"

For Further Application

- 1) Consider thanking God regularly from each category. Maybe use a journal: 1) The people he has given you to love
- 2) The provisions he has given you to live
- 3) The spiritual blessings you have in Christ.
- 4) The hardships He has seen you through
- 5) The transformation he has accomplished in areas of your life.