

## **life groups' sermon guide**

### **gratitude**



*Life Groups exist at Kingsway to provide authentic relationships for spiritual growth, caring for one another, and reaching out to others.*

*If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, "thank you," that would suffice. ~Meister Eckhart*

Someone once said that gratitude is a matter of the heart.

Q: What are the things of your life that you are grateful for today?

Q: Make a list of a few of the things you are most grateful for other than salvation and share one of them and why you're grateful for it.

Q: How do you express your gratitude for what you have written down or shared?

Read **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

Q: What is our thankfulness, our gratitude rooted in; is it present circumstances or something bigger than the world and events around us? Explain your answer...

Non-believers focus on the circumstances of life. They get beat up, bogged down, depressed, maybe even worse during life's trials. Christians are not supposed to be that way. We are to remain grateful that the world may see something different in us. Being grateful in times of trouble can be a very challenging issue. Most all of us know that, many unfortunately first hand.

Q: I have a Christian friend that says "we are in a valley, coming out of the valley or heading for the valley everyday of our Christian life." If that statement is true what does that say about being grateful?

Q: *What part of the valley are you looking at?*

Q: Why do you think we are saved? Is salvation anything more than making us happy? *Did God save us just to bless us and make us happy;? Or has He saved us so that we would become people of faith and more Christ-like in our character?*

Read the following verses:

**Romans 4:1-5**

**Romans 5**

**Psalm 51**

*One forgives to the degree that one loves. ~ Francois de La Rochefoucauld*

Our theme this week is gratitude. What is the overlying theme of the verses we just read?

Q: How do forgiveness and gratitude go together?

Q: How does Romans 4:1-5 speak toward gratefulness or perhaps away from self righteousness?

Q: What about Romans 5? Lets divide Romans 5 in half. What kind of gratefulness is Paul speaking of in the first 11 verses? What about verses 12-20? Is there a difference and how does it come together in our lives?

Read **Romans 1:21**

Q: Are there life consequences for being ungrateful? We're not talking eternal salvation for the believer, just everyday life issues.

Q: If we say yes to that question then how do we develop an attitude of gratitude? What are some practical guidelines? If you had to write a chapter in a book on developing a grateful attitude what are some of the methods you'd write about? *Make a list here and share.* Keep in mind that personal experience is a wonderful tool for teaching others.

JFK said: *"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."*

Q: So we have or are developing an attitude of gratitude; how can we learn to express that gratitude?

Robert N. Rodenmayer, wrote that *"there are three kinds of giving: grudge giving, duty giving, and thanksgiving. Grudge giving says, 'I hate to,' duty giving says, 'I ought to,' thanksgiving says, 'I want to.' The first comes from constraint, the second from a sense of obligation, the third from a full heart. Nothing much is conveyed in grudge giving since 'the gift without the giver is bare.' Something more happens in duty giving but there is no song in it. Thanksgiving is an open gate into the love of God."*

*<sup>15</sup> Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. ~ Colossians 3:15-17*

*I want to go on living even after my death! And therefore I am grateful to God for giving me this gift...*

Anne Frank, 14, diary., April 4th 1944

*Thou who hast given so much to me, give one thing more--a grateful heart. --George Herbert (1593-1633)*