

# CELEBRATION SERVICE 2018

**Instructions:** This week, we want you to focus your small group time on two things:

- (1) Celebrating God's blessings in the lives of your group members, helping each other grow in talking about Jesus and sharing testimonies about His work in your lives; and
  - (2) Learning about and practicing the journaling technique that is encouraged in our Bible reading plan for 2019, which is the F260 plan found at [replicate.org](http://replicate.org).
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## **Celebrating God's blessings in 2018!**

God is always good, and He is always at work in the lives of His children for their good and for His glory. From comfort to discipline, God's blessings in Christ are a constant source of motivation for praise and worship in the life of a believer. In fact, Paul tells the believers in the church in Thessalonica that it's God's Will for their lives that they should "rejoice always; pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances..." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a). Celebrating God's blessings and praising the Lord should be more than a weekly occurrence on Sunday morning, it should be the constant condition of our hearts, and in a sinful world that's so full of brokenness and pain, it must be a daily discipline in our lives. Your small group can help in cultivating and encouraging lives that always rejoice and give thanks to the Lord. Today, spend time doing just that!

1. How can you "rejoice always?" What does that mean, and how is that actually accomplished in your life? How can your small group help?
2. How can you "pray without ceasing?" What does that mean, and how is that actually accomplished in your life? How can your small group help?
3. How can you "give thanks in all circumstances?" What does that mean, and how is that actually accomplished in your life? How can your small group help?
4. Take time to allow each person in your group to share one blessing from the Lord in their lives during the past year. Make a list of the blessings that are shared.
5. Using the list of blessings, allow one or two people to lead your small group in a time of worship through prayer, specifically recognizing and thanking God for all of the blessings that were shared in the group.
6. Can you think of someone to share your testimony with this week? Discuss, encourage, and commit!

## **Journaling using the H.E.A.R. method.**

The F260 Bible reading plan for 2019 encourages the use of a journaling method that uses the acronym H.E.A.R., which stands for highlight, explain, apply, and respond. It's a simple method of journaling that starts by highlighting the part of the daily reading that stands out the most to you. For example, if your daily reading was Philippians 3-4, perhaps the familiar and powerful words in Philippians 4:4-6 would stand out most to you. If so, highlight those verses, and then spend time with the Lord doing the following three things. First, take time to simply explain in your own words what God's Word says in the highlighted passage. Try to do this in just a couple of sentences, capturing only what God is saying in the verse(s). Second, take time to apply what God is saying to your life through the verse(s). This doesn't have to be long either.

In just a couple of sentences, capture how God's Word speaks into your life right now. Third, take time to respond to God's Word. Response should flow out of the application, leading you to confess, to thank, to praise, to remember, to surrender, etc. to God out of obedience to His Word. Take time in your group to practice this method right now.

1. Read Philippians 4:4-6, using this as the highlighted passage.
2. Work individually or in groups of two or three, and explain these verses in one or two sentences. Share your explanations.
3. Work individually or in groups of two or three, and apply these verses in one or two sentences. Share your applications.
4. Work individually or in groups of two or three, and respond to these verses in one or two sentences. Share your responses.
5. How can you encourage each other in spending time with the Lord in His Word each day and in taking time to respond to His Word each day in your lives?