

# think·thanks

## LESSON 1 // THINGS STANDING IN THE WAY OF THANKS

**Big Idea:** One of the most common commands and encouragements in Scripture is the call to give thanks. Gratitude is where God's best for your life begins.

Anytime we slip from the high calling and practice of active thanksgiving, we slide into a spirit of grumbling. Quite often the reason we're not more grateful is that we've allowed grit to get into the gears of our gratitude. This happens when we're not pursuing spiritual growth, we've accepted the common attitudes of our culture, we've lost focus and adopted unrealistic expectations. We may have allowed pride to take hold in our hearts, violated God's life principles or even stepped into the devil's "comparison trap." We may also be nursing anger, unforgiveness and bitterness. God wants you to get rid of this kind of grit from the gears of your gratitude so you can live in the blessing of a thankful life!

**1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT)** *Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.*

### Start Talking:

- What do you find yourself complaining most about? Why?
- What are you most grateful for right now in this season of your life? How often do you share this gratitude with others?

### Start Thinking:

- What are some signs that someone is not living a life of gratitude? What practical impact does this begin to have on one's life? Why do you think the Bible consistently commands us to "give thanks"?
- It can be very difficult to remain grateful in all circumstances, how do you respond when circumstances are tough? Where does this come from?
- This weekend Pastor Dale shared that "grumbling" is a way of thinking, talking and acting. In what area of your life (thoughts, words or, behavior) is grumbling most prevalent? How can you combat this and move towards gratitude?
- **Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5.** This verse speaks about Christians conforming to the culture. How can you realize if you've fallen into this trap? How does this begin to impact your gratitude?
- **Read 2 Corinthians 10:12 & Exodus 20:17.** Comparison is a trap that robs us of recognizing and appreciating what God has done for us (and in us). Why is it easy for people to fall into this trap? When you've struggled with comparison, how have you pulled yourself out of it?

### Start Praying:

Take some time at the end of your gathering and ask group members to share a few things they are grateful for that God is doing (or has done) in their life. Ask group members if they have prayer needs and pray for one another during this time.

### Start Doing:

- Invite those in your group to prayerfully consider supporting outreach efforts at Church of the Redeemer. Support can be offered by volunteering, donating products, or offering financial support (for those that are able). For more information visit: <https://church-redeemer.org/ministries/outreach/covid-19>
- Encourage group members to live with an "attitude of gratitude" this week. Challenge them over the next week to pause daily and share with (at least) one other person what they are grateful for. Next time that you come together, encourage members to share how this impacted them and others.

