

Week 3



THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF THANKSGIVING

Prayer Focus: Ask the Lord to help every participant grow in having a thankful heart no matter what situation they are in.

FELLOWSHIP AND WELCOME (10–15 MINUTES)

Welcome everyone as they walk in. Be sure to identify any new members who were not at the previous session, and be sure that they receive the appropriate materials—workbook and book.

Encourage everyone to congregate in the meeting place. If it is a classroom setting, make an announcement that it is time to sit down and begin the session. If it is a small group, ensure everyone makes their way to the designated meeting space.

OPENING PRAYER

WORSHIP (15–20 MINUTES)

PRAYER/MINISTRY TIME (5–15 MINUTES)

VIDEO/TEACHING (20 MINUTES)

SCRIPTURE

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving (PSALM 100:4).

SUMMARY

Thanksgiving is absolutely vital to entering the gates of the Lord and receiving supernatural strength from His Presence. In fact, it is very difficult for us to move into the place of genuine praise apart from thanksgiving. While praise responds to the nature of God, thanksgiving celebrates the acts of God. Thanksgiving is intentional about parading before our minds the mighty acts, works, and miraculous exploits of the Lord—and responds to them with enthusiasm and gratitude. Thanksgiving is a strong and steady anchor for our hearts, as it keeps us ever mindful of what God *is doing* rather than buying into the lack-based perspective of an enemy who is always trying to get the people of God focused on what is supposedly *not* happening.

We strengthen ourselves in the Lord by choosing an attitude of thanksgiving, as this helps us to stay more aware of what God *is doing*, how God *is moving*, and what God *is bringing to pass* in our lives, rather than crumbling before the circumstances or impossibilities that seek to intimidate us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (25–30 MINUTES)

1. How does thanksgiving keep us in a place of humility?
2. Explain how thanksgiving is part of the protocol for entering God's Presence. (Psalm 100:4—the relationship between thanksgiving and praise.)
3. Describe how living in a place of thanksgiving keeps you *more* mindful of God's work in your life.
4. Based on 1 Timothy 4:1-5, how can thanksgiving sanctify and cleanse?
5. Discuss some of the different benefits of thanksgiving. **Have participants share testimonies of how staying thankful—even during difficult times—kept their hearts strong.**
6. What does it mean to offer up thanks, even in times of mystery?
7. What does the following statement mean to you: “Faith does not deny a problem's existence; it denies it the place of influence.”
8. In this session, Pastor Bill taught about how thanksgiving disarms the devil and puts his weapon into *your hand*. **Invite participants to share testimonies of how thanksgiving actually turned their circumstance around.**

ACTIVATION: RECALIBRATE YOUR HEART WITH THANKSGIVING

This will be a *group exercise*.

If possible, have praise and worship music ready to go—either live, or on some kind of audio system.

First, encourage participants to identify the following: 1) what they are thankful for, and 2) what they are thankful in the *midst of*.

During this time, encourage participants to make a list of things they are thankful for. (Approximately 10 minutes.)

Also, encourage them to honestly list out the circumstances or situations they are presently dealing with—that they will choose to be thankful *in the midst of*.

Reminder: this is *not* encouraging the participants to be thankful *for* their circumstances or claim that God sent these difficulties their way. Instead, thanksgiving is a supernatural act that causes them to: 1) lift their eyes to God, 2) acknowledge the circumstance in its proper place—subservient to God, and 3) specifically recognize the good things that God has done in their lives.

Second, after these things are identified and written down, have a time of praise and worship. This is a time to expressively offer up thanksgiving to God, and in the process of doing so disarm the powers of the enemy.

Goal: Learn to become more aware of what God has done and is doing in your life than the circumstances you are going through.

PLANS FOR THE NEXT WEEK (2 MINUTES)

Encourage group members to stay up to date with their daily exercises in the *Strengthen Yourself in the Lord Workbook*.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Week 3



VIDEO LISTENING GUIDE

Any area of our lives where we have no hope is under the influence of lie.

Benefits of Thanksgiving

1. Thanksgiving keeps you in a place of humility.
2. Thanksgiving keeps you in the center of what God is doing.
3. Thanksgiving enables you to stay aware of God, His Presence, and His promise.
4. Thanksgiving gives you an audience with the King.
In thanksgiving and praise, what we say is the offering.
In worship, we are the offering.
5. Thanksgiving can supernaturally change our circumstances.
6. Thanksgiving sanctifies.

7. Thanksgiving continues, even when there is mystery.

Whenever there is death, loss, and destruction, you've seen the fingerprints of the devil.

Faith does not deny a problem's existence; it denies it a place of influence.