**GIVE THANKS**

**(*The act of giving or expressing gratitude*)**

**Week Used:** 11/08 Fri San Clemente (Br. Jim/Allen); 11/12 MC Lake Forest (Bro. Paul/Sis. Leanne); 11/15 Mission Viejo (*Irvine Spectrum Outreach*); 11/29 C&C Connect (*Friendsgiving*)

**GOAL**: The goal of a Connect Group is to facilitate discussion so that everyone may be ministered to, grow & encouraged. This is found in *1Corinthians 14:26*. It is not primarily to teach but speak enough ‘*seed-thought*’ that will lead to spirit-led discussions.

***1 Corinthians 14:26
Order in Church Meetings***26How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

**Open with Prayer First!**

**ICE BREAKER:**  Share something that made you feel very grateful!

**WORSHIP:** (Worship. Wait. Then, ask if anyone has heard from the Lord)

**TESTIMONY & SCRIPTURE SHARING TIME:** (Ask for a few **brief (1min** testimonies OR have someone share a verse of Scripture)

**SCRIPTURES: *2 Corinthians 4:13-15 Colossians 3:15-17******John 6:8-12***

**TOPIC:** GIVING THANKS

The giving or offering of thanks, unlocks many spiritual keys in the Kingdom of God. Usually, giving thanks is offered *after* something has been done. But there’s another level of thanks where gratefulness is expressed *before* something happens!

Job 38:4-7 describes the Angels giving thanks & shouting for joy when the Lord laid the foundations of the earth.

At the time of creation, there was thanksgiving! When you give thanks, it releases the creative power of God! During the 7-day creation, God said, “it is good!” There was approval, there was praise, there was the giving of thanks!

Is it proper to thank God, when you perceive He is ‘starting’ to do something!?

**CONVERSATION STARTERS**: **Do you generally thank God *before* or *after* something happens? (pls. elaborate)**

In the book of the late prophet Eli Hernandez, are you “Creative or Reactionary”, he cites the story of Daniel & Job when they went through tough times. The reason why they were going through tough times, is because God was creating something & it was heading their way!

**CONVERSATION STARTERS**: **When something unpleasant happens, do you generally think that God has released a blessing in your life? Why or why not?**

* When we just react, we eventually become a slave to our emotions!
	+ It creates unbelief
	+ It lowers expectations
* But when we think creatively, we train our minds to look for things God has released into our lives!
* *It is a good habit to believe God for something every day*!!

*Are you creative or reactionary?*

10Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this* day *is* holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, **for the joy of the Lord is your strength**.” – Nehemiah 8:10

*Being joyful is an expression of holiness!*

***CONVERSATION STARTERS****:* ***What do you think*** *the joy of the Lord is your strength* ***means?***

**YOU ARE EMPOWERED WITH EMOTIONAL STRENGTH WHEN YOU ARE JOYFUL!**

**GRATITUDE AFFECTS YOUR HEALTH IN A POSITIVE WAY!**

**CONVERSATION STARTERS**: **Do you think peace & gratitude goes hand-in-hand?**

* Great peace have they which love thy law & nothing shall offend them! – Psalms 119:165
* Is it possible not to be offended?
* 17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*, - Romans 14:17*
* The righteousness of God covers our past (sins)!
* The peace of God guides us in the present time!
* The joy of the Lord gives us hope for the future!

*Note to Facilitator*: **Pray for all needs exposed during the lesson or discussions!**

***2 Corinthians 4:13-15 (NKJV)***

13And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, *“I believed and therefore I spoke,”* we also believe and therefore speak, 14knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present *us* with you. 15For all things *are* for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause **thanksgiving** to abound to the glory of God.

***Colossians 3:15-17 (KJV)***15And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; **and be ye thankful**. 16Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly bin all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, **giving thanks to God** and the Father by him.

***John 6:8-12 (KJV)***

8One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, saith unto him, 9There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? 10And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11And Jesus took the loaves; **and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples**, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. 12When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.