

Sermon Questions for Life Groups
The Gospel According to Genesis:
Thanks-Giving/Communion (1 Cor 11:23-26)

Pastor Dave Roberts
Sunday, October 4, 2015

*These questions are generated by several authors for Life Group discussions
or family or personal devotions*

1. Read Ps. 118 and discuss what arouses gratitude in the psalmist's heart. How does he celebrate what God has done? Should we celebrate alone or in community?
2. Give examples from Israel's history when their gratitude was expressed in worship.
3. As Christians, we can often fall into the same pitfalls as the rest of the world when it comes to being self-centred. Read Proverbs 30:7-9:
 - a. Explain how the author attempts to avoid these pitfalls.
 - b. Explain why having just one's "daily bread" is the best option for remaining close to God and His will.
4. Read Hosea 13:5-6 and discuss why it is that we stray from God when we become satisfied with material or physical things.
5. In Philippians 4:6-7, God tells us not to be anxious about anything, but to present our requests to Him with thanksgiving in our hearts. What is assumed both about our fears and our faith in God, as well as about His faithfulness to us in this statement?
6. Pastor Dave cited Colossians 3:15-17 when discussing the beneficiary – why do you think this is one of Pastor Lee's favourite passages?
7. Have you been to see the War Room (if not, you should plan to do so!). Read 2 Chronicles 7:14 and discuss the impact that this passage had on you in the context of the movie, as well as the impact this passage could have on our nation.

8. Pastor Dave gave an outline with three major points on understanding how we as Christians need to be grateful, per John Ortberg and his publication called “Soul Keeping”, (2014). Here is an excerpt from John Ortberg’s blog page (<http://www.johnortberg.com/three-components-of-gratitude>)

“More gratitude will not come from acquiring more things or experiences, but from more of an awareness of God’s presence and his goodness.”

It’s a way of looking at life, always perceiving the good. Gratitude is a by-product of a way of seeing things, and it always involves three factors. It comes from the old Latin word ‘bene’, which meant good, and gratitude will always involve three ‘benes’.

(1) First, the benefit. *In order to be grateful, you have to receive and recognize a gift that you believe is good. You find it favorable. The Bible says, “Praise the Lord, my soul . . . and forget not all his benefits — who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things . . .” (Psalm 103:2-5, NIV) It doesn’t get any better than that, does it? But the important thing to remember is that God does all this. **These are the benefits he gives us, and the soul responds with gratitude.***

- Review Psalm 103: 2-5 and look at the 5 benefits mentioned in this passage, i.e. forgiveness, healing, redemption, crowned with love and compassion and being satisfied with good things. Share how each of these benefits affect your life, personally. Are there any of these benefits that you haven’t thought of before or have not yet appropriated for your life?

(2) Second, gratitude requires that there be a benefactor. *Again the little word ‘bene’, Latin for “good,” this time coupled with ‘factor’, which is related to the word factory. A benefactor is one who does good, a little factory that produces good. To be truly grateful you must not only recognize the benefits or gifts that come your way, but that they are not just random acts; they are not accidents. They are coming from Someone who has good intentions for you. To be grateful as a Christian, you must believe that the good that is in your life comes from God. Not from your own efforts or merit. Not from others who might want to impress or manipulate you for their gain. The apostle James writes, “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights. . . .” (James 1:17) Light is an expression of goodness, and **when we consider what he has done for us and what he has given us, our souls are grateful.***

- How well do you know this benefactor who is our God? Look below at the divine attributes that God possesses and share an appreciation and awe of who our God is: (from Charles Spurgeon - http://www.preceptaustin.org/the_attributes_of_god_-_spurgeon.htm)

The Attributes of God:

Eternal
Faithfulness
Foreknows
Good
Holy
Immutable
Impartial
Incomprehensible
Infinite

Omnipotent
Omnipresent
Omniscient
Jealous
Justice
Longsuffering
Love
Mercy

Righteous
Self-existent
Self-sufficient
Sovereign
Transcendent
Truth
Wise
Wrath

(3) In addition to the benefit and the benefactor, there is the beneficiary: *the one who receives the good gifts of God. And that's you. You are the beneficiary of the benefits of a God who has your best interests at heart, and this is going on all the time.*

- Question – Read Romans 1:21 and Hosea 13:6 and reflect on your own life, have you ever acted in a way that is described in these two passages? How can we prevent this from happening??

When we take that for granted or believe we deserve his gifts, then we are no longer grateful; you can't be grateful for something you believe you are entitled to, and without a grateful heart the soul suffers.

Because the soul needs gratitude.