

# Made for More: Small Group Guide

## Week 5: Express Gratitude Regularly

February 1, 2026

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### Opening Prayer & Ice Breaker

**Ice Breaker Question:** Share about a time when someone's expression of gratitude toward you made a significant impact. How did it make you feel?

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### Key Takeaways from the Sermon

#### 1. Expressing Gratitude Begins with Giving Thanks to God

- The Bible contains over 100 occurrences of thanksgiving
- Jesus modeled gratitude throughout His ministry
- We gather on Sundays to say thank you to God for what He has done

#### 2. Gratitude Needs to Be Intentional, Not Assumed

- "Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones" (Proverbs 16:24)
- Don't assume people know you're grateful—express it
- Gratitude is a learned behavior that should become part of who we are

#### 3. Expressing Gratitude Creates Encouragement

- "The tongue has the power of life and death" (Proverbs 18:21)
- Think of relationships like a bank account—deposits and withdrawals
- Gratitude puts focus on others rather than ourselves

#### 4. We Can Easily Forget to Be Grateful

- We can become self-focused and egocentric
- Research shows we underestimate the positive impact of expressing thanks
- It's never too late to express gratitude

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### Discussion Questions

#### Section 1: Gratitude to God

1. **Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11** - "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."
  - How does gratitude to God naturally lead to encouraging others?
  - What are three specific things you're grateful to God for right now?
2. The sermon mentioned that communion (Eucharist) literally means "thanksgiving."
  - How does this understanding change the way you approach communion?
  - How can we maintain an attitude of thanksgiving for Jesus' sacrifice in our daily lives?

## Section 2: Intentional Gratitude

3. **Read Proverbs 16:24** - "Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones."
  - Who in your life might assume you're grateful for them but hasn't heard it recently?
  - What holds us back from expressing gratitude even when we feel it?
4. Pastor Mark shared his struggle with saying "I love you" to his parents.
  - What patterns from your family of origin affect how you express gratitude today?
  - How can we break unhealthy patterns and create new, healthier ones?
5. The sermon mentioned that gratitude is a learned behavior parents teach their children.
  - If you have children, how are you modeling gratitude for them?
  - What practical ways can we teach gratitude in our homes?

## Section 3: The Power of Encouragement

6. **Read Proverbs 18:21** - "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit."
  - Share an example of when someone's words brought "life" to you.
  - How can we be more intentional about speaking life into others?
7. The sermon used the analogy of emotional "deposits and withdrawals."
  - Think about your closest relationships. Are you making more deposits or withdrawals?
  - What specific "deposits" could you make this week?

## Section 4: Overcoming Barriers

8. The research study showed that people underestimate how much their gratitude means to others.
  - Why do you think we tend to hold back from expressing thanks?
  - What "awkwardness" or fear do you need to overcome to express gratitude?
9. **Read Romans 5:8** - "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
  - How does understanding God's grace toward us help us extend grace and gratitude to others?
  - Is there someone you've been withholding gratitude from? What would it take to change that?

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## Memory Verse

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

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## Closing Activity (10 minutes)

**Gratitude Circle:** Go around the circle and have each person share one thing they're grateful for about the person on their right. Be specific and genuine.

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## Closing Prayer

*Pray together, thanking God for:*

- The relationships in your group
- His example of gratitude through Jesus
- The opportunity to encourage one another
- Specific prayer requests shared during discussion

*Ask God to help each person be intentional about expressing gratitude this week.*