



21 GRAMS

Soul Food – Part 2

#NP21GRAMS

Week 5
5 of 5
October 30, 2016

Bottom Line: The healthy soul is a grateful soul.

Icebreaker: What are you most grateful for in your life right now?

Key Verse: *Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.* 1 Thessalonians 5:18

This instruction comes from Paul at the end of a list of rapid-fire instructions tucked into the closing of his first letter to the Thessalonians. When we read the rest of the letter, we know that Paul loved these brothers and sisters (2:8). He had tender words for them and was grateful for them. He called them his glory and crown (2:19). Paul shared the gospel and his life with them because they were dear to him.

If you want to see a list of how to be thankful, just go back and read all of 1 Thessalonians 2. Paul loved them because they shared in the good and bad with him. The church in Thessalonica was born out of persecution, yet Paul told them to continue to give thanks and be grateful for what they have because it is God's will for them. When we compare their situation with our own, you would think we would find more grateful people today because we do not face the same type of opposition and suffering that these men and women did. I think you would find that most Americans are less content than people from previous generations. But why?

In the abundance that we live in, we always want more and don't take time to think about all that we have. Our embarrassment of riches keeps us from seeing how well off we actually are. This is why cultivating an attitude of gratitude is both difficult for us and meaningful to us. If we were to take a step back and consider all that we have and all that Christ is doing in and through us, we would never run out of reasons to be grateful.

So take some time today, this week, and over the next several months to seek and cultivate gratitude for Jesus and what He has done for you, for our church and what God is doing through NewPointe, and for all the good gifts Jesus brings.

THINK IT OVER >>>

Thinking back on Dwight's message, what stood out to you?

Dwight said that gratitude involves a benefit, a benefactor, and a beneficiary. He said the two enemies of gratitude are entitlement and expectations.

God forgives, heals, delivers, rewards, and satisfies (Psalm 103:1-5)

Paul wrote to be thankful in all circumstances. The meaning is pretty clear, but most of us probably want this verse to read "in the circumstances we want to give thanks in." Why should we be thankful even in difficulty?

In what sense is gratitude a choice we must make each day and pursue all the time?

Does knowing that gratitude is God's will for you change the way you think about it?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

Are you a person to whom gratitude comes naturally? What do you think helps you maintain this attitude?

If you are not someone to whom gratitude comes easily, what could you do to become a grateful person? Why is this a good trait to develop?

How do we express gratitude in worship? What are some other ways we can express gratitude?

Would you say many people you know are grateful? If you are a parent, what about your children? How can we model gratitude to believers and unbelievers alike?

What are we missing if we don't see anything to be thankful for?

NEXT STEPS

This week, consider taking some next steps together, as a group:

1. Sometimes life is difficult and gratitude is not easy to come by. Think outloud together about all the things you are grateful for. If someone else says something that resonated with you, write it down. Consider keeping this list in your wallet, your Bible, or another place you are likely to come across it so you can be thankful to God each time you see it.
2. Thank God for who He is and for all He has given you. Give thanks for the cross of Christ which frees you to know God and love Him fully. Thank God for taking care of your soul, for placing you in a community of believers, and for allowing you to know Him.

EVALUATION/ACTION Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: The healthy soul is a grateful soul.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Day 1: Psalm 118:1-4

Day 2: Luke 17:11-19

Day 3: Luke 7:36-39

Day 4: Philippians 1:3-8

Day 5: Philippians 1:9-11

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)