

## Life Group Preparation Notes

Stand-alone message by Daniel Erasmus

Thanksgiving Sunday - 26<sup>th</sup> November 2023



### **Note for the facilitator:**

The information shared below is a guideline for you to use in a way that best suits your crew. Ensure you maintain a safe space that encourages all members to share vulnerably. Take time to regularly remind the group of your guidelines and values.

**Worship:** As you make time for worship this week, be mindful of what you are thankful for. Worship is an ideal opportunity to offer up our thanks to God for all that He has done in 2023 and still continues to do.

**Check-in:** In keeping with Sunday's theme of Thanksgiving, spend a few minutes quietly reflecting on what you are thankful for in 2023. Then take turns in your group to share and even to offer up prayers of thanksgiving.

### **Synopsis of Message:**

As part of our Thanksgiving service we heard two heart-warming and encouraging testimonies of God's goodness. We heard that giving God thanks in all circumstances not only gets us through challenging times but can also bring about a change in our circumstances. Pastor Daniel highlighted four truths of gratitude that we should embrace:

1. **Gratitude is the door to God's presence** – Psalm 100:4
2. **Gratitude brings freedom** – 2 Corinthians 3:17 and Johan 2:9
3. **Gratitude is a daily choice** – Acts 16:25-16
4. **Choosing gratitude means letting go of something else**

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. During Sunday's message we heard a testimony from Andre and Janice of how they never stopped seeking God and giving Him thanks amidst a prolonged financial challenge. God miraculously came through for them. We also heard how Jonah experienced freedom after giving God thanks even when he was facing a seemingly hopeless situation. Discuss what stood out for you from these two stories.
2. Giving thanks brings an element of freedom. You can experience spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical freedom. Are you currently in a difficult situation and seeking freedom? Share whether you need to make more room for gratitude and what steps you may need to take to make this happen?
3. Gratitude is a choice we need to make daily, even in the hard times when we don't understand what's happening. Ps Daniel shared that by choosing gratitude we would need to let go of something else. It's not possible to have gratitude while being bitter, holding a grudge, or even harbouring disappointment towards God. Ask the Lord to search your heart as you consider what you may need to surrender in order to express your gratitude.

### **Check out and Prayer:**

**Facilitator:** Share any resources (YouVersion, RightNow Media, other) you find useful.

Remember to check in with your groups with regards to your group's status, i.e. where you are as a group, as a leader, and possible next steps for 2024. Refer to the document sent out (on WhatsApp) by Rozanne on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023.

### **Important Reminders:**

- **U-Turn:** Buy a pack of "MiChange" vouchers for R50 for someone to receive basic services which incl. food, clothing, a shower and a bed.
- **Aslan:** purchase one of 500 bibles (R60 ea) to be handed out during mission week
- **Organ Donation:** Sign up via our [website](#)
- **10ten:** A gap year programme based on John 10:10. Aimed at young adults wanting to take time out and explore their next steps in terms of studies and careers. Click [here](#) for more info.