



I LOVE MY CONNECT

STUDY 22

Thank You Jesus

Psalm 100:4, Hebrews 13:15

"Thank You Jesus," – such a simple thought that has massive potential and power in our lives. When we live thankful lives unto God we demonstrate the value and worth we place in our relationship with him and realign our value system. When we worship God, we are telling God his worth in our lives. Speaking or confessing his praises also aligns us with the will of God, the word of God and the spirit of God.

When we find it difficult to be thankful or to encourage or give praise usually it is because we are wrapped up in ourselves. The power of thanksgiving does something beautiful in our lives and releases the true value and worth of our lives. In thanksgiving, while it costs us, we receive a spirit of generosity which opens doors to God's presence, his word, his purpose, and miracle working power in our lives.

Appreciating or praising God helps us overcome negativity and defeat in our lives and relationships. Scriptures set a pattern to always be thankful, for all things and in everything to give thanks. When we say "thank you" or appreciate or encourage others we soften people's hearts and build them up. Silence can be extremely loud; when we withhold appreciation and encouragement it can be soul destroying.

Saying "thank you" energises relationships, and will also put a fresh heart in us, invigorate our work, enliven our speech, strengthen our vision, and change our outlook. A lack of appreciation in our lives can shrivel us, but so can a lack of giving appreciation.

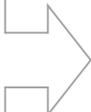
Let us always be thankful and keep a life giving spirit, one that is aligned with the word, Spirit, purpose and will of God, that demonstrates appreciation to our God and everyone he brings into our lives.

CONNECTION AND ACTION *Use these questions to promote conversation and connection.*

ICEBREAKER: What was the best Christmas present you received as a child? How did you react when you opened it?

- Q:** How did you recently show appreciation to someone, and what was their response?
- Q:** What makes you feel appreciated? What are some great ways to show appreciation?
- Q:** On a scale of 1-10 how grateful and appreciative are you in life? What steps can you take to increase your level of gratitude?
- Q:** What difference does saying "thank you" to God make in our lives? What about saying "thank you to others"?
- Q:** What have you learned about praising God during difficult times?

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BIBLE AND BELIEF Use these questions and scriptures to help believers develop a biblical worldview.

Read Acts 16:22-34

- Q:** How were Paul and Silas able to praise God in their circumstances?
- Q:** What were the results of their action in this situation?
- Q:** What can we learn from Paul and Silas for our own circumstances?

Read Colossians 1:3-8, 2 Timothy 1:3, Romans 1:8, 1 Corinthians 1:4

- Q:** What things is Paul giving thanks for?
- Q:** Why do you think he is grateful for these things?
- Q:** Why did he thank God instead of directly thanking the people?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philippians 4:6-7

- Q:** How can we apply what these passages say about thanksgiving and rejoicing in our lives?

GROWING LEADERSHIP Use these questions to help people in your group grow as leaders.

- Q:** How well do you do as a leader at showing appreciation and encouragement in your teams?
- Q:** What have you learned about how to best show appreciation or honour to someone?
- Q:** How can we build a culture of appreciation in our teams?
- Q:** What is the benefit of showing honour and appreciate for our leaders in front of the people we lead?

Activity

Take time to express encouragement and appreciation to each person in the group. *You could do this in pairs, small groups or as a whole group.*