



WORDS TO LIVE BY

Week 4

BREAKING THE ICE

- What is your ideal day when it's warm outside?
- If you could travel anywhere in the world (no budget), where would you go?

MAIN CONTENT

Pastor Kevin Queen brought us into our last week of Words to Live By as he spoke about gratitude! The words “thank you” are simple, yet can easily be forgotten to say. It is not a hard thing to do, but if forgotten, can hurt someone unintentionally. Pastor Kevin shared that “unexpressed gratitude is experienced as ingratitude”. “Thank you” are two words that can have more impact than we realize. We can do things out of a selfless heart, but it is still great to hear when someone is appreciative of something you’ve done for them! It is easy to take people and peoples’ kind gestures for granted. We have to be intentional that they know they’re appreciated!

1. Does saying “thank you” come naturally to you or is it something you have to be mindful of?
2. Why is it important to let people know they are appreciated?

Pastor Kevin then went on to talk about the story of the leper.

Luke 5:14-19 says, “He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?’ Then he said to him, ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well.’”

It is so easy for us to forget to say thank you to the people around us, but even easier to forget to thank God for the blessings He has given us and continues to give us. Jesus gave us the ultimate gift of taking the weight of our sins and defeating them on the cross, so that we may live in freedom! That in itself is enough to never stop telling Him “thank you”.

Like the Israelites in the wilderness, we are humans that tend to easily forget when God has provided for us. We are constantly asking and “in want” of things and ways we would like to see the Lord move. The Lord says, “Ask and you will receive,” so He wants us to ask for things, because He loves giving His children good gifts. We also must be mindful to be grateful when He provides, and even when He doesn’t.

3. What is a prayer that the Lord has answered recently that you would like to thank Him again for today?

4. How can we be more mindful to remember the times God has provided for us?

“Gratitude always precedes the miracle.” Before Jesus fed the 5,000, He gave thanks to God. Giving thanks opens our eyes of faith to see that we have a provider, He is present and He will care for us. Gratitude kills entitlement and opens opportunities. Henri Nouwen writes, “In the past I always thought of gratitude as a spontaneous response to the awareness of gifts received, but now I realize that gratitude can also be lived as a discipline. The discipline of gratitude is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all I am and have is given to me as a gift of love, a gift to be celebrated with joy.”

As important as it is to thank God for what He has done in the past, it is just as important to thank Him before the miracle. The Lord’s ways are higher than ours, and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. He knows what is best. We have to trust Him, and be grateful now-before the provision.

5. How do we hold fast to the truth that God is still good before our prayers are answered?

6. When is an instance that the Lord answered your prayer, but in a different way than you were expecting?

CLOSING PRAYER

God, we thank you for who you are. We thank you for your faithfulness, your love, your steadfastness and your compassion. Lord, we pray that as we go into this week that we would have eyes to see and ears to hear all that you do for us. We pray that we would have hearts of gratitude and that there would be moments in our days that we take time to thank you. As we enter into this Holy Week, we pray that we would consistently remember your death and resurrection. Thank you for the sacrifice you made for all of us and the freedom we have because of you. We praise you for today and all of our days. In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

ACTION STEP

- Pray and ask the Lord about what relationships He wants to restore in your life.
- Come spend Easter at Cross Point with us – make plans with your Group to attend the same service, if possible!
- Take time every evening this week to make a gratitude list and then at your next group, share what the experience was like for you.