

Sunday morning
teaching plan

Date:
10th May
2026

TITLE:	Thankfulness
THEME:	Living well
AIM:	To understand the difference that gratitude and thankfulness can play in improving our wellbeing, and to discover ways in which we can apply them to our lives.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

We live in a fast-paced world where it's easy to focus on what we don't have, what's going wrong, or what we want next. Social media, comparison, pressure at school, and everyday stress can all make us overlook the good things already present in our lives. As a result, feelings of dissatisfaction, anxiety, or negativity can grow, even when there are positive things around us.

In contrast, developing a habit of thankfulness—also known as gratitude—has been shown to have a powerful impact on our wellbeing. Gratitude helps shift our perspective from what is lacking to what is already good. It can improve mood, strengthen relationships, and help us become more resilient during difficult times. Rather than ignoring challenges, gratitude gives us a healthier way to face them.

From a Christian perspective, thankfulness goes even deeper. The Bible teaches that every good thing ultimately comes from God, and gratitude is a way of recognising His presence and provision in our lives. It is not just about saying "thank you" when things go well, but learning to trust God and remain thankful even in difficult circumstances.

This session explores what it really means to be thankful, why it can sometimes be difficult, and how choosing gratitude can transform not just our outlook, but our whole way of living.

WARM UP

Blindfolded Pictionary.

Stapler	Desk	Bike
Spider web	Smoke	Tree
Ice	Blanket	Seaweed
Flame	Bubble	Hair
Tooth	Leaf	Worm

Watch the video about how we can be thankful to God for every good gift: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXYy4W5wAfM&ab_channel=SpeakLife

MAIN TEACHING

Thank you

Ask:

What are different ways of saying thank you? And do you know how to say it in different languages?

Slides 1-5 have thank you in different languages. Try and say some of them.

Ask:

What do you think the words 'thankfulness' and 'gratitude' mean?

In most cultures around the world, people say thank you as a way of appreciating what someone has done for them or what they have. Doing this is known as being grateful or expressing gratitude. Gratitude is the feeling that something good has happened to you combined with the acknowledgement that an outside source is responsible.

Teaching point: To think about what 'thank you' really means.

How Thankful am I?

Ask the group to answer the questions from the slides.

See if anyone wants to share thoughts etc.

Teaching point: To give the group the chance to think about how thankful they are.

When to be thankful

Ask:

- Why do you think it's hard to be thankful "in all circumstances"? Corrie Ten Boom
- Does being thankful mean ignoring problems?
- How can gratitude change your perspective?

The Ten Lepers

Read Luke 17:11-19

Jesus is traveling along the border between Samaria and Galilee. This is important because Jews and Samaritans didn't usually associate. And being a border place symbolizes people on the margins. As He enters a village, **ten men with leprosy** stand at a distance.

Ask:

- Why do you think the 10 men stand at a distance?
- Does anyone know what Leprosy is?

Key Aspects of Leprosy (Hansen's Disease):

Symptoms: Signs include discoloured, numb patches of skin, thick or stiff skin, painless ulcers, nerve damage, muscle weakness, and eye problems leading to blindness if untreated.

Transmission: It is transmitted via droplets from the nose and mouth during close, consistent contact with an untreated person. It is not spread by casual contact like shaking hands, sitting next to someone, or sharing meals.

Incubation Period: The bacteria grow very slowly; symptoms can take 5 to 20 years to develop after exposure.

Treatment: Leprosy is curable with multi-drug therapy (MDT), usually a combination of antibiotics taken over 6 to 12 months.

Complications: Untreated cases can lead to severe nerve damage, resulting in permanent disability, loss of sensation, and potential amputation of digits due to unperceived injuries.

Origin: The disease is one of the oldest known, mentioned in ancient medical texts

But Leprosy in biblical times wasn't just a disease as it affected **every part of life**:

- Physical suffering (skin disease, pain, deterioration)
- Social isolation (forced to live away from others)
- Spiritual exclusion (considered "unclean" under the law). They had to call 'unclean' to warn others as they came along.

Ask:

- How do you think this would affect someone mentally or emotionally?
- What do you think they wanted most—healing, or something else?

They call out together:

"Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

Ask:

- What does asking for mercy show about their attitude?
- Why is it sometimes hard to ask for help?

Notice that they don't ask for healing directly but they ask for **mercy** and they obviously recognize Jesus has authority already before He has done anything.

Jesus tells them:

“Go, show yourselves to the priests.”

At this point—they are **not healed yet**.

But they go anyway.

Ask:

- Why do you think they obeyed before seeing any change?
- Have you ever had to trust something before seeing results?

As they go... they are healed.

Ask:

- What do you think their reaction was in that moment?
- What would *your* reaction be?

Out of ten:

- Nine keep going
- One turns back

The one who returns praises God loudly and falls at Jesus' feet thanking Him.

Ask:

- Why do you think the nine didn't return?
- Do you think they were ungrateful or just distracted?

The one who returns is a Samaritan, an outsider.

Ask:

- Why do you think Jesus points this out?
- What does it show about who responds to God?

Jesus asks:

- “Were not all ten cleansed?”
- “Where are the other nine?”
- “Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?”

Ask:

- What do you think Jesus is really highlighting here?
- Do you think He was disappointed? Why or why not?

Jesus says to the one who returned:

“Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

This suggests something more than physical healing.

Ask:

- What’s the difference between being healed and being truly “made well”?
- How could gratitude be connected to something deeper spiritually?

Earlier in the passage, all ten lepers are described as being **cleansed** (a different word, more about physical healing).

But to the one who returns, Jesus says something different:

“Your faith has made you well” (sōzō)

That shift in wording is important.

The original Greek word used here is **sōzō** (σῶζω).

sōzō doesn’t just mean physical healing. It can also mean:

- **to save**
- **to rescue**
- **to restore**
- **to make whole**

It’s the same word often used in the Bible for **salvation**, not just healing.

The word used here can imply more than physical healing but it suggests spiritual wholeness and restoration beyond the body. So whilst Ten were healed physically only one was transformed completely.

Ask:

- Are we more like the nine or the one? Why?
- What are some things in your life you’ve received but not really thanked God for?
- What does it look like today to “turn back” and give thanks?

TAKEAWAY

EXTRA INFORMATION

