

Paul says that after accepting Jesus as Lord, we must continue to walk with Him and that we continue to make progress. We are pilgrims on a journey and God is with us every step of the way. David knew this and he was overflowing with thankfulness as He concluded the 23rd Psalm.

Consider what the truth of Ps 23:6 reveals and why that gives us cause to be thankful. Those who are blessed will bless, because grace and gratitude naturally are found together. We want to be a people who reflect the grace God has lavished on us by overflowing with thankfulness. End your time together with prayers of thanksgiving for all God has given you this day.

WRAP-UP

Perhaps at the point of your salvation you had no idea what the Christian life would be like. You may have been responding to the knowledge that you were a sinner in need of a savior. But your salvation was only the first step on a journey of faith. We need to grow deep roots that draw from God's love. And we must build our lives on the foundation of God's truth daily. We are grateful for what God has done, and we look forward to eternity with Him in heaven. But every day that Jesus walks with us we have reason to be overflowing with gratitude.

MEMORY VERSE.

Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

- *Colossians 2:7 NLT*

PRAYER (20 MIN) Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.

Challenge – Set aside a time to journal and write out as many things as you can that you are grateful for today. Don't be satisfied to refer to what you received in the past but look to the present for things to thank God for.

“Present Gratitude is Greater than Nostalgia”

Gratitude is Greater- #3

INTRODUCTION

Nostalgia can be a good thing. Hopefully, we all have special times in our lives we can look back on fondly and be grateful for. We never want to forget all that God has done for us. But our gratitude shouldn't end with nostalgia. As we continue to follow Jesus, we should find opportunities to give thanks every day of our lives. And in the process of growing and building our faith we'll receive God's grace, and we will overflow with gratitude.

Ice Breaker

What is one thing in the past you will always remember fondly and give thanks for? What is one thing today you are grateful for?

Key Passage

Colossians 2:6-7 NLT - 6 And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. 7 Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Let your roots grow into Jesus

In our key passage (Col 2:6-7) Paul says that after accepting Jesus we are to continue to follow Him and let our roots grow into Him. Although our salvation was secured at the moment we accepted Jesus as Lord, we continue on this spiritual journey every day of our lives. Salvation is the starting point but it is not the end point of our gratitude.

But what does it mean that we “grow roots”? Let’s consider the function of roots.

For a plant, the roots provide water, nourishment, and stability. In what ways does Jesus keep you watered (John 4:14)? When you find yourself “spiritually dry” what refreshes you?

John 4:14 NLT - 14 But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life."

What does Jesus tell us about the nourishment we receive from Him? What do you do on a regular basis that brings you spiritual nourishment?

John 6:51 NLT - 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and this bread, which I will offer so the world may live, is my flesh."

Matthew 4:4 NLT - 4 But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

What is one area that Jesus has given you strength in?

Ephesians 3:17 NLT - 17 Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong.

If our gratitude is based on “stuff” or circumstances then when we lose the stuff or things aren’t going well, we lose our gratitude. But when our roots draw deeply from the well of Christ’s love and we recognize that by God’s grace, His goodness and mercy follow us every day of our lives, then our gratitude is unshakable. It can grow and strengthen every day.

2. Build your life on Jesus

In our key passage, Paul says “let your lives be built on Him”. The verb Paul used for this is *epoikodomeō* and is in the present tense, meaning “be built upon”. He is telling us that this process is ongoing, not something completed in the past. We make decisions, take actions, and live our lives moment by moment. All of our lives should be built upon Christ as our foundation.

At this time of the year, we see many images in the news of homes being washed away in powerful storms because they were not on firm foundations. Jesus used similar imagery in teaching to build our faith on a firm foundation.

Matthew 7:24-27 NLT - 24 "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. 25 Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. 26 But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. 27 When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."

What does Jesus reference as the way we build on a rock solid foundation? What is one of Jesus’ teachings that you can apply to a daily decision or action? Are there major decisions facing you that you need to seek God’s direction in making? If so, share them with your group and pray together for them.

3. Let your faith grow strong as you follow Jesus

Colossians 2:6, 7b NLT - 6 And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him.... Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Psalms 23:6 NIV - 6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.