

# Grateful

GIVING THANKS TO GOD  
IN ALL THINGS

***LEADER GUIDE***

LIFEWAY WOMEN

# LEADER GUIDE

**WELCOME!** Before you read any further, we want to say how thankful we are for you, the leader. Thank you for your willingness to dive into Scripture, brew the coffee, place the chairs, and set aside the time regularly to meet with other women.

*Grateful: Giving Thanks to God in All Things* is a four-session Bible study from Lifeway Women. In this study, you'll examine narratives, psalms, and other biblical teaching that will help develop a heart of gratefulness, regardless of the circumstances.

Our goal for this leader guide is to help you feel equipped to facilitate and guide your Bible study group gatherings in a way that fosters deep conversation, prayer, and spiritual growth for you and the women you're leading.

We want to encourage you to use this study however it works best for you and your group. If you want to follow this leader guide to the letter, do that! If you want to do your own thing, feel free! We want to give you all the tools you might need, but we are certain God has ordained your time with your specific group in your specific setting.

We are grateful for you and praying for you as you lead this study.

*Lifeway Women*



## *WEEKLY GROUP MEETING*

### *SUGGESTED SCHEDULE*

**OPTIONAL INTRODUCTORY SESSION**—Distribute Bible study books if participants don't have them yet, get to know one another, and discuss the questions found on page 7 of this leader guide.

**WEEK ONE**—Distribute Bible study books to those who don't have them, and discuss the Week One personal Bible study using questions found on page 9 of this leader guide.

**WEEK TWO**—Discuss the Week Two personal Bible study using questions found on page 11 of this leader guide.

**WEEK THREE**—Discuss the Week Three personal Bible study using questions found on page 13 of this leader guide.

**WEEK FOUR**—Discuss the Week Four personal Bible study using questions found on page 15 of this leader guide.

## ***HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR GROUP TIME***

Each group session contains the following elements. We've included a suggested amount of time based on a one-hour group meeting. Adjust as you need to for the time you have together!

**GATHER (10 MINUTES)** This is a time to greet and welcome everyone and get them talking. In the optional introductory session (p. 7 of this leader guide), you're provided with some icebreaker and general discussion questions to help group members get to know each other and introduce the study. In the subsequent sessions, you'll find one or two icebreaker questions that set the tone for the study.

**DISCUSS (40 MINUTES)** You'll find a list of questions for each week in this leader guide. Pick and choose the ones you want to discuss with your group. These questions are designed to help you facilitate conversation around the previous week's Bible study and personal reflection. As you go through your own study during the week, put a star by any questions or statements you might want to discuss with your group.

**CLOSE (10 MINUTES)** Weekly prayer ideas and prompts have been provided, and you can use this however you wish to enhance or close the session.

## *HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU LEAD.*

**GET THE WORD OUT.** Be sure to advertise the study early, and utilize all methods for getting the word out. Post it on your church's website, send emails to potential attendees, and promote it on all forms of social media. It's best to start advertising the study four to six weeks before it begins. The study is four-weeks long, which means you will meet four or five times. Visit [lifeway.com/grateful](https://lifeway.com/grateful) for free promotional materials to help get the word out about your study.

**SCHEDULE.** Be sure to make everyone aware of the schedule ahead of time, and start promptly each week to honor everyone's time. In your group time, you'll discuss what you're learning. You'll also be encouraged to spend a good bit of time in prayer.

**STAY IN TOUCH.** Prepare a sign-up sheet with space for names, email addresses, and phone numbers. You may also include information like birthdays, social media handles, and favorite candy so that you can foster community among group members.

**GET COZY.** Make an effort to create a comfortable environment for group meetings. Arrange chairs in a circle to encourage conversation. If your group is large, you may want to split into smaller groups for the discussion time. If you choose to do so, enlist discussion leaders for each group to keep the conversation moving and focused.

**CHILDCARE.** Be sure to check with participants to see if childcare is needed and organize leaders and space for the children in advance.

**BIBLE STUDY BOOKS.** Each participant will need a Bible study book. Make sure you leave plenty of time for all the books to be ordered and received between announcing and starting your Bible study. Consider offering a scholarship or buy-one, give-one option for those who cannot afford a study book on their own.

**EARLY PREP.** We encourage you to read through the entire leader guide before the first session and evaluate how this will work best for your group. Highlight specific questions from the leader guide you want to cover during your group time. And make it a priority to stay on top of your own personal study between each meeting! Also, list additional talking points and questions you want to pull in from the personal study. You can do that on the Notes page following each week.

**PERSONAL STUDY.** Between each meeting, there are five days of personal study to complete in the Bible study book.

**PRAYER.** Most importantly, be sure to pray for the women who attend the study. And pray for yourself as you prepare to lead. Ask God to draw the women closer as they learn more about Him.

**EVALUATE.** At the end of each group session, ask: What went well? What could be improved? Did you see women's lives transformed? Did your group grow closer to Christ and to one another? Also, do a final evaluation at the close of the study.

**CONNECT.** Find ways to interact and stay engaged with each member of your group throughout the study. Make use of social media, email, text messages, and handwritten notes to encourage them. Continue these connections even after the study ends.

We've provided a discussion guide for each session. Remember these are simply suggestions for how to use your time together. We want to empower you as you lead to do what is best for your group!

## ***DISCUSSION GUIDE***

### **OPTIONAL INTRODUCTORY SESSION**

**GATHER** Welcome women to the introductory session of *Grateful*. Provide name tags and distribute Bible study books if participants don't have them yet.

**MEET AND GREET** one another! This will be the main point of today's meeting, so spend as much time getting to know one another as you can. (We highly recommend snacks, coffee, and tea!)

**DISCUSS** Here are a few discussion ideas, especially if you're leading a brand-new group.

- ◆ Invite each woman to introduce herself and share basic get-to-know-you information.
- ◆ Who's the most grateful person you know? Why did you choose this person?
- ◆ What are some characteristics of a grateful person?
- ◆ What do you think encourages a grateful heart, and what hinders it?
- ◆ What do you hope to gain from this Bible study and this group?

### **PREVIEW THE STUDY**

Give a short overview of the study. Share about the weekly structure and the five days of personal study to complete in each week. Encourage women to do what they can. If they are unable to finish all five days of the personal study, they can still learn and contribute to the group time each week. Brainstorm specific times when they might try to complete their personal study each day.

Set the commitment and time expectations you have for your group, and take the opportunity now to cover any important housekeeping notes.

Remind your group to complete Week One of the Bible study book before your next group gathering.

**PRAY** Close with prayer. Ask how the group can be praying for one another over the coming week, and then do that now.

*NOTES*



## WEEK ONE

### GRATEFUL FOR GOD'S SALVATION

**GATHER** Welcome participants back to the study. Allow for a time of introductions for any newcomers. (If your group skipped the optional introductory week, begin with the “Meet and Greet” section on p. 7 of this leader guide.) Ask the following question to get your group talking:

- ◆ Growing up, what was your favorite holiday, and why?

**DISCUSS** Encourage discussion by asking some of the following questions, along with any you flagged in the days of personal study.

- ◆ Which day was your favorite day of study? Why?
- ◆ What stood out to you from this week of personal study? What has stuck with you? What surprised you or was new information?
- ◆ How does gratefulness get lost in the shuffle of your life? What can you do differently to keep this from happening?
- ◆ Which spiritual blessings are you most thankful for and why?
- ◆ How have you experienced the faithful love of God in the last few days?
- ◆ When you look back over the last few years, how has God changed you the most? Which change are you most thankful for, and why?
- ◆ Is there anything anyone would like to share from your reflection time on page 41?
- ◆ What's one thing you learned this week that will help you cultivate a heart of gratitude? How will you apply what you learned?

**CLOSE** Provide time for some members of your group to share their stories of how they came to Christ. Focus your closing prayer time on thanking God for the change He has made in your lives through Christ and the gift of salvation.

**REMIND** Remind group members to complete their Week Two personal study before the next group gathering.

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## WEEK TWO

### GRATEFUL FOR GOD'S PRESENCE

**GATHER** Welcome participants back to the study. Ask the following question to get your group talking and connecting with one another:

- ♦ If you were going to go on a two-week vacation (all expenses paid) and you could take four people with you, where would you go, and who would you invite to go with you? Why the place? Why the people?

**DISCUSS** Encourage discussion by asking some of the following questions, along with any you flagged in the days of personal study.

- ♦ Which day was your favorite day of study? Why?
- ♦ What stood out to you from this week of personal study? What has stuck with you? What surprised you or was new information?
- ♦ Which of the attributes of God are you most thankful for, and why?
- ♦ What does it mean to present your prayers and petitions to God with thankfulness? How can you do that even in the difficult times?
- ♦ When was a time you experienced God's discipline? Were you able to be thankful for it in the moment? How about now? Explain.
- ♦ What does it mean to pray constantly, and how can you do that?
- ♦ Is there anything anyone would like to share from your reflection time on page 73?
- ♦ What's one thing you learned this week that will help you cultivate a heart of gratitude? How will you apply what you learned?

**CLOSE** Provide a few moments for group members to share how the presence of the Lord has been a comfort or encouragement to them over the past few days and weeks. Close with an open time of prayer for group members to express their gratefulness to God for His constant presence.

Remind group members to complete their Week Three personal study before the next group gathering.

*NOTES*



## WEEK THREE

### GRATEFUL FOR GOD'S WORK IN AND THROUGH US

**GATHER** Welcome participants back to the study. Ask the following question to get your group talking and connecting with one another:

- ◆ Of all the jobs you've had, which one has been your favorite, and why?

**DISCUSS** Encourage discussion by asking some of the following questions, along with any you flagged in the days of personal study.

- ◆ Which day was your favorite day of study? Why?
- ◆ What stood out to you from this week of personal study? What has stuck with you? What surprised you or was new information?
- ◆ Name some people who've been instrumental in leading you to the Lord and encouraging you in your faith walk. Why did you choose them?
- ◆ What are some things you love about your current community of faith? How do our faith communities influence our gratefulness?
- ◆ On Day Four, the writer talked about "upside-down gratitude." What is upside-down gratitude, and how did Jesus and Paul both display it? Are you able to express this kind of gratitude in your life? Explain.
- ◆ How does God's generosity to us produce generosity in us? How has this been the case for you?
- ◆ Is there anything anyone would like to share from your reflection time on page 103?
- ◆ What's one thing you learned this week that will help you cultivate a heart of gratitude? How will you apply what you learned?

**CLOSE** Encourage group members to share ways the Lord has worked in them and through them over the past days and weeks. Close with an open time of prayer for group members to express their gratefulness to God for His work in and through their lives.

Remind group members to complete their Week Four personal study before the next group gathering.

*NOTES*



## WEEK FOUR

### GRATEFUL FOR GOD'S PROMISES

**GATHER** Welcome participants back to the study. Ask the following question to get your group talking and connecting with one another:

- ◆ Which family member, friend, or acquaintance would you want . . .
  - . . . to spend a day at the beach with?
  - . . . beside you in a crisis situation?
  - . . . to help you with a DIY project?
  - . . . to help you buy a new car?
  - . . . to pray for you when facing a big decision?

**DISCUSS** Encourage discussion by asking some of the following questions, along with any you flagged in the days of personal study.

- ◆ Which day was your favorite day of study? Why?
- ◆ What stood out to you from this week of personal study? What has stuck with you? What surprised you or was new information?
- ◆ How does remembering you belong to God foster gratefulness when life is hard?
- ◆ Do you think much about life after death? Why or why not? How does keeping eternity in mind help us make the best use of our time on earth?
- ◆ How are you currently leaning on the trustworthiness of God?
- ◆ What does it look like for you to be on mission for God? How does having a grateful heart encourage and motivate you to be on mission?
- ◆ Is there anything anyone would like to share from your reflection time on page 135?
- ◆ What's one thing you learned this week that will help you cultivate a heart of gratitude? How will you apply what you learned?

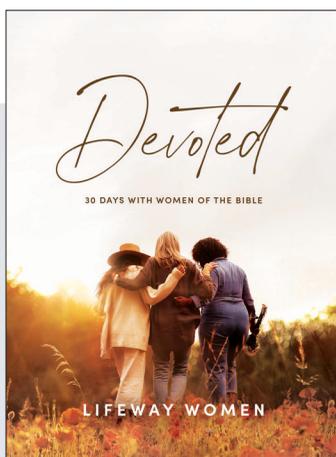
**CLOSE** Ask group members to briefly share what they have learned from this study and how they will live their lives differently because of it. Close with an open time of prayer for group members to express their gratefulness to God for what He has taught them through this time together.

*NOTES*



## FINISHING WELL

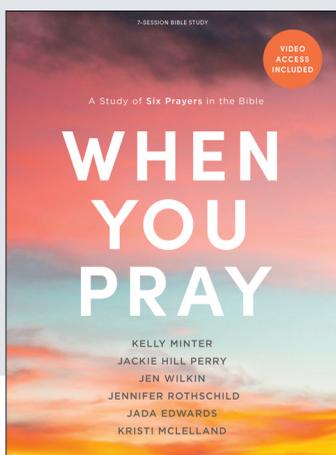
**NEXT STEPS** Even after the study concludes, follow up and challenge women to stay involved through another Bible study, church opportunity, or anything that will continue their spiritual growth and friendships. Provide several options of ministry opportunities the members can participate in individually or as a group to apply what they have learned through this study.



### WHAT'S NEXT?

If you enjoyed this study, check out *Devoted: 30 Days with Women of the Bible* by Lifeway Women.

[lifeway.com/devoted](https://lifeway.com/devoted)



Or *When You Pray: A Study of Six Prayers in the Bible* from Kelly Minter, Jackie Hill Perry, Jen Wilkin, Jennifer Rothschild, Jada Edwards, and Kristi McLelland.

[lifeway.com/whenyoupray](https://lifeway.com/whenyoupray)