

Week 3 — The church

READ

“For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” (Romans 12:4-5; NIV)

THINK

The Bible says the church is like a body—a connected, living, active thing, made up of many ‘parts’. It means we’re part of a group that’s to love, serve, and support each other through all of life’s ups and downs. While our church is far from perfect, in what ways can you see your church is helpful to you? In what ways are *you* serving and loving your church family?

PRAY

Lord of the church, I thank you . . .

- for including me in the body of Christ by faith in him.
- for making each member of the church unique, with an important role to play.
- for my brothers and sisters in Christ at WHPC — for the love, friendship and encouragement we share together.
- for all those who teach the Bible at my church: preachers, Bible Study leaders and kids & youth teachers.
- for all who use the gifts you've given them in many seen and unseen ways — cleaning, playing music, setting up morning tea, visiting people, praying, etc.

SHARE

During the week, try to tell a few people in your church family how much you appreciate being part of the same church as them!

Week 4 — Life in Christ

READ

“In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 6:11; NIV)

THINK

By turning our trust from ourselves to the risen King Jesus, we find a new kind of life. A life of friendship with God. If we are followers of Jesus, we are to ‘count’ (i.e. ‘consider’) ourselves as having ‘died’ to the old life of sin—the life without God in charge. And we are to daily ‘count’ ourselves as being alive to God, in relationship with him through Jesus. It’s all about remembering who God has made us to be—and finding our purpose, security, and hope in Jesus. In the rough and tumble of daily life remember that you are truly alive in Christ! In him you can change!

PRAY

My life-giving God, I thank you . . .

- for the life that you've given me. It's by your grace and provision that I take every breath.
- that you've forgiven me, and my old sinful self is no longer in charge. My hurts, hassles, and failures no longer define me.
- that you give me new life and hope in Jesus!
- for your Spirit, who gives me life, and teaches me to set my mind on things that please you.
- for the various people, situations and experiences in my life that bring me joy.
- for the hope of eternal life, beginning now and continuing forever in your presence.

SHARE

As the week goes by try to explain to someone from church, a Christian friend, or family member, something that has changed for the better in your life because you follow Jesus.



30 Days of Thankfulness

“ . . . give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
1 Thessalonians 5:18

Thankfulness

Saying ‘thank you’ is something most of us were taught when we were young (or younger). And with good reason. If someone gives you something or does something for you, it’s just good manners to say ‘thank you.’

But it’s easy to forget to thank people. And in the stress of everyday life, it’s easy to become *unthankful* in our hearts: to not appreciate the blessings and good things that surround us.

In his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul said we’re really good at being unthankful: *“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him.”* (Rom. 1:21)

But as Christians we don’t need to be like that! Through all life’s ups and downs, we can cultivate thankful hearts that focus on the good things God has given us.

That’s why, in this first month of spring, we’re spending the whole month encouraging each other to be thankful. To help us with that, feel free to use this handout as a guide throughout the month. You’ll see that for each of the four weeks of September, we’re going to focus on a particular theme. As we do, each week we would like you to:

1. **Read**—read the printed Bible passage.
2. **Think**—briefly reflect on the passage.
3. **Pray**—use the prayer points in your regular time of prayer through the week.
4. **Share**—share what you’re thankful for, and say ‘thanks’ to God and others.

Thanks!
;)

Week 1—The gospel

READ

“But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:21-24; NIV)

THINK

The gospel is the good news of what God has done through Jesus to bring you into a real relationship with him. It’s a gift you simply receive, and it’s a gift that changes everything! How does knowing you’re eternally loved and accepted by God change how you face the challenges of this week?

PRAY

Loving Father, I thank you . . .

- for the good news about Jesus!
- for the love and grace shown to me in what Jesus did on the cross. Thank you that I am only right with you through faith in him.
- for the Holy Spirit who enables me to believe, and is working in me to make me more like my Saviour, Jesus.
- for the Bible, translated into English. That I can read it and understand more of who you are and what you've done for me.
- that you're able to use everything that happens in my life to grow me in Christ-like maturity, and to bring glory to yourself.

SHARE

During the week try to share something you’re thankful for in your relationship with God.

Week 2—Creation

READ

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20; NIV)

THINK

Evidence for the reality, power, and goodness of God is all around us. Look at sunshine, the stars, the surging ocean, or even the face of a friend. This whole universe is an art gallery filled with wondrously made things. And the ‘artist’ has put these things before us, so that we might know he’s there and give thanks. Look around your life right now—what wonderful things do you see? Those things are there because God has given them to you as a gift!

PRAY

Almighty God, I thank you . . .

- for the amazing world you've given me to enjoy, which shows your beauty and power.
- for revealing to me, in the Bible, the truth that you're my Creator.
- for the many good things I enjoy because I live in Australia — for relative peace, prosperity and freedom.
- for sending Jesus into our world. Thank you that he understands how difficult life is, and is with me as I push through the hard times.
- that one day Jesus will return and restore your creation. Thank you that one day there will be no more pain, suffering or death.

SHARE

As the week goes by, look out for the people God has put in your life—the people who love, help, or encourage you. Tell them what you most appreciate about them!