

ELEMENTARY DISCUSSION GUIDE

CHARACTER TRAIT: THANKFULNESS

DEFINITION:

A grateful heart that comes from trusting God

MEMORY VERSE:

"Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NLT

FINISH LINE: We can be thankful even through hard times

READ: LAMENTATIONS 3:17-26

WHAT DOES IT SAY? (OBSERVATION)

1. What are some of the hard things Jeremiah talks about? (*No peace, poor, hopeless, suffering, homelessness, awful time, loss*)
2. Reread Lamentations 3:21-22. When Jeremiah was in the middle of this suffering, what did he remember? (*God's faithful love and mercy never ends.*)
3. What truths about God was Jeremiah thankful for? (*His love is forever. He is faithful and merciful. He is good and dependable.*)
4. Read this month's memory verse. What THREE things does Paul remind us that we need to do? (*Be joyful, pray, and give thanks*)
5. How is Paul's response like Jeremiah's? (*He knew he could thank God, no matter what was happening.*)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? (INTERPRETATION)

1. Why might it be hard to be thankful if you went through hard times like Jeremiah did?
2. How do you think remembering who God is and trusting Him helped Jeremiah through these hard times? (*Think back to what we learned week 1 about being thankful for who God is.*)
3. Does God change? Is He the same no matter what is going on, whether it is easy or hard? (*God is the same yesterday, today, and always.*) Do you believe that? Why or why not?

WHY DOES IT MATTER? (APPLICATION)

1. When you are in the middle of something that is really hard, do you have to pretend to be happy or is it ok to be sad? (*It is ok to be sad.*) Why do you think that? (*God created emotions and gave us the ability to feel them. We can even see times in Scripture where Jesus was emotional. John 11 tells us Jesus cried when Lazarus died.*)
2. How can you talk to God if you are in the middle of a hard time? What can you be thankful for even when you are sad or struggling?
3. The Bible is full of examples of people who told God how they were feeling, but stopped to remember His character even in hard times. Look at Psalm 13, by David, to see one such example!