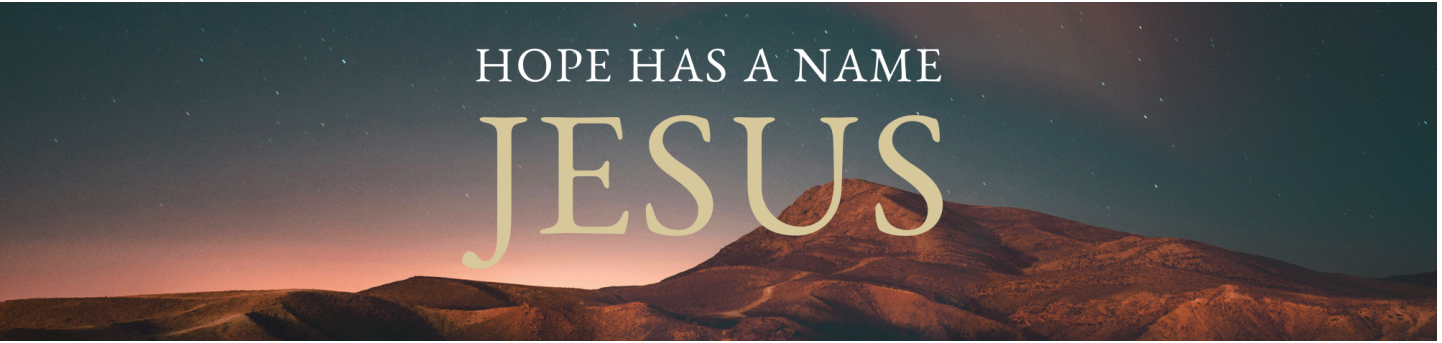




HOPE HAS A NAME JESUS

LEADER'S NOTES

Week 1: Overflowing with Gratitude

Purpose of the Session

To help group members understand how gratitude—rooted in Christ—transforms every aspect of the Christian life. This session explores how Paul, writing from prison, teaches that gratitude is the natural overflow of a life anchored in Christ. Leaders will guide participants toward seeing gratitude not as a feeling, but as a Christ-centered posture developed through faith, hope, and spiritual maturity.

How to Use This Guide

Begin with prayer, inviting God to shape the group's hearts toward true gratitude. Read or summarize the "Context for the Week" to frame Paul's message in Colossians. Use the discussion questions to guide reflection. You may pick which questions to use or ask people in your group to choose a question to use. Allow time for Scripture reading, personal sharing, and practical application. The Leader's Notes under each question will help you draw deeper insight and facilitate meaningful conversation.

Context for the Week

As we finish Thanksgiving week and conclude the Colossians series, Paul's emphasis on gratitude becomes central. Writing from prison, he consistently expresses thanksgiving—seven times throughout the letter—because he is rooted in Christ. For Paul, gratitude isn't seasonal or circumstantial; it is a lifestyle shaped by the gospel.

QUESTION 1

Gratitude is the Fruit of Being Rooted in Christ (**Col 2:6–7**)

Help the group reflect on what it means to be 'rooted' in Christ. Use the tree metaphor from the sermon—roots determine fruit. Invite members to consider what currently forms the foundation of their identity or stability. Gratitude naturally grows when Christ is the source. Guide them to connect hope (Col 1:4–5) with gratitude—when our future is secure in Christ, we don't live with fear or urgency that drains gratitude. Encourage discussion around misplaced hope or cultural pressure to 'not miss out.'

Questions:

- What does it look like for your life to be rooted in Christ right now?
- How have you seen gratitude grow or diminish depending on what (or who) you're rooted in?
- How does your future hope in Christ shape your gratitude today?
- What 'bucket list pressures' or fears of missing out tend to distract you from resting in Christ's promise of restoration?

QUESTION 2

Gratitude Builds Peace and Unity (**Col 3:15**)

This question addresses the relational and emotional side of gratitude. Holidays and family gatherings often expose unresolved tension. Help group members recognize how gratitude shifts the focus from frustration to God's goodness. Emphasize that Christ's peace is not the absence of problems but His presence in them (John 16:33). Encourage honest reflection about areas of relational strain and remind the group that gratitude can soften hearts and restore unity.

Questions:

- Where do you sense tension, anxiety, or relational strain in your life right now?
- How does gratitude change the atmosphere in a home, a friendship, or a church?
- Why do you think bitterness and peace cannot coexist?
- How have you experienced Christ's peace during difficulty?

QUESTION 3

Gratitude Fuels Worship (**Col 3:16**)

Guide the group to consider how gratitude affects corporate worship and personal devotion. Help them reflect on distractions that hinder worship—stress, busyness, digital noise—and how thankfulness reorients the heart. You may share the sermon's reminder that worship is a posture, not a preference. Encourage discussion on how worship has restored gratitude during hardship and how gratitude prepares the heart for worship.

Questions:

- How does a thankful heart change the way you approach worship?
- What helps you shift your focus from distractions to Christ?
- In what ways has worship helped restore gratitude during a hard season?
- How does the idea that worship is posture, not preference, challenge your approach to worship?

QUESTION 4

Gratitude Guides All of Life (**Col 3:17**)

This question helps connect gratitude to real-life habits, work, parenting, relationships, and attitude. Encourage authenticity—gratitude doesn't pretend life is easy. Highlight that gratitude is a spiritual discipline that changes our perspective and impacts how others see Christ in us. Help members identify small but specific areas where gratitude could transform their daily rhythms.

Questions:

- Where is it hardest for you to practice gratitude—work, parenting, rest, relationships, ministry?
- How can gratitude reshape your attitude or actions in that area?
- How do you balance honest struggles with a heart that still practices gratitude?
- Who in your life models everyday, authentic gratitude?

QUESTION 5

Gratitude in Prayer Guards Our Hearts (**Col 4:2; Phil 4:6–9**)

Center this discussion on the connection between thankful prayer and inner peace. Help members see that gratitude in prayer shifts the heart away from fear and control. Highlight Paul's promise that God's peace 'guards' our hearts. Encourage the group to name areas where they need God's peace right now and to consider practical practices—journaling, gratitude lists, Scripture-filled prayer—that cultivate thanksgiving.

Questions:

- What happens to your heart when prayer is shaped by thanksgiving rather than worry?
- Where do you most need God's peace to guard your heart right now?
- What practices help you turn concerns into prayer with thankfulness?
- What is one shift you can make this week so your prayer life is marked by gratitude?

Closing Reflection and Prayer

Invite the group into a moment of quiet reflection. Ask them to name an area where God is calling them to practice gratitude. Pray together, asking God to root each person more deeply in Christ so that their lives overflow with thankfulness—in worship, relationships, daily living, and prayer.