

ALLEY Rundown – November 4- 6, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Give Thanks (Give Thanks No Matter What Happens) • 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Today's Key Question: What are you grateful for?

Today's Bottom Line: You always have something to be grateful for.

Monthly Memory Verse: Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good. His faithful love continues forever. Psalm 136:1 (NIRV)

LG: Emoji Drawing Prompt Sheets

SLIDE: Theme

Hey, everyone! I am so pumped for another month here in the ALLEY. Have any of you ever given anyone a shout-out? (*Get response.*) Awesome! And for those of you who have no idea what I'm talking about—have no fear! A 'shout-out' is just a way to call attention to people who you appreciate and are thankful for! You can give a shout-out to a friend for helping with your math homework or to a parent for the delicious meal they cooked or even your amazing Small Group Leader for showing up and having fun with you today! Shout-outs let people know how much gratitude we have for them. And I can't wait to hear what you are thankful for all month long.

Let's start our time together with a little challenge. I need a couple artists who think they know their emojis and how to draw them. Anyone like that here?

*Choose two volunteers. Sets each one up with multiple papers.
They will write on a new paper each time.*

Alright, so I'll quietly give each of you an emotion or reaction. Your job is to draw an emoji, without words, that will help your side of the room guess the correct word. Make sense? Great! We'll do a few rounds.

Alright here we go!

Divide the room in half. Half will guess the drawing of the one volunteer. Use the 'Emoji Drawing Prompts' Printable to easily prompt the volunteers.

**Thankful*

**Amazed*

**Sad*

**Nervous*

**Surprised*

**Loving*

**Happy*

**Rolling on the floor laughing*

**Frustrated*

**Cool*

**Angry*

**Mind Blown*

(After activity) Wow, you all really know your emojis! Great job, everyone.

Okay, so these drawings represent a lot of emotions! Not all of our emotions are positive, are they? In fact, we ended our activity on a bit of a downer. We can be super excited or find something absolutely hysterical one moment, and a few moments later we might feel sad or frustrated. This can also be true about the moments when we feel thankful. Often how we're feeling gets in the way of feeling grateful.

For example, have you ever noticed how when you're angry it is hard to find anything to be thankful for? It's like all of the anger and frustration we're feeling about something or someone is clouding our vision to see anything besides the thing we're angry about.

But what if there's a better way? What if gratitude is possible, even when we're feeling upset? And if it is possible, what might that even look like?

"Those are some great questions for us to think about today. And we have a great place where we can start as we look for answers—the Bible! In the pages of the Bible, we can read about people who experienced the power of God in their lives. And God inspired them to write down what they learned from these experiences to help us grow and figure out how God wants us to live today! And we've got a great verse that can help us dive into this idea today . . . let's head there now!

VIDEO: SO and SO Show (12:05)

As a follower of Jesus, we are called to do things differently. We love those who we are supposed to hate. We serve instead of fighting for power. And we learn to give thanks even when it is hard to see anything worth being grateful for. And as we live differently, other people will notice, not us, but the One who is living through us. And because of Jesus—His life, death, and resurrection that makes life forever with God possible—we always can find at least ONE thing to be thankful for: God's unfailing, amazingly awesome LOVE for each and every one of us!

It's like it says in our memory verse this month.

SLIDE: Memory Verse

Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good. His faithful love continues forever. Psalm 136:1 (NIRV)

Today as you go to groups, think about this:

SLIDE: Key Question

What are you grateful for? Think about your life right now. What are some things or who are some people that might fill your heart with gratitude? And maybe, how does being a follower of Jesus help you answer that question beyond just the easy and the obvious?. But before you head out, let's pray and ask God to help us to be thankful, no matter what comes our way! Let's pray!"

Lead the group in a prayer related to what they just heard.

SLIDE: Theme

OFFERING:

Where has our offering money been going to this year? Yep, to families in Kenya! They are experiencing lack of food resources because of an on-going drought. We are collecting money for food baskets to bring the families who live in Turkana. If you have any offering, you can bring it up now while we watch this video of Turkana families receiving baskets.

Turkana video #2