



GRATITUDE

Gratitude | Meeting the Future with Gratitude · Session #3· Nov. 25/26

Philippians 4:4-7 · Psalm 23:5-6

Opening: When you think of the future, what emotions come to the surface? How about when you feel grateful?

Discussion:

Read Philippians 4:4-7 • In her message, Pastor Tracey Bianchi had us think about the posture we take before God as we look to our future.

- Tracey challenged us to face our future with a posture of gratitude. Restate in your own words what this means practically towards God, ourselves and others?
- How do we live into a way of life that celebrates the great truth of abundance, that is God, rather than living with a mindset of scarcity and fear?
- In our various experiences in community, do we usually hear words spoken to encourage the mindset of scarcity or abundance? How does the subtlety of these common interactions impact us?
- How would you describe your prevailing posture toward God as you think about your future? What would be your prevailing posture toward God if you saw or experienced more of His goodness and glory? This week, ask God to show you more of His goodness and glory and make note of what you notice? What other disciplines could you practice to know and experience more of God?
- This passage tells us that God's peace can reign in our hearts instead of our fears and worries. Have you experienced this? If so, how did this come about? And how would you describe this peace?

Read Psalm 23 in a few translations.

Through his story of an emptying cup of water, Pastor Pete Stearns brought us into the tension of how unease about our future robs us of being fully present with what is before us. Psalm 23 reminds us that God is with us as our Good Shepherd. We have all we need. Our cup overflows and his 'beauty and love chase after us' (The Message).



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- What causes you to “check-out” from being present?
- How does Psalm 23 or the image of the Good Shepherd help you feel secure regarding your future?
- What happens when you are fully present to whomever is before you? What happens when you are fully present to God’s presence?
- How does knowing that God’s goodness and mercy will follow you all the days of your life, help you trust God with your unknown future?

Practice of the Week:

Celebration: Engaging in actions that orient the spirit towards worship, praise and thanksgiving to God.

- Pay attention to the prevailing attitude you have toward God. Journal about what you notice. *“The attitude you have toward God is the deepest and most important thing about you. It spills over into everything.”* Colin Smith
- Identify and pursue those activities that bring your heart deep gladness. Express your response to the beauty and goodness of God in words, music or silent adoration.
- Free yourself from the addiction of criticism and negativity; live from a mentality of abundance.

For further reading:

Ruthless Trust, by Brennan Manning

True Worshipers: Seeking what Matters to God, by Bob Kauflin

Worship on Earth as it is in Heaven, by Rory Noland