

***“You are My God...
...and I will give You thanks!”***

***Week 3
Leader’s Guide***

Central Verse: *“I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord has done.”*
Psalm 118:17

Target/Goal/Focus: The goal is to give participants the opportunity to prayerfully consider what God’s Word has to say by way of answer to this basic question: How can I live for God today?

1. Sometimes we hear people talk about “just going through the motions” or “putting in their time.” The view of life as put forward in Psalm 118 is just the opposite. “I will **LIVE!**” Here is what gives us that latter view of life. It is what Jesus has done for us and in what He gives us. Read John 10:10. Discuss what you hear Jesus saying in those words. **First of all, He emphasizes that the life we have from Him and in Him is a gift – “that they may have life.” He also tells us this is not just an ordinary life He is giving – it is “life to the full.” How exciting is that!**
2. What Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:15 gives some specific direction to how we live out the gift of “*life to the full*” that we have in Christ. What is that direction? **The life we live, we live for Him.** What does Galatians 2:20 add to this? **For one, it makes what Jesus did ever so personal – “who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Our lives are seen as an extension of our faith – “the life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God.” Clearly what we confess – “You are my God” – is at the core of how we live!**
3. It’s not about us, is it? It’s about Him! Read the central verse for this study out loud again. *“I will not die but live, and will proclaim **what the Lord has done.**”* Begin to make a list of all that the Lord has done for you. As you make your list, also begin to ask questions such as these: How can I use what God has done for me to live for Him? How can I use what God has done for me to serve Him? How can I live for God today? What correlations or connections are you beginning to discover? **Hopefully I am seeing and connecting what God has done for me with specific opportunities to manage (or steward) those gifts in such a way as to point other people to Him.**

4. There is a verse in Psalm 118 that takes the gift of life we have been given and breaks it down into day-by-day segments. Read Psalm 118:24 and discuss how these words can help us live out our confession of faith each day. **They can help us in any number of ways, not limited to the following observations:**
 - They help us to receive each day as a gift to be lived out for the Lord.
 - They help us to focus on what we have – we have today – we don't have tomorrow.
 - They help us to look for reasons God will give us to rejoice and be glad in that day.
 - They set the tone for our attitude/mindset/heart-set to be one of gratitude.

5. Let's look at this in someone else's life. Spend a few moments reading the story of the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:4-42). What great things did God do for her? What changes took place in her? What happened as a result of the sharing she did of all that God had done for her? **He offered and gave her eternal life. He demonstrated to her that He was the Christ. He freed her from a sinful life-style. She became His witness. Many more believed.**

6. True or False. Each day is a new opportunity for me to live out my faith in Jesus.

7. What does this do to our understanding of stewardship if we define our stewardship as being our answer to this question: How can I live for Christ today? **Doesn't this broaden our understanding and perception of what stewardship is? All too often we equate stewardship with how much money we give to the church. That's only a small part of stewardship, isn't it?**

8. Daily living out our faith in Christ is not just an individual effort. It is a team effort. Read and discuss the following passages from the book of Acts which show Christians joining together to live out their shared confession of faith. What do these verses have to say to your congregation when you are united in living out the Christian faith?
 - Acts 2:42-47
 - Acts 4:32-35

This makes for a powerful witness to our community, our friends and our neighbors. God blesses such unity and brings forth fruit from it.