



## SERMON BASED | SMALL GROUP NOTES FALL 2017

Message Series: I'm Okay, I'm Okay – Everything Is Fine

Message Title: Discontentment

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### **Icebreaker**

Take the "turkey vote" in your group! Do you like your turkey roasted, baked, smoked, or fried? In addition to that, what is your favorite Thanksgiving side dish?

### **Message Overview**

In this two-week series, we look into the lie that we often tell that "I'm fine, everything is fine" – when really we may be secretly battling anxiety and discontentment in life. In week two – we take an in depth look at discontentment and how it unravels our life. Discontentment stems from a lack of perspective and it robs us of our joy – we start to fixate only on what we lack instead of what God has already done in our life. So how can we fight discontentment in life?

### **Discussion**

Last week we looked at praise and how it recognizes God for who he is and therefore extinguishes anxiety. On the other hand, thanksgiving is **remembering** all that God has done for us, and thanksgiving is how we fight discontentment. When we have a thankful heart we can remember not only what God did for all of us through the cross (UNIVERSAL THANKS), but we can remember what he has done specifically in our life (UNIQUE THANKS).

- Read **Psalm 34** aloud – In this Psalm David says that, "I sought the Lord and he answered me". Share a story with your group of a time where you feel that God answered you. What were your feelings when God answered that prayer or came through in your circumstances?

Though Thanksgiving is the simple act of remembering – it can still be challenging for us to get our hearts to that place. Especially when our hearts are hardened and bitter, we have an inability to see or remember what God has done in our life. If we are to fight for Thanksgiving in our life, we have to understand the subtle differences in praise and thanksgiving.

### **PRAISE vs THANKSGIVING**

- Praise recognizes God for who He is while Thanksgiving remembers what He has done.
- Praise focuses more on the nature of God while Thanksgiving more on the activity of God.
- Praise inspires holiness and awe, while Thanksgiving inspires closeness and joy

- *What are the obstacles in your life to being thankful? How would you explain in your own words how praise and thanksgiving are different?*

Despite the obstacles, what if Thanksgiving was more than just a once a year occurrence, but a daily practice and habit in our lives?

**Discontentment is defined as:** That internal feeling of not having enough or being enough. Feeling “less than” in some area of your life.

***The good news is that thankfulness is what breaks through your discontentment!***

Discontentment on any level undoes your marriage, career, faith, and happiness. We have all experienced the dissatisfaction that comes when we are not content with things at home, at work, or in our personal life. Discontentment tells you the lie that what you have isn’t enough, and discontentment robs the joy from our lives.

When we grow discontent, we start clamoring through life searching for the more, the new, and the next that we think we need – when really, we just need thankfulness back in our life. Discontentment causes us to miss the blessings and gifts in our life, and instead – we can only see what we lack.

We all struggle with discontentment in life, we even see this in the life of David – he is constantly wrestling through different seasons of discontentment – but in **Psalm 100** (*read aloud in your group*), we learn something about how David overcomes discontentment and chooses to live a lifestyle of Thanksgiving.

Grow JOY Through Thanksgiving By:

1. **Remembering** (Psalm 103 – *forget not*)  
You have to make a conscious effort to remember the things that God has done in your life. Being passive with thanksgiving will lead to forgetting the best things in life. Our default setting is discontentment – so we have to PRACTICE being thankful.
2. **Returning** (*get a healthy perspective of God, yourself, and your circumstances*)
3. **Right-Sizing** (*live in the reality that what God has done is more important than what we feel like we lack*)
  - *Discontentment robs joy, but thanksgiving FUELS joy. Which one is the louder voice in your life?*
  - *Talk about the words “happiness” and “joy” – are these the same or do they mean something different to you?*

Happiness is emotional and fleeting while joy is steady and sure. Joy can exist when happiness does not – and happy cannot replace joy. The strength of your walk with God is that you can sustain a life of joy despite your circumstances – you can trust God and CHOOSE to live a joyFULL life.

### **Wrap Up / Close**

The issue with discontentment is that it ALWAYS pushes us to think that what we have isn't enough, so we look for something new – but "new" very quickly becomes mundane.

- *How can you keep the blessings in your life that you have gotten familiar with (spouse, career, friends/family) fresh in your mind?*

Take some time to go over with your group some of the things in your life that you are thankful for – no matter how big or small. Keep in mind that you can always choose an attitude of thankfulness and joy, regardless of the circumstances in your life.

### **Throughout the Week (Optional)**

- Last week you were challenged to set aside time each day to practice a posture of praise, this week, set aside 5-10 minutes at the start of each day to remember, return, and right-size all the things in your life that you have to be thankful for. Use this to fuel your joy throughout the day!