



2017 Summer Bible Study Overview & Week at a Glance

Theme Verse:

"Always be joyful. Never stop praying.

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will FOR YOU who belong to Christ Jesus."

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 NLT

Introduction to the theme - By Rev. Layne Nelson

Summary Paragraph:

You are here. And you matter! God Loves you and wills for you to experience a life of Joy, Prayer, and Thankfulness in all the circumstances you may face. Our lives are to be lived in relationship with God and others. God has brought you to this place and together we will learn how God's LOVE is - FOR YOU!

Introduction to theme:

We come from all sorts of different places and backgrounds. We know both joys and sorrows. And each of us knows life can be hard at times... Perhaps you have felt like you have been left out on your own...? Or like the ones in whom you have trusted have left you hanging...? Maybe you just don't know how you feel, or if you can even feel at all?

Whether life's difficulties are brought on because of the actions of others, or brought on as consequences of your own actions, KNOW THIS...you are not alone! The fact is, most of us have felt like this at some point in our lives (and if you haven't, you probably will). But you don't have to live your life like this.

In difficult moments, God meets us where we are at and shows us the hope and presence of God in Christ. As Lutherans, we call this the "Theology of the Cross". God meets us, forgives us, and helps bring light out of our dark moments.

You have a God who LOves you very much, and who did a most amazing thing FOR YOU... God sends Jesus into your world to free you from your sin, empower you in your circumstances, and show you the deep RELATIONSHIP that God wants to have with you - EVERYDAY! This LOVE is life changing. This powerful LOVE shown in Christ was given, FOR YOU!

As such, you are freed to live in joy, prayer, and thankfulness at all times.

Scriptural background:

The book of I Thessalonians is the first letter the the Apostle Paul writes to a church he had earlier established in the Roman town of Thessalonica. Paul was no longer with them; he was preaching and teaching in other towns and they were alone to figure out life on their own.

This letter, now book of the Bible, is one of the earliest books of the Bible written. It dates to around the year A.D. 50 or 51 - just 20 years or so after Jesus was raised and ascended to heaven. It was written to REASSURE and to ENCOURAGE the people of that new church.

In this letter Paul gives thanks for their faith, talks about how to live, and addresses the question about the return of Christ. He instructs them of the importance to keep on living life, even as they await Christ's return. God is with us in our daily life!

Key points:

In our theme verses, 5:16-18 near the end of the letter, Paul instructs the people to, "*Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances.*"

-Paul instructs us to be JOYFUL always.

This reminds us that our hope is in Christ and this allows us to have joy even though we may face difficult circumstances in life. Christ has freed you from your sin, and that changes everything.

-Paul instructs us to PRAY at all times.

Prayer is a powerful resource to help us get through difficult times, but more than that, it reminds us of our connection with God. Through prayer God is present with us each day.

-Paul instructs us to be THANKFUL in all circumstances.

Living a life of "gratitude" shapes how we treat God's people and ourselves; it keeps our priorities on the ways of God. Living this way is a response to what God has done for us, FOR YOU, in Christ Jesus!

Theme in real time:

But how can we possibly be joyful "always"? How can we give thanks in "all" circumstances? The Apostle Paul must have really meant us to be thankful and joyful "some" or "most" of the time, right? No. Paul, means all.

Sure, you will experience difficult times; you may even experience truly devastating circumstances... but they don't define you! Jesus does!

In your baptism you have been joined to Jesus Christ. You have been given the life changing gift of freedom in Christ. This union with Christ becomes the core of who you are and of who you are called to be. As such, your life has great depth and great value, whether you may feel it or recognize it in the moment or not... because of what God has done, FOR YOU.

To be able to live in joy, and prayer, and thankfulness is a gift FOR YOU.

Learning Objectives:

-Understanding: Campers will come away from this study with the joy and confidence that God is present with them in life through all circumstances.

-Tools: Campers will learn and grow in the practice of prayer, and see it as a way we live in relationship with God each day. Campers will be introduced to meditation.

-Spirit: Campers will develop an attitude of gratitude at all times in response to God's gift of new life in Christ.

Supplemental verse:

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."

Romans 8:28 NLT

Quotes:

"Pray, and let God worry." - Martin Luther

"I am the Lord your God. You don't need any gods besides me." (Twist on 1st commandment)

Prayers to start and end each day:

Luther's Morning Prayer...

"I give thanks to you, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear son, that you have protected me through the night from all harm and danger and I ask that you would also protect me today from sin and every danger, so that my life and actions may please you. Into your hands I commend myself: my body, my soul, and all that is mine. Let your holy angel be with me, so that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen."

Luther's Evening Prayer...

"I give thanks to you, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear son, that you have graciously protected me today, and I ask you to forgive me all my sins, where I have done wrong, and graciously to protect me tonight. For into your hands I commend myself: my body, my soul, and all that is mine. Let

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Title	Chosen FOR YOU	A Place FOR YOU	Given FOR YOU	God's Will FOR YOU	A Challenge FOR YOU
Big Picture	You are created to be in a lifelong relationship with God. This is not your own choosing, but it is God's will for YOU!	You are created to live in community. When you do, you begin to see the world in a different way.	The whole reason Jesus came into the world was FOR YOU.	This new way of living is to be shared by YOU!	Will YOU dare to let go, trust God, and live life for God by serving others?
Bible Verses	1 Sam. 3:1-10 <i>God calls Samuel.</i>	Mark 8:1-10 <i>Feeding the Four Thousand.</i>	Luke 22: 7-20 <i>The Last Supper.</i> and/or Luke 19: 1-10 <i>Jesus and Zacchaeus</i>	Matthew 28: 16-20 <i>The Great Commission</i>	1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 <i>Parting thoughts.</i>
Key Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God created you and meets you where you are. • Nothing can separate you from the LOve of God in Christ. • You are invited to listened to God's call for YOU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you follow Jesus you are a part something bigger than yourself. • Following Jesus means putting the needs of others ahead of your own. • YOU are called to be a part of God's work in the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus is present with you in Holy Communion, giving you forgiveness. • Jesus came to seek and to save YOU (the lost). • You are free to live in Joy and Thanksgiving because of what Jesus has done for you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus will always be with you: yesterday, today, and tomorrow. • You are not alone: Jesus gives you an Advocate, the Holy Spirit. • As we love our neighbors we show our LOve to God. • YOU have a responsibility to care for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray, and let God worry. • We LOve God as we look out for and serve others. • True joy comes when we live for others, and not ourselves. • YOU have a responsibility to care for others.