



If You Are So Inclined

November 21, 2021

Psalm 78:1-8

Connect

- Share a Thanksgiving tradition you practiced growing up, one you continue, or one you'd like to begin.
- In a spirit of honest vulnerability, do you find yourself leaning into, or away from, God these days? Discuss.

Engage

- Read *Psalm 78:1-8*. What do you read in these eight verses that you'd like to lean in and hear more? Why?
- What stories of gratitude have been passed down to you from your ancestors? How have those stories shaped your life? How are you passing those stories on?
- “*Hallelujah anyway!*” can sound dismissive; almost sarcastic. What if, however, we saw it as a persistent and disciplined response of trust to whatever we were facing in our lives? Is this faithful in your estimation? Is it realistic?
- In these stressful days, many seem to be lashing out in frustration. How does this generally negative societal atmosphere make it challenging to operate in a spirit of gratitude? How are you contributing to the problem and/or the remedy?
- In life, we're often holding pieces of the puzzle but cannot see the completed picture. In this spirit, one person wrote, “*I wanted to see it all at twenty years old. I wanted to see the full picture of my life. But, if God would have revealed it all to me at that time, I would have run away.*” Can you relate? Is it better to get life in pieces? Discuss.

Next Steps

- Toward whom or what do you hold negative energy these days? Can you name them, list them, and find a way to speak life or positivity into that person or situation? Call it a gratitude experiment. Pick a person or two associated with those negative thoughts, claim something positive about them, and reach to them with a word of encouragement. See what that may also heal in your own spirit.

Pray

- “*God, in gratitude we come to you in prayer. While we are often ready to rush into our demands and wants, slow us down so we may always begin with ‘Thank you!’ Broaden our vision so that we don’t get lost in negativity and criticism but that we rise above the fray with enough grace to live with a grateful heart. Amen.*”