

# TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?...

A Video Bible Study Series

(John 6:68, NIV)

## CELEBRATE GOD SERIES

### ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE — LESSON 1 (EXODUS 16)

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

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#### Bible Verse

He said to them, “Here is what the Lord commanded. He said, ‘Tomorrow will be a day of rest. It will be a holy Sabbath day. It will be set apart for the Lord.’” *Exodus 16:23-25 (NIV)*

#### Lesson Objectives

1. We can celebrate what God is doing, even during tough times.
2. Remember that God’s goodness and faithfulness nurtures gratitude.
3. We need a Sabbath often.
4. Think about the good things the Lord has done for us. This will increase faith and lessen doubt and unbelief.
5. Choose an “attitude of gratitude” and rejoice in the Lord always!

#### Teaching Aids

“Attitude of Gratitude” Power Point

#### Background Information

In Philippians 4:4 Paul tells us, “*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – rejoice!*” Ask yourself these questions: do you celebrate God when He doesn’t answer a prayer the way you want Him to answer it?

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## TEACHER'S GUIDE CONTINUED

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Do you honor His faithfulness even when you are disappointed or angry? Do you celebrate God every day? Do you forget about His never-ending goodness and faithfulness? Are you celebrating the gift, or the Giver of the gift?

God not only gives us life today, but for eternity. As the Israelites left Egypt, they had a lot to learn about celebrating God. Their lack of trust that God would care for their short-term needs kept them from remembering the goodness of God. God had freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. God rescued them from the Egyptian army by dividing the waters of the Red Sea so they could escape. He gave them water and food in the desert.

God provided for the Israelites for 40 years, one day at a time. Relying on God for their daily needs kept the Gift Giver in the forefront of their minds and hearts. On the sixth day of each week they collected twice as much food so they could rest from their labor on the seventh day, the Sabbath. This was the day of rest established at the creation of the world. It is a holy Sabbath day, set apart for the Lord. Still today, we need to regularly have a day for rest and remembering God.

### **I. Introduction: Celebrating the past**

#### **A. Celebrations are fun!**

1. We have parties for birthdays and graduations. We get awards for our efforts at work and in sports.
2. Married couples go out to dinner or on vacation to celebrate their anniversaries.
3. We celebrate national holidays like Memorial Day and the Fourth of July, to honor people who fought for our independence and freedom.
4. There are holidays that celebrate our faith. On Christmas we celebrate Jesus' birth. At Easter we celebrate the day He rose from the grave.
5. All these celebrations are important, but they focus on events that happened in the past.

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## **I. Introduction: Celebrating the past continued**

### **B. Do we celebrate the people in our lives today?**

1. If you are married, do you only celebrate that you and your spouse have been married a long time? Or, do you celebrate that your spouse is a good friend and a child of God?
2. Do you celebrate a good friend, or a roommate?
3. Can we celebrate these people when we are disappointed with them?

## **II. Rejoicing in the Lord**

### **A. “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again – rejoice!” (*Philippians 4:4*)**

1. Do we have an “attitude of gratitude” for who God is? Do we praise Him for everything He does and will do?
2. Do we rejoice in God even when He doesn't answer a prayer the way we want Him to answer it?
3. Can we honor His faithfulness even when we are disappointed or angry?
4. Maybe we prayed for a family member or a friend to get well, but they didn't get well.
5. Maybe we asked God to give us a job, or a new place to live, but God seemed silent to our prayer. Can we still celebrate Him?

### **B. Are we celebrating the gift, or the Giver of the gift?**

1. Do we celebrate God every day?
2. He not only gives us life today, but for eternity.
3. Do we forget about His never-ending goodness and faithfulness?
4. Are we celebrating the gift, or the Giver of the gift?

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### **III. What is the Sabbath?**

#### **A. The Israelites had a lot to learn about celebrating God.**

1. Their lack of trust that God would care for their short-term needs kept them from remembering the goodness of God.
2. We all have a lot to learn about remembering God, but God showed us a way to remember Him when He created the world. It's called the Sabbath.

#### **B. Genesis 1:31-2:3; *“God saw everything He had made. And it was very good. There was evening, and there was morning. It was day six. So, the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed. By the seventh day God had finished the work He had been doing. So, on that day He rested from all His work. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. He blessed it because on that day He rested from all the work He had done.”***

1. Following His creation, God celebrated His work as “good” and rested. We also celebrate the work God does as “good” and rest.
2. Today, most of us celebrate the Sabbath on Sunday. Our Sunday is a celebration of God. It is a day we can rest from our labor. It is a day we can stop thinking about ourselves and spend the day remembering God.

### **IV. Feeding the Israelites in the desert (*Exodus 16*)**

#### **A. The Israelites were hungry and quickly forgot how God saved them.**

1. The Israelites told Moses and Aaron, *“We wish the Lord had put us to death in Egypt. There we sat around pots of meat. We ate all the food we wanted. But you have brought us out into this desert. You must want this entire community to die of hunger.”*

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#### **IV. Feeding the Israelites in the desert (*Exodus 16*) continued**

2. Then God told Moses, *“I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people must go out each day. Have them gather enough bread for that day. On the sixth day they must gather twice as much as on the other days.”*
3. The Israelites gathered twice as much food on the sixth day so they would not need to collect food on the Sabbath.
4. Remember, the Sabbath was a day of rest. This was a day they could rest, pray, and remember God.
5. Moses said, *“You will know that the Lord has heard you speak against Him. He will give you meat to eat in the evening. He’ll give you all the bread you want in the morning.”*
6. *“That evening quail came and covered the camp. In the morning, the ground around the camp was covered with dew. When the dew was gone, thin flakes appeared on the desert floor.”*
7. *Moses said to them, “It’s the bread the Lord has given you to eat.”*
8. God continued to feed the Israelites in the desert this way for 40 years.

#### **V. God gave His people the Sabbath**

**A. Every day, except on the Sabbath, the Israelites gathered food they needed for that day.**

**B. The Sabbath was given so the Israelites could spend this time remembering God.**

1. The Israelites had short memories. They grumbled as slaves in Egypt, so God sent them Moses. They grumbled more when Moses arrived to set them free. And, they didn’t stop grumbling as they wandered safely in the desert.

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## **V. God gave His people the Sabbath continued**

2. The Israelites' complaining wasn't about where they lived. It came from their hearts, and lack of trust in God.
3. When they needed or wanted something, they stopped remembering how God took care of them every day.
4. They only thought about what they wanted.
5. In the desert, God gave them the food they needed one day at a time. This helped the Israelites to remember that it was God who provided for them every day.

## **VI. The Sabbath is a celebration of God**

### **A. God also commanded the Israelites rest on the seventh day, the Sabbath.**

1. Exodus 16:23-25; *He said to them, "Here is what the Lord commanded. He said, 'Tomorrow will be a day of rest. It will be a holy Sabbath day. It will be set apart for the Lord.'"*
2. God provided the Israelites with more food on the sixth day so that on the seventh day, the Sabbath, they would be free from their work to rest and remember God.
3. This was a day for them to stop thinking of their own needs and to praise God for all He had done. This was their worship.

### **B. Is the Sabbath important to us today?**

1. Do we complain like the Israelites?
2. We grumble and whine about our circumstances.
3. Like the Israelites, we forget how God takes care of us.
4. We forget even faster when our lives become difficult, like when our health isn't good, or we struggle with money.

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## **VI. The Sabbath is a celebration of God continued**

5. But, praising and worshipping God should not be connected to our circumstances. We should celebrate God for who He is and His faithfulness.
6. An “attitude of gratitude” doesn’t come from money, health, or the praise you receive at work.

### **C. Ask yourself this question: are you a person with an “attitude of gratitude” for God, or do you complain a lot?**

1. It’s a tough question, but how we live our lives is a reflection of our hearts.
2. Like the Israelites, we need to take time to remember God.
3. Think about the many blessings God has given you. This will nurture an “attitude of gratitude”! Here are some blessings to remember:
  - a) The Holy Spirit opens your heart to know Jesus as your Lord and Savior.
  - b) You are a child of God.
  - c) God has placed other believers in your life to guide you in faith.
  - d) God provides you with a place to live.
  - e) God provides you with food to eat.
  - f) God gave you His Word to learn about Him.
  - g) God will never leave you, in good times and bad.

## **VII. Conclusion**

### **A. David wrote in Psalm 118:24, “This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”**

1. Those who rejoice in the Lord have an “attitude of gratitude”.

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## **VII. Conclusion continued**

2. The more we rejoice, the less we feel sorry for ourselves.

### **B. When we grumble, we grumble against God.**

1. In Exodus 16:8 Moses said to the Israelites; “You are not grumbling against us, but against the Lord.”
2. Grumbling against God is a sin that hurts our relationship with Him. If you grumble against your staff, a roommate, or your spouse, do you think it hurts your relationship with that person?
3. The more we focus on the goodness of God, the more we will feel grateful to God. Thanking Him for what He does for us is very important.

### **C. We all need a Sabbath.**

1. Christians today celebrate the Sabbath on Sunday, but it does not need to wait for Sunday. It can be any time set aside as “holy” where you are still and remember God.
2. **Psalm 46:10; “Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”**
3. If you are feeling down, take a Sabbath and remember God’s goodness.
4. Also make an effort to actively rejoice, even if you don’t feel like rejoicing.
5. Quietly focus on God’s love and grace, as well as the other good things in your life.
6. Think on the good things the Lord has done for you. This will increase your faith and lessen doubt and unbelief.
7. Choose to have an “attitude of gratitude” and rejoice in the Lord always.
8. The more you focus on the goodness of God, the more you will feel grateful to God.

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## TEACHER'S GUIDE CONTINUED

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### Closing Prayer

God, I rejoice in Your love for me. Through the sacrifice of Jesus I am Your child. This is not because of anything I have done, but because of who You are. I give You all my praise in Jesus' name. Amen.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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#### 1. Why were the Israelites grumbling in the desert?

- They wanted food. They wished they had stayed in Egypt where they could have all the food they wanted.

#### 2. What was the root cause for their grumbling?

- The root cause was their hearts. They didn't trust God would care for them and that He had the power to help them. They didn't take time to remember all the things He did for them in the past.

#### 3. How did God provide food for the Israelites while they were in the desert?

- He fed them with manna and quail. Manna came every morning in the form of tiny flakes that could be gathered. Quail came in the evening.

#### 4. How many days each week did the Israelites gather food?

- The Israelites gathered food for six days and gathered twice as much on the sixth day, so they had enough food through the Sabbath.

#### 5. What were the Israelites to do on the seventh day?

- They rested from their labor, focused on prayer, and remembered God.

#### 6. How long did God provide this food?

- 40 years.

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## PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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**1. What are some things you grumble about?**

**2. What are some things you can do to develop an attitude of gratitude towards God?**

- If you are feeling down, take a Sabbath and remember God's goodness.
- Make an effort to actively rejoice, even if you don't feel like rejoicing.
- Quietly focus on God's love and grace, as well as the other good things in your life.
- Think on the good things the Lord has done for you. This will increase faith and lessen doubt and unbelief.
- Choose an "attitude of gratitude" and rejoice in the Lord always.

**3. When should we rejoice?**

- Always!

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