



YOUTH
session page

Thanksgiving & Service

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 | Session 9.18

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Prepare a large tic-tac-toe board on one end of your meeting space and provide a couple of beanbags or other safe items to throw. (See Content)
- Listen to the FaithElement podcast for this session.
- Use the social media prompts on this session's webpage to help youth begin engaging the session them ahead of their gathering.
- Find web links for underlined items on this session's webpage at faithelement.net.

Intro

Play the [Katina's song](#) and ask:

- What lyrics in this song spoke to you the most and why?
- How often do you usually spend time thanking God?
- Why do we take God's blessings for granted sometimes?

Context

On one end of your meeting space create a large tic-tac-toe board on the floor that is as large as your space allows. Form two teams and have them gather about ten to twenty feet away, behind a line that the teams cannot cross. Give each team a bean bag, tennis ball, or something else that can be thrown at the tic-tac-toe board. Tell the players that they will need to alternate team members for this activity as if they were in a relay race, so they need to work out an order and make sure everyone on their team remembers it before starting. Have one team begin by throwing their bean bag toward the board, and use colored paper or some other means to identify which square the bag initially landed in. If someone misses the board, do not mark any square. The second team will then throw their object, and again, mark its landing using a different color than the first team. If a team throws their bag and it lands in a square occupied by the other team, the other team loses their claim to that square and it becomes neutral again for any team to hit with their bean bag. Play each game until a team has three squares in a row as in regular tic-tac-toe, and play as many games as your time allows, then ask.

- What was your strategy to win this game?
- How did you have to work as a team to make that happen?
- What would have happened if someone didn't care about the team, but only about themselves and why?
- In what ways are we called to care about others and not just ourselves?
- What does it look like when someone is not interested in serving others?

Content

Read [Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19](#) and watch the Bible Background Video.

Ask your group:

- What do you think the author was going through in the first four verses?
- How did God save him?
- How do these things cause the author to become devoted to God?
- In what ways have we tried to repay God like the author desires in verse 12?
- How do you think God wants to be repaid and why?
- What is significant about the author praising and thanking God in public?

Closure

Show the ["Get Down" video](#) and ask:

- One line in this song is "This valley is so low, I can barely see the sun." When could that have described something you've gone through?
- How do you express your gratitude when God pulls you through a difficult time?
- How would you respond to someone who was claimed appreciation for God's blessings, yet did not have any desire to bless other people and why?
- What are some practical things we can do to thank God by serving others in our community?

Close this session in prayer.

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