

BE THANKFUL



AN ACTION PLAN FOR A RADICAL THANKSGIVING

BASED ON THE BOOK, *RADICAL*, BY DR. DAVID PLATT

FOR SMALL GROUPS

- **Pray for the hungry and homeless in your city.**

If your small group is like many others, your prayer times often focus on bringing the needs of your group members before God. During your small-group meeting closest to Thanksgiving, try something different: focus on interceding in prayer for the hungry and homeless in your community.

Perhaps beforehand, someone could do a little research to learn the facts about these problems in your area. As a group, pray for the single parents, the children, and the elderly. Pray for those who are looking for jobs, those who are overcoming addictions, and those with mental or physical disabilities. Pray that those who are not Christians would come to know Christ. Pray for the churches and others who minister to the hungry and the homeless.

- **Review your favorite Bible passages of the year.**

Have you noticed how sitcoms on television will sometimes have a “clip show” episode that is primarily made up of scenes from earlier episodes? Your small group is no sitcom. (Okay, maybe it feels like it at times!) But do something similar to a “clip show” for your Thanksgiving week get-together.

Take turns reviewing the Bible passages that have meant the most to each of you in the past year. These could be Bible passages that the group has studied together, that your pastor has preached on, or that one of you has read in his personal devotions. Regardless, have each person read her “favorite” Bible passage to the group and share why she is thankful for how God has used this passage in her life.

The Bible refers to itself as “living and active” (Hebrews 4:12). This review will prove it.

- **Use positive peer pressure to downsize together.**

In America we have been abundantly blessed by God. We have more than enough reasons to be grateful at Thanksgiving or any other time of the year. The challenge before us is to not let this abundance lead us into accumulating more for ourselves than we need. Selfish hoarding is just what prevents us from doing more to help those who lack even the basic necessities of life.

The battle against materialism is one that has to be waged unceasingly. Why not help each other in your group downsize—or really, rightsize—together?

Some ideas:

- Walk through each other's homes and talk about what you can give up.
- Hold a group rummage sale to raise money for the poor.
- Talk about what size homes or apartments or what kinds of cars you really need to have.
- Talk about what a lifestyle cap might look like.
- Commit to holding each other accountable for your decisions.

What better time than Thanksgiving to do the countercultural work of freeing up resources to bless others?

• Serve a meal to the hungry as a group.

Thanksgiving is perhaps the most natural day of the year to help the poor. Many communities have a rescue mission or other organization that invites volunteers to serve meals to the hungry. Churches organize food delivery programs and food pantries for needy families.

So volunteer in one of these programs as a group. Pray ahead of time for relationships with the poor and other volunteers to develop. Then use the experience as a launch pad to continued service. Ask the charitable organization how you can help out after the other Thanksgiving volunteers have melted away.

• Team up to help out a fellow church member.

There's something beautiful and right when one part of the body of Christ cares for another part. Your small group can do that, and in the process knit your church closer together, by making a choice to help out a church member or family who has a practical need.

Perhaps an elderly woman needs her yard cleaned up for winter. Perhaps a family needs a house painted but can't afford professional painters. Perhaps someone needs help boxing up belongings for a move. With the permission of the person you want to help, your small group can step in and get the job done.

The day after Thanksgiving would be a good day for this project. When the rest of the world is out trying to get a bargain at the Black Friday sales, you can be giving a fellow church member a reason to thank God for the body of Christ.

Return to

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in December for the Action Plan for a Radical Christmas
and in January for An Action Plan for a Radical New Year

WHAT PART OF THE GOSPEL IS OPTIONAL?

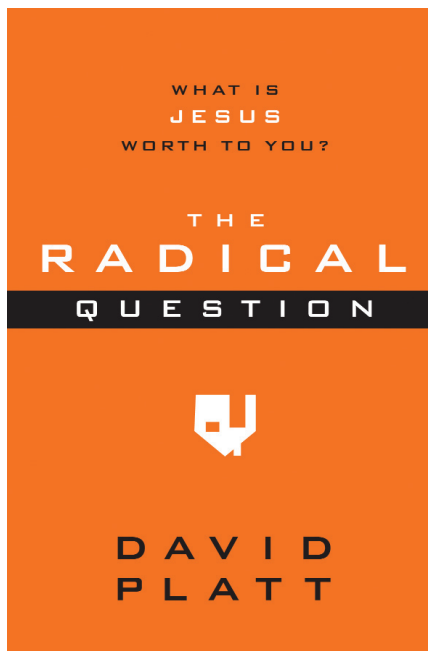
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Radical is a daring call for Christians to believe and obey the gospel according to Jesus—even if it flies in the face of success according to the American church. David Platt reveals what can happen when we exchange our convenient beliefs for authentic discipleship.

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