

**Monuments 04: "Gratitude"**  
**1Thessalonians 16-18**

August 24, 2025

**Main Idea:** Gratitude is the posture of an authentic follower's heart.

There are scores upon scores of movies in which a character comes to their wit's end. They could be being bested in some contest or even a fight for their life. The situation could be something far less physical, but nonetheless, overwhelming. At the point where hope is lost, their grip is failing, or they are about to give up; someone or something comes along and saves the day. In *Avengers: Endgame* the team is beat. Captain America is the only one left to face Thanos and his army. He is beat. Then the rest of the Marvel characters arrive, and the tide turned, and you can see Captain America's response on his face. Lightening McQueen gave up his chance of winning the Piston Cup to help The King finish well and you can see the response of gratitude even in this cartoon.

Hollywood has captured something that is in the hearts of people across the world. A hero story appeals to people. Uncommon courage and sacrifice encourage people. It is a reality written into the fiber of who we are: we all need a hero. We need a savior. There is no hero like Christ! He is THE SAVIOR! When we recognize that, we ought to respond. We see the responses of those depicted in Hollywood productions and we are encouraged. This is because at our very core, we know we need help in life too. As the ultimate hero, each of us should respond to Christ. Like those in movies: gratitude, thankfulness, and similar responses are appropriate for us. Everything can be shaped by our thankfulness.

**To the Book:**

**Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16** – When Paul wrote “rejoice,” he used a similar phrase as *be thankful*. He added a time frame to the command: always. There is no time not covered by “always.” Good times and bad times are included.

**Read V. 17** – Of course, it is impossible for us to be constantly using our mouths in prayer. Paul is referring to an attitude or posture in which we recognize our dependence upon God and are always responding to it.

**Read V. 18** – As he writes “give thanks,” the idea becomes more direct and based upon the earlier wording of *rejoice*, Paul is doubling down on the idea. Gratitude is important. Our attitude in every situation we encounter should be influenced by the hope we have in Christ. All three verses are unified in Paul's further explanation that these are God's will for humanity. Specific situations are not the topic here, but acknowledgement of our need for a Savior and what Christ did (and is doing) for us is a monumental concept that all followers have in common.

**Gratitude Tips:**

- Start and end your day listing 3 things you're thankful for.
- Teach your children to pray grateful prayers before asking for things.
- Reflect on what God has already done instead of what He hasn't yet.
- Replace complaints with thanksgiving—literally say, “God, thank You that...”
- When you're anxious, pause to pray a 1-minute “thank-you” prayer.
- Use worship music as a gratitude tool—sing your thanks aloud.

**Family Night Big Idea:** Because of God's goodness, we should all respond with worship inspired by our thanks!

**Read: Psalm 118:1** – God is good, the people had been reminded of it and were being encouraged to respond.

**Elementary School:** Ask, “What are some good things God has done that make you want to shout, ‘thank you’?”

**Middle/High School:** Ask, “Why does it change our attitude when we think about things we are grateful for?”

**Pray:** “Lord, help us remember all that you have provided to us and focus our attitudes on being thankful. Amen.”

**Velocity (Middle and High School Students)**

**Velocity:** Meets this Wednesday, Aug. 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Gravity:** Today in both services.

**Today's Songs**

*Honey in the Rock*.....Brook Ligertwood

*Trust in God*.....Elevation Worship

*Graves Into Gardens*.....Elevation Worship

**Get the Church App**

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**Kenya Christmas 2025 Donations**

Their needs this year include completing construction on classroom structure, outfitting a lab, training and hiring a full-time pastor, buying several cows, and doing updates and repairs. Go online to give or write “Kenya Christmas” in the remarks line of your check.

**PlusONE**

If you want to grow your faith, you need to take the initiative and add something to your church attendance. We can help you get started with Family Night, Small Group, or Personal Study. Ask a staff member or fill out a Communication Card.