OVERFLOWING WITH GRATITUDE: THE ANATOMY OF A THANKFUL FAITH — WEEK 6 OF 6 (SERIES FINALE)

When the Leftovers Are Gone

Transforming Thanksgiving from an Annual Holiday into a Daily Lifestyle — Slides & Word-for-Word Speaker Notes (14pt)

Preacher / Date: Rev. Lex DeLong • November 29, 2026 (Post-Thanksgiving Sunday)

Scripture Text: Colossians 3:12–17; 4:2 (Companion Reading: Psalm 118:1–9, 28–29)

Main Idea: Gratitude outlasts the Thanksgiving season when believers allow the peace of Christ to rule their hearts, the Word of Christ to dwell richly within them, and the name of Christ to govern every word and deed.

Short Summary: Gratitude outlasts Thanksgiving Day and becomes a daily lifestyle when we let Christ's peace rule our hearts.

SLIDE 1 OF 25 — TITLE SLIDE



SPEAKER NOTES — INTRODUCTION

Open your Bibles with me this morning to **Colossians chapter 3**, beginning in **verse 12**.

Can we stop for a second and take an honest mental inventory of your refrigerator this morning? Three days ago, it was packed to the door seals—turkey, stuffing, gravy, sweet potatoes, and three kinds of pie fighting for shelf space. By today, most of those containers are empty, washed, and stacked back in the cabinet. And if you stepped into a store or scrolled through your phone on Friday morning, you noticed how abruptly the calendar moved on. Before the pumpkin pie plates even dried, the harvest banners vanished, the shopping deals screamed for our attention, and Thanksgiving quietly slipped into the rearview mirror for another twelve months.

That abrupt cultural shift exposes the exact question we must face as we bring our six-week series, *Overflowing with Gratitude*, to a close:

SLIDE 2 OF 25 — OPENING QUESTION

POST-THANKSGIVING QUESTION

"What happens to our thankfulness when the leftovers are gone?"

SPEAKER NOTES

> *What happens to our thankfulness when the leftovers are gone?*

Look back for a moment at the full anatomy of a thankful faith that Scripture has traced for us over these past five Sundays:

- In **Week 1** (*"The Root of Gratitude"* — Colossians 2:6–7), we began right here in Paul's letter to Colossae and discovered that gratitude is rooted in being rescued and established in Jesus Christ.
- In **Week 2** (*"The Amnesia of Abundance"* — Deuteronomy 8:7–18), Moses warned us how full barns and easy seasons breed forgetful hearts whenever we imagine our own strength built our lives.
- In **Week 3** (*"Thanksgiving on the Frontlines"* — 2 Chronicles 20:14–22), King Jehoshaphat showed us how faith sends praise ahead of the battle before the victory ever appears on the horizon.
- In **Week 4** (*"The Ten-Percent Return"* — Luke 17:11–19), Dr. Luke challenged us with what happens after God answers our cry for mercy—turning back like the one healed Samaritan to worship at Jesus' feet.

- Last Sunday in **Week 5** (*"From Your Hand We Give to You"* — 1 Chronicles 29:10–19), King David showed us how recognizing God's total ownership frees our white-knuckled grip into open-handed, joyful stewardship.

Now, on this Post-Thanksgiving Sunday, we connect back to **Colossians**—the letter with the highest concentration of thanksgiving anywhere in the New Testament[1]—to learn how gratitude survives December, January, and every ordinary weekday in between.

History actually hands us a striking picture of this from the very Pilgrims we remember every November. Everyone knows the postcard image of autumn 1621 in Plymouth: after burying roughly half of the 102 *Mayflower* passengers during their first brutal winter, roughly fifty survivors gathered their first corn harvest and celebrated for three days with venison, fowl, and relief.[2]

Few people remember what happened the moment those leftovers were gone. Just weeks after that 1621 harvest feast, in November 1621, a small English vessel named the *Fortune* sailed into Plymouth Harbor carrying thirty-five new colonists—and almost no food or provisions to feed them.[3] Governor William Bradford wrote in *Of Plymouth Plantation* that the colony had to drop immediately onto half rations to survive the winter.[4] For the better part of two lean years, Plymouth scraped by on meager allowances, shellfish, and groundnuts.[5] Then, in the spring and early summer of 1623, a relentless multi-week drought scorched their fields until the young cornstalks began to wither and die.[6]

Imagine the temptation to bitterness, panic, and finger-pointing inside a hungry settlement! Yet Bradford marveled that through nearly two years of scarcity, that faithful core of believers bore their hardship with quiet patience and cheerfulness of spirit, holding faithfully to their church covenant and peace with one another.[7] When the 1623 drought threatened starvation, they did not fracture in anger; they set apart a solemn day of humility and prayer before God.[8] Before evening fell, clouds rolled across a clear sky and brought gentle, soaking rain that revived both their parched corn and their weary hearts—prompting them to call a formal public day of thanksgiving, because, as Edward Winslow wrote, it would be great ingratitude to keep hidden in private what God had graciously answered in public prayer.[9]

The 1621 harvest meal lasted three days. What sustained Plymouth when the table went bare was not holiday sentiment—it was a daily, covenant life ruled by the peace of Christ, nourished by Scripture, lived out in steady faithfulness, and guarded by persistent prayer.

More than fifteen hundred years before Plymouth, sitting chained to a Roman guard around AD 60 to 62, the Apostle Paul wrote to a young church in Colossae facing its own threat to joy and gratitude.[10] False teachers were peddling a spiritual upgrade—extra rules, harsh self-denial, and religious calendars—whispering that Jesus alone wasn't quite enough (Col. 2:8, 16–23). Paul's answer throughout the letter is crystal clear: in Jesus Christ, all the fullness of God dwells bodily, and in Him you have already been made complete (2:9–10).

SLIDE 3 OF 25 — INTRO BLOCKQUOTE (COLOSSIANS 2:9–10)

COLOSSIANS 2:9–10

"Because Christ is enough, thanksgiving is not a seasonal decoration we unpack in November; it is the daily heartbeat of a believer!"

SPEAKER NOTES

> *Because Christ is enough, thanksgiving is not a seasonal decoration we unpack in November; it is the daily heartbeat of a believer!*

Before Paul gives us four urgent, practical commands in **Colossians 3:15–17 and 4:2**, he deliberately lays a gospel foundation in **verses 12 through 14**. Let's read **Colossians 3:12–15** first so we can hear the exact sequence Paul intended.

> **Colossians 3:12–15** — "12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful."

Pause right there over **verses 12 through 14** before we step into the commands. Notice why Paul refuses to start with a to-do list! If a preacher simply walks up to the pulpit on the Sunday after Thanksgiving and says, "Try harder to stay thankful this week!", we would all run out of willpower before Wednesday morning.

Paul starts by reminding us **who we already are** and **what Christ has already done**: we are *chosen by God*, *set apart as holy*, and *deeply beloved* (v. 12).[11] You are not clawing your way up a ladder hoping God might notice you; you stand securely loved in Christ! Because you have been loved like that, Paul uses the picture of getting dressed every morning: put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience (v. 12). Put up with one another's rough edges, and when someone gives you a genuine reason to complain, forgive them—and notice the motive right at the end of verse 13: *just as the Lord has graciously forgiven you!* Wrap that whole wardrobe together with love, which binds the church into mature harmony (v. 14).

Paul rooted every command that follows in **grace that we have already received!** We do not manufacture daily gratitude out of thin air; we live it out as forgiven, beloved people dressed in the character of Jesus. And right out of that gospel wardrobe rises this following core truth:

SLIDE 4 OF 25 — CORE TRUTH (SHORT PULPIT SUMMARY)

CORE TRUTH • COLOSSIANS 3:12–17

> **“Gratitude outlasts Thanksgiving Day and becomes a daily lifestyle when we let Christ’s peace rule our hearts.”**

SPEAKER NOTES

> *Gratitude outlasts Thanksgiving Day and becomes a daily lifestyle when we let Christ’s peace rule our hearts.*

To live that out long after the holiday decorations come down, Paul places **four direct commands** in our hands across **Colossians 3:15–17 and Colossians 4:2**:

SLIDE 5 OF 25 — ROADMAP: FOUR COMMANDS FOR DAILY GRATITUDE

COLOSSIANS 3:15–17; 4:2

Four Commands for Daily Gratitude

01	02	03	04
Let Christ’s Peace Rule Our Hearts 3:15; Psalm 118:5–9	**Ensure Christ’s Word Inhabits Our Lives** Colossians 3:16	**Honor Christ’s Name in Every Moment** 3:17; Psalm 118:28–29	**Guard Your Gratitude Through Watchful Prayer** 4:2; Psalm 118:1, 29

SPEAKER NOTES

1. **Let Christ's Peace Rule Our Hearts** (3:15; Psalm 118:5–9)
2. **Ensure Christ's Word Inhabits Our Lives** (3:16)
3. **Honor Christ's Name in Every Moment** (3:17; Psalm 118:28–29)
4. **Guard Your Gratitude Through Watchful Prayer** (4:2; Psalm 118:1, 29)

Look first at **Colossians 3:15**, where Paul calls us to…

SLIDE 6 OF 25 — MAIN POINT I



SPEAKER NOTES

I. Let Christ's Peace Rule Our Hearts (Colossians 3:15; Psalm 118:5–9)

It takes about forty-eight hours after Thanksgiving for real-world pressure to test our peace. Maybe a tense comment around the family table still stings. Maybe work emails are already piling up for Monday morning, medical news has unsettled your home, or the December budget is looking tight. Right into that real pressure, Paul speaks his first command: *let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

Look closely at the two halves of verse 15. First…

SLIDE 7 OF 25 — SUBPOINT I.A

I. LET CHRIST'S PEACE RULE OUR HEARTS

A. Follow Christ's Peace Through Obedience, Not Passing Feelings

Colossians 3:15a–b • Colossians 1:20 • Psalm 118:5–9

- **Cross-Bought Peace:** Reconciled through Christ's blood.
- **Decisive Authority:** Obey Christ's call in one body.
- **Refuge Under Pressure:** Steadied in God during distress.

SPEAKER NOTES

A. Follow Christ's Peace Through Obedience, Not Passing Feelings (3:15a–b; Ps. 118:5–9)

That short English word **"rule"** in verse 15 translates a vivid athletic term (βραβευέτω) that appears only here in the entire New Testament: **to act as an umpire or referee.**[12] Picture an umpire standing behind home plate or a referee on the court. Players argue, tempers flare, and everyone thinks they saw the play differently—until the umpire steps in, blows the whistle, and makes the binding call. Once the call is made, you don't debate whether you *feel* like honoring it; you obey the call!

Now hear an important clarification, because this verse is often misunderstood. Many well-meaning Christians read "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" as though Paul is handing us an emotional compass for private decisions—"If I feel calm about buying that car or switching jobs, God must be saying yes." Look at the verses right around verse 15, and you see Paul means something far deeper and more concrete! Verse 13 just addressed **real relational friction**—putting up with irritating people and forgiving legitimate complaints. And verse 15 immediately anchors Christ's peace in community: "to which indeed you were called **in one body**."

Paul isn't telling you to wait for a warm, tranquil mood before you act like a Christian! He is commanding us to **follow Christ's peace through active obedience!**[13] When resentment starts replaying an old hurt in your mind, Christ's peace blows the whistle and says, "Out! You were forgiven at the Cross—release that grudge!" When anxiety starts rehearsing worst-case scenarios for December, or pride tempts you to win an argument at the expense of unity in your marriage or this church, Christ's peace steps onto the field and makes the decisive call. We follow His peace by **obeying His reconciling lordship**—not by chasing whatever calm mood happens to drift across our emotions!
That is why our companion psalm, **Psalm 118**, speaks with such gritty realism! Listen as I read **Psalm 118:5–9**.

> **Psalm 118:5–9** — "5 From my distress I called upon the Lord; The Lord answered me and set me in a large place. 6 The Lord is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me? 7 The Lord is for me among those who help me; Therefore I will look with satisfaction on those who hate me. 8 It is better to take refuge in the Lord Than to trust in man. 9 It is better to take refuge in the Lord Than to trust in princes."

Notice where the psalmist's peace was forged! Not in an easy armchair, but "from my distress"—literally, from a tight, cramped corner where the walls felt like they were closing in (v. 5).[14] He cried out to the Lord, and God answered and brought him out into wide-open space! Because "the Lord is for me," fear lost its grip (v. 6). He learned that taking refuge in the faithful Lord steadies the soul far more than trusting human promises or earthly leaders (vv. 8–9). When Christ's cross-bought peace (Col. 1:20) stands as umpire over your heart, circumstances don't get the final word—He does!
And look immediately at the second command Paul attaches right to the end of verse 15:

SLIDE 8 OF 25 — SUBPOINT I.B

I. LET CHRIST'S PEACE RULE OUR HEARTS • COLOSSIANS 3:15C

B. Practice Gratitude as an Ongoing Identity, Not a Seasonal Mood

Seasonal Mood	Ongoing Identity
Driven by Entitlement Fades fast when comfort disappears.	**Rooted in Grace** Chosen, holy, beloved, forgiven people.

SPEAKER NOTES

B. Practice Gratitude as an Ongoing Identity, Not a Seasonal Mood (3:15c)

Three tiny words close verse 15: "and be thankful." Not merely "say thank you when everything goes smoothly," but **continually show yourselves to be thankful people!**[15]

Have you ever wondered why Paul bolted "be thankful" directly onto "let the peace of Christ rule"? Think about what kills peace inside a home or a church faster than almost anything else: **an ungrateful, entitled, or unforgiving heart!** When we quietly assume God owes us comfort, our spouse owes us perfection, and our church owes us our preferences, every inconvenience feels like a personal insult—and peace evaporates!

Conversely, when gratitude becomes your settled identity—when you wake up remembering that you are chosen, holy, beloved, and forgiven—entitlement loses its oxygen. You cannot nurse a bitter grudge and overflow with genuine thanksgiving at the exact same moment. Obeying Christ's peace makes room for gratitude, and practicing daily gratitude guards Christ's peace!

SLIDE 9 OF 25 — POINT I CLOSING BLOCKQUOTE

COLOSSIANS 3:15

“An ungrateful heart turns every inconvenience into a grievance; a heart ruled by Christ’s peace turns every mercy into worship.”

SPEAKER NOTES

> *An ungrateful heart turns every inconvenience into a grievance; a heart ruled by Christ’s peace turns every mercy into worship.*

Yet if Christ’s peace is going to keep calling the shots in our hearts long after November ends, what feeds that peace when the noise of the world grows loud? Look at Paul’s second command in **verse 16**…

SLIDE 10 OF 25 — MAIN POINT II

COLOSSIANS 3:16

II. Ensure Christ’s Word Inhabits Our Lives

SPEAKER NOTES

II. Ensure Christ’s Word Inhabits Our Lives (Colossians 3:16)

Look at **Colossians 3:16** with me.

> **Colossians 3:16** — "16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

If verse 15 addresses the **peace** that rules our hearts, verse 16 addresses the **Word** that reshapes our minds and fills our fellowship. Notice how Paul structures this command in two rich movements. First…

SLIDE 11 OF 25 — SUBPOINT II.A

II. ENSURE CHRIST'S WORD INHABITS OUR LIVES

A. Give Scripture Permanent Residence, Not a Holiday Visit

Colossians 3:16a

- **Weekend Guest:** Leaves the house unchanged.
- **Permanent Resident:** Shapes every room daily.
- **Rich Indwelling:** Fuels gratitude across the church.

SPEAKER NOTES

A. Give Scripture Permanent Residence, Not a Holiday Visit (3:16a)

Look at that vivid verb Paul chooses right at the start of verse 16: "Let the word of Christ **dwell** (ἐνοικείτω) in you richly." That Greek word literally means **to move in, take up residence, and make a home.**[16]

Think about the difference between a **Thanksgiving weekend guest** and a **permanent resident** in your house. A weekend guest drops a suitcase in the spare bedroom, stays polite in the living room, never touches the thermostat, never rearranges the kitchen cabinets, and drives out of the driveway by Sunday afternoon—leaving your home basically unchanged. A **permanent resident**, on the other hand, unpacks every box, hangs pictures on the walls, sits at the table every morning, and shapes the entire atmosphere of the house!

Now ask yourself honestly:

SLIDE 12 OF 25 — HEART CHECK QUESTION (BLOCKQUOTE)

HEART CHECK • COLOSSIANS 3:16

“Is the Word of Christ a holiday guest in your life, or a permanent resident?”

SPEAKER NOTES

> *Is the Word of Christ a holiday guest in your life, or a permanent resident?*

Too many believers treat Scripture like their Thanksgiving gravy boat—pulled off the high shelf for special occasions, dusted off for a Sunday morning service, and tucked right back in the cupboard until next week. Paul says, “No! Ensure the gospel message about Christ—His cross, His resurrection, His authoritative Word—moves in **richly!**” Let it spill over into your calendar, your budget, your media habits, your parenting, and the way you talk to your spouse when you are exhausted on a Wednesday night.

When the Word of Christ lives richly inside us, gratitude never runs dry—because Scripture constantly reminds forgetful hearts who God is, what Christ has accomplished, and how faithfully He keeps every promise!

And watch what happens when the Word of Christ truly takes up residence—because in verse 16, “in you” is **plural** (in y’all [as my sister-in-law would say], across the whole congregation).[17] Look at the second half of verse 16:

SLIDE 13 OF 25 — SUBPOINT II.B

II. ENSURE CHRIST'S WORD INHABITS OUR LIVES • COLOSSIANS 3:16B–C

B. Pour That Word Into Wise Counsel and Grateful Song

Channel 1	Channel 2
Word-Filled Counsel Teaching truth for mutual strength.	**Grateful Song** Singing sincerely straight to God.

SPEAKER NOTES

B. Pour That Word Into Wise Counsel and Grateful Song (3:16b–c)

Look at the two channels through which a Word-filled church overflows:

First, the channel of Word-filled counsel with one another: "with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another." Remember, the false teachers in Colossae bragged about their secret "appearance of wisdom" (2:23). Paul replies that genuine, Spirit-given wisdom lives right inside the ordinary fellowship of believers opening God's Word together![18] Notice both sides of that ministry:

- **Teaching** builds up—sharing biblical truth so brothers and sisters grow strong in Christ;
- **Admonishing** lovingly warns—putting an arm around a drifting friend and gently steering them back when bitterness, apathy, or compromise starts pulling them off course.

Notice Paul didn't say, "Watch the pastor teach while everyone else stays silent." Every believer sitting in these seats has a calling to speak Christ's truth into one another's lives!

Second, the channel of Word-filled, grateful song: singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs Don't get tangled trying to draw rigid modern genre lines between psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; Paul is calling for the full richness of Spirit-led, truth-saturated worship—from the Old Testament Psalter, to Christ-exalting hymns, to fresh songs of praise.

with thankfulness in your hearts to God.[19]

And catch two details that transform Sunday morning singing—and weekday worship in your car or kitchen:

- First, singing in church travels in **two directions at once**: horizontally, we actually *teach and encourage one another* as we hear brothers and sisters beside us confessing God's faithfulness; and vertically, we sing directly *to God!*
- Second, singing "in your hearts" does not mean keeping your mouth closed! It means refusing to mumble hollow lyrics on autopilot while your mind is already planning lunch. It means letting the truth of Christ's grace move down into your chest until gratitude rises straight from the core of who you are!

SLIDE 14 OF 25 — POINT II CLOSING BLOCKQUOTE

COLOSSIANS 3:16

> **"When Christ's Word moves in as a permanent resident, it turns isolated believers into a wise, singing, thankful family."**

SPEAKER NOTES

> *When Christ's Word moves in as a permanent resident, it turns isolated believers into a wise, singing, thankful family.*

Now watch how Paul takes this daily gratitude straight out the sanctuary doors and plants it squarely in the middle of Monday morning in **verse 17**…

SLIDE 15 OF 25 — MAIN POINT III

COLOSSIANS 3:17 & PSALM 118:28–29

III. Honor Christ's Name in Every Moment

SPEAKER NOTES

III. Honor Christ's Name in Every Moment (Colossians 3:17; Psalm 118:28–29)

Look once more with me at **Colossians 3:17**.

> **Colossians 3:17** — "17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

If you want one single verse in the entire Bible to frame above your workbench, tape beside your computer monitor, or hang inside your front door as you leave for work tomorrow morning, **Colossians 3:17** is it. Notice two transformative truths packed into this single sentence.

First…

SLIDE 16 OF 25 — SUBPOINT III.A

III. HONOR CHRIST'S NAME IN EVERY MOMENT

A. Erase the Line Between Sunday Worship and Monday Work

Colossians 3:17a • cf. 3:18–4:1

- **Every Sphere:** Home, family, and daily work.
- **His Reputation:** Acting as Christ's accredited ambassador.
- **His Character:** Matching Jesus in every room.

SPEAKER NOTES

A. Erase the Line Between Sunday Worship and Monday Work (3:17a; cf. 3:18–4:1)

Listen to the sweeping, airtight scope of Paul's opening words: "Whatever you do, in word or deed, do **all** in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Not *some* things. Not just the "spiritual" hour between 10:30 and 11:30 on Sunday morning. **Whatever you say—and whatever you do!** And if you ever wonder whether Paul really meant ordinary, messy, everyday life, just glance down at the very next verse (**Colossians 3:18–4:1**)! Immediately after verse 17, Paul walks straight into the kitchen, the living room, and the workplace—addressing wives and husbands, children and fathers, bondservants and masters—which carries straight into our workplaces today!

We are masters at drawing an invisible chalk line down the middle of our week: on one side sits the "sacred" box—church services, Bible reading, prayer meetings, Thanksgiving grace; on the other side sits the "secular" box—paying bills, folding laundry, answering frustrating customers, sitting in traffic, or shoveling the driveway. Paul walks up with a wet sponge and wipes that chalk line clean off the floor!

SLIDE 17 OF 25 — POINT III.A BLOCKQUOTE

COLOSSIANS 3:17

“For a follower of Jesus, there are no off-duty hours where Christ steps out of the room.”

SPEAKER NOTES

> *For a follower of Jesus, there are no off-duty hours where Christ steps out of the room.*

And notice carefully what it means to do everything **“in the name of the Lord Jesus.”** In Scripture, a person’s *name* stands for their character, authority, reputation, and ownership.[20] Acting in the name of the Lord Jesus is **not** slapping a religious catchphrase onto selfish behavior, like sticking a Christian bumper sticker on a car while cutting people off in traffic! Acting in His name means moving through every room as **Christ’s accredited ambassador**—asking before you speak a word, send an email, handle a complaint, or finish a task: “Does this match the character of Jesus? Does this honor His reputation? Can I lay this cleanly at His feet?”

And look at the motive that turns even the most ordinary Monday chore into sacred ground in the second half of verse 17:

SLIDE 18 OF 25 — SUBPOINT III.B

III. HONOR CHRIST'S NAME IN EVERY MOMENT • COLOSSIANS 3:17B; PSALM 118:28–29

B. Offer Every Word and Deed as Thanksgiving Through Christ

Every Word	Every Deed	Through Christ
Speech seasoned by grace.	Daily tasks made sacred.	Our risen Chief Cornerstone.

SPEAKER NOTES

B. Offer Every Word and Deed as Thanksgiving Through Christ (3:17b; Ps. 118:28–29)

Look at how Paul finishes the sentence: "giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

Do you see how that elevates everyday life? Driving kids to practice, caring for an aging parent, showing integrity on a job site when nobody is watching, writing an encouraging note—none of it is wasted drudgery when offered "giving thanks through Him to God the Father!" Every honest word and faithful deed becomes a living thank-you note handed to our Heavenly Father **through Jesus Christ**, our great High Priest and Mediator![21]

That brings us straight back to the soaring climax of our companion psalm, **Psalm 118**. Remember, Psalm 118 was the final hymn of the Passover Hallel—almost certainly on the lips of Jesus and His disciples in the Upper Room the very night He walked out to Gethsemane and the Cross (Matt. 26:30).[22] Right before the closing verses, Psalm 118 celebrates "the stone which the builders rejected" becoming "the chief cornerstone" (v. 22)—the very prophecy Jesus and the apostles applied directly to His death and resurrection (Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:11)!

Now listen to how that personal, Christ-centered gratitude erupts in **Psalm 118:28–29**.

> **Psalm 118:28–29** — "28 You are my God, and I give thanks to You; You are my God, I extol You. 29 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting."

Did you hear that sudden shift in verse 28? Early in the psalm, the whole congregation sang together; here at the finish, it becomes deeply, unmistakably personal: "You are **my** God, and I give thanks to You; **my** God, I extol You!" Because the rejected Cornerstone became our risen Savior, every word we speak and every task we touch becomes our personal offering of thanks to our Father through Him!

SLIDE 19 OF 25 — POINT III CLOSING BLOCKQUOTE

COLOSSIANS 3:17 • PSALM 118:28–29

"There is no such thing as an 'ordinary' Monday when every word and task is offered in Jesus' name as a thank-you to the Father."

SPEAKER NOTES

> *There is no such thing as an "ordinary" Monday when every word and task is offered in Jesus' name as a thank-you to the Father.*

Yet there is one more question we must face honestly before we close this six-week series. We can walk out of church today completely convinced that Christ's peace should rule our hearts, His Word should inhabit our homes, and His name should govern our days—and still watch our gratitude quietly cool off by mid-December! Why? Because good intentions drift!

That is why we turn one page over to **Colossians 4:2** for Paul's fourth and final command…

SLIDE 20 OF 25 — MAIN POINT IV

COLOSSIANS 4:2 & PSALM 118:1, 29

IV. Guard Your Gratitude Through Watchful Prayer

SPEAKER NOTES

IV. Guard Your Gratitude Through Watchful Prayer (Colossians 4:2; Psalm 118:1, 29)

Look one last time at **Colossians 4:2** with me.

> **Colossians 4:2** — "2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;"

Right after applying Christ's lordship to marriage, parenting, and work in 3:18–4:1, Paul hands the church the **sustaining engine** that keeps daily thanksgiving alive when the weeks turn long and hard. Notice two vital disciplines in this single verse. First…

SLIDE 21 OF 25 — SUBPOINT IV.A

IV. GUARD YOUR GRATITUDE THROUGH WATCHFUL PRAYER

A. Refuse to Let Spiritual Drowsiness Cool a Thankful Heart

Colossians 4:2a–b • Mark 14:38

- **Steadfast Devotion:** Hold fast without quitting.
- **Alert Eyes:** Guard against creeping cynicism.
- **Awake Hearts:** Spot God's daily mercies.

SPEAKER NOTES

A. Refuse to Let Spiritual Drowsiness Cool a Thankful Heart (4:2a–b)

Look at the two muscular action words Paul pairs together: "Devote yourselves to prayer"—literally, **hold fast, persist steadfastly, refuse to quit**[23] —"keeping alert in it." That second picture—**keeping alert, staying wide awake on watch**—is the very same word Jesus spoke to Peter, James, and John in the Garden of Gethsemane when their heavy eyelids kept drooping on the night of His arrest (Mark 14:38).[24]

Think about how quietly **spiritual drowsiness** steals our gratitude. Most believers don't wake up one morning and announce, "Today I'm going to become a cynical, ungrateful Christian!" No—we simply get busy, skip time in prayer, drift onto spiritual autopilot, and fall half-asleep at our post. And the moment a believer grows drowsy in prayer, grumbling, impatience, and anxiety slip right past the gate!

Staying awake in prayer means keeping your eyes wide open to **both** sides of reality: staying alert to the subtle temptations trying to sour your attitude, *and* staying wide awake to spot the hundred quiet mercies God drops into your path every single day!

And look at the closing words of **Colossians 4:2**—the exact same two-word Greek phrase Paul used back in 2:7—and feel the six-week circle snap shut:

SLIDE 22 OF 25 — SUBPOINT IV.B

IV. GUARD YOUR GRATITUDE THROUGH WATCHFUL PRAYER • COLOSSIANS 4:2C; PSALM 118:1, 29

B. Anchor Persistent Prayer in God's Unending Covenant Love

Week 1 Bookend	Week 6 Bookend
Colossians 2:7 Overflowing with gratitude.	**Colossians 4:2** Watchful prayer with thanksgiving.

SPEAKER NOTES

B. Anchor Persistent Prayer in God's Unending Covenant Love (4:2c; Ps. 118:1, 29)

"…with an attitude of **thanksgiving!**"

If you were with us back in **Week 1** in **Colossians 2:7**, you just heard the exact bookend of our entire series! In 2:7, Paul called a rooted walk of faith one that is "overflowing **with thanksgiving**." Now in 4:2, he closes the practical instruction of the letter with the very same phrase: "keeping alert in prayer **with thanksgiving!**"

Why does prayer need thanksgiving? Because prayer without thanksgiving quickly shrinks into a frantic emergency wishlist—we only talk to God when something breaks, and we forget Him the minute the crisis clears! Prayer saturated *with thanksgiving* remembers who God has already proven Himself to be while asking Him for fresh grace today!

And where does prayer find an inexhaustible supply of thanksgiving—even in lean winters, hospital waiting rooms, or hard seasons when the leftovers are long gone? Look one last time at the twin bookends of **Psalm 118**, **verses 1 and 29**:

> **Psalm 118:1, 29** — "1 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting… 29 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting."

Five times across Psalm 118 (vv. 1–4, 29), the choir rings out that unshakeable refrain: **“For His steadfast covenant love endures forever!”** That treasured Hebrew word for lovingkindness (*ḥesed*) is not a fragile mood that rises and falls with our circumstances; it is God’s sworn, unbreakable covenant loyalty—proven supremely at the Cross of Jesus Christ and sealed by His empty tomb! [25]

Turkey leftovers spoil in four days. Holiday excitement fades in a week. Earthly circumstances shift like November wind.

SLIDE 23 OF 25 — POINT IV CLOSING BLOCKQUOTE

PSALM 118:1, 29

“God’s steadfast covenant love has no expiration date!”

SPEAKER NOTES

> *God’s steadfast covenant love has no expiration date!*

Because His mercy endures forever, watchful prayer never runs out of reasons to give thanks!

Conclusion:

As we close out our six-week journey through *Overflowing with Gratitude* and step into the week ahead—long after the Thanksgiving table has been cleared—carry this simple truth home in your heart:

SLIDE 24 OF 25 — SERIES FINALE SUMMARY BLOCKQUOTE

SERIES FINALE • COLOSSIANS 3:12–17; 4:2

“Gratitude outlasts Thanksgiving Day and becomes a daily lifestyle when we let Christ’s peace rule our hearts, ensure Christ’s Word inhabits our lives, honor Christ’s name in every moment, and guard our gratitude through watchful prayer.”

SPEAKER NOTES

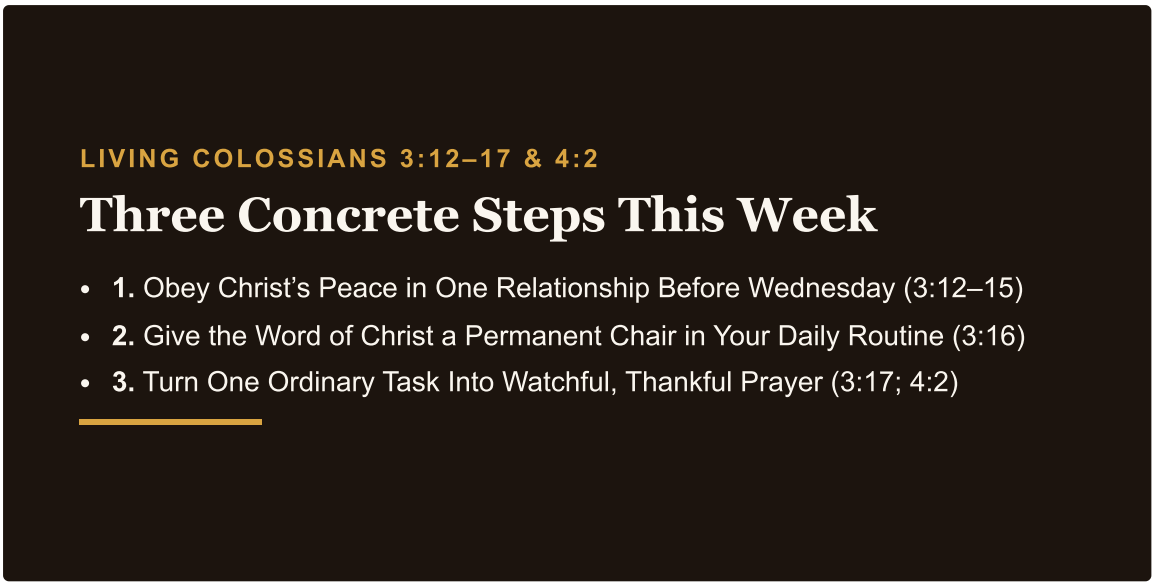
> *Gratitude outlasts Thanksgiving Day and becomes a daily lifestyle when we let Christ’s peace rule our hearts, ensure Christ’s Word inhabits our lives, honor Christ’s name in every moment, and guard our gratitude through watchful prayer.*

Remember all four daily anchors Paul gives us as forgiven, beloved people dressed in Christ’s grace (Col. 3:12–14):

- **Let Christ’s Peace Rule Our Hearts**—obeying His call in our relationships and embracing gratitude as our settled identity (3:15; Ps. 118:5–9).
- **Ensure Christ’s Word Inhabits Our Lives**—giving Scripture permanent residence that overflows in wise counsel and grateful song (3:16).
- **Honor Christ’s Name in Every Moment**—erasing the line between Sunday and Monday so every word and deed ascends as thanksgiving through Christ (3:17; Ps. 118:28–29).
- **And Guard Your Gratitude Through Watchful Prayer**—refusing spiritual drowsiness and anchoring persistent prayer in God’s unending covenant love (4:2; Ps. 118:1, 29).

Let’s make sure this doesn’t stay in our notebooks today.

SLIDE 25 OF 25 — THREE CONCRETE STEPS THIS WEEK



SPEAKER NOTES

Put **Colossians 3:12–17 and 4:2** into practice in three concrete steps this week:

1. **Obey Christ's Peace in One Relationship Before Wednesday (3:12–15):** Identify one strained relationship, lingering irritation, or unspoken grudge where your feelings want to keep score. Remembering how freely the Lord forgave you, obey the peace of Christ this week—choose a gentle answer, extend forgiveness, or make the reconciling phone call.
2. **Give the Word of Christ a Permanent Chair in Your Daily Routine (3:16):** Don't pack Scripture away until next Sunday. Open even one short chapter—start with **Psalm 118** or **Colossians 3**—before your phone grabs your mind each morning, and share one encouraging truth or verse aloud with someone in your home or church family before the week ends.
3. **Turn One Ordinary Task Into Watchful, Thankful Prayer (3:17; 4:2):** Pick one routine moment tomorrow—your morning commute, washing dishes, opening your laptop, or locking up the shop—and dedicate it deliberately "in the name of the Lord Jesus." Pause for thirty seconds of wide-awake, thankful prayer, thanking your Father specifically for His steadfast love that outlasts every holiday and endures forever!

Footnotes

1. On the extraordinary concentration of thanksgiving terminology (εὐχαριστέω, εὐχαριστία, εὐχάριστος, and χάρις as “thankfulness”) across Colossians (1:3, 12; 2:7; 3:15, 16, 17; 4:2), see Peter T. O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 44 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1982), xxxiv–xxxv, 206–13; and Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 284–86.

2. William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation, 1620–1647*, ed. Samuel Eliot Morison (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), bk. 2, chs. 11–12 (annals for 1620–1621); Edward Winslow, *Mourt’s Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth* (1622; repr., Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1963), 82.

3. Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, bk. 2, ch. 12 (annal for November 1621), recording the arrival of the *Fortune* with thirty-five additional settlers lacking adequate provisions.

4. Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, bk. 2, ch. 12, noting the colony’s immediate move to “half allowance” to stretch their grain through the winter of 1621–1622.

5. Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, bk. 2, chs. 13–14 (annals for 1622–1623), detailing the colony’s lean subsistence on half rations, shellfish, and groundnuts across nearly two years.

6. Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, bk. 2, ch. 14 (annal for 1623); Edward Winslow, *Good Newes from New England* (London, 1624; repr., Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1996), 54–56.

7. Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, bk. 2, ch. 14, commending the settlers’ patience and cheerfulness of spirit during those two lean years of scarcity.

8. Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, bk. 2, ch. 14, recording the July 1623 day of humiliation and prayer followed by “sweet and gentle showers” that revived the withered corn.

9. Winslow, *Good Newes from New England*, 55–56, explaining the colony’s subsequent public day of thanksgiving so they would not smother in private what God had granted in answer to public prayer.

10. On the Roman imprisonment provenance (ca. AD 60–62), Epaphras’s founding ministry, and the syncretistic Colossian “philosophy” (Col. 2:8, 16–23), see F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 17–32; and Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 36–60.

11. On the literary unity of Col. 3:12–17 and the gospel indicative (“chosen, holy, and beloved”; “as the Lord forgave you,” ἐχαρίσατο) grounding the imperatives of 3:15–17, see David W. Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 237–49; and Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 275–84.

12. On βραβεύω (*brabeuō*, a NT hapax legomenon in Col. 3:15; cf. καταβραβεύω in Col. 2:18) deriving from athletic umpiring/arbitration and carrying the sense “decide, arbitrate, rule,” see Walter Bauer, Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich (BDAG), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 181; and Murray J. Harris, *Colossians & Philemon*, Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament, 2nd ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010), 147–48. On the superior manuscript reading τοῦ Χριστοῦ (P^{46}, Sinaiticus*, A, B, C*, D*), see Barbara Aland et al., eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece* (NA28), 28th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012), ad loc.

13. On the corporate, relational orientation of “the peace of Christ” in Col. 3:15 (ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι, directly following relational forbearance and forgiveness in 3:12–14) rather than subjective private guidance, see Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 283–85; O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 204–6; and Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 244–46.

14. On מִן־הַמֵּצַר (*min-hammēṣar*, “out of the tight place / straits”) contrasted with בַּמֶּרְחָב (*bammerḥāb*, “into a broad/spacious place”) in Ps. 118:5, and refuge (חָסָה) vs. human trust (בָּטַח) in vv. 8–9, see Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73–150*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 413–14; and Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms: Volume 3 (90–150)*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2016), 460–64.

15. On εὐχάριστος (a NT hapax legomenon) paired with the present imperative γίνεσθε (“continually show yourselves to be thankful”) as settled character rather than isolated speech, see Harris, *Colossians & Philemon*, 148; and Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 721–22.

16. On ἐνοικέω (*enoikeō*, “inhabit, live in as home”) with πλουσίως (“richly, abundantly”) in Col. 3:16, see BDAG, 338; O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 206–8; and Bruce, *Colossians*, 157–58.

17. On the plural ἐν ὑμῖν encompassing both inward personal appropriation and corporate life “among you,” see Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 286–88; and Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 247–49.

18. On ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ (“in all wisdom,” echoing Col. 1:28 and countering the false teachers’ “appearance of wisdom” in 2:23) modifying the reciprocal ministry of teaching (διδάσκοντες) and admonishing (νουθετοῦντες), see O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 208–9; and Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 288–89.

19. On the overlapping semantic range of ψαλμοῖς, ὕμνοις, ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς in first-century Jewish-Christian worship, the dual horizontal/vertical movement of congregational singing, and ἐν [τῇ] χάριτι (“with thankfulness / in grace”) sung sincerely ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, see Bruce, *Colossians*, 158–60; O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 209–11; and Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 289–92.

20. On the biblical theology of “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου Ἰησοῦ) denoting representation, allegiance, character, and lordship across all speech and conduct (ἐν λόγῳ ἢ ἐν ἔργῳ)—immediately illustrated in the household code of 3:18–4:1—see Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 250–52; and Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 292–94.

21. On Christ’s exclusive mediatorial role in Christian thanksgiving (εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ δι’ αὐτοῦ), see O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 212–13; and Harris, *Colossians & Philemon*, 153–54.

22. On Psalm 118 as the climactic hymn of the Egyptian Hallel (Pss. 113–118) sung at Passover (cf. Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26) and the Messianic cornerstone link in v. 22 leading to personal confession in v. 28, see Kidner, *Psalms 73–150*, 411–16; and Ross, *Commentary on the Psalms: Volume 3*, 454–59, 471–75.

23. On προσκαρτερέω (*proskartereō*, “persist obstinately in, hold fast to, devote oneself steadfastly”) in Col. 4:2 (cf. Acts 1:14; 2:42; Rom. 12:12), see BDAG, 881; and Harris, *Colossians & Philemon*, 170–71.

24. On γρηγορέω (*grēgoreō*, “keep watch, stay awake”) echoing Jesus’ Gethsemane exhortation (Mark 14:38; Matt. 26:41) and linking prayer directly to ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ (forming a series bookend with Col. 2:7), see Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 319–22; and O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 236–39.

25. On the framing inclusio of Psalm 118:1 and 29 (הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ) and the covenant theology of חֶסֶד (*ḥesed*, “steadfast loyal love”), see Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS), 5th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997), ad loc.; and Ross, *Commentary on the Psalms: Volume 3*, 459–60, 474–75.

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