

Title: **"Give Thanks in All Circumstances" (Part 2)**
Text: **1 Thessalonians 5:18**
Date: **November 27, 2022**

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Big Idea

The grace that we've been given in Jesus should make us the most grateful people on the planet and yet, if we're honest, often we're not. Why? What is it that gets in the way? And how can we get it right?

Jammer #1: Amnesia

One of the things that can really gut our gratitude is what I'm calling Amnesia. And what I mean is we forget how good God has been to us to this point. We tend to get so caught up in the present moment—whether we're wrestling with rogue Christmas lights or struggling with something much more significant—whatever it is, it feels like it's the only thing that matters. We notice the squeaky wheel in our lives and it gets all our attention. And we set aside all the answered prayers and ways God has been there for us prior to this. "Who cares about yesterday, I'm hurting today." And we want to grumble to God about it. "Where are you? Why aren't you fixing this?"

Jammer #2: Myopia

Myopia is just a fancy word that means nearsightedness. This jammer is similar to the first, but it's the other side of the coin. If amnesia means I get so caught up in present struggle that I forget God's grace to me in the past, myopia means I get so caught up in the present struggle that I forget God's grace coming to me in the future. I forget the larger story I'm a part of. I forget the fact that God is always at work and able to take whatever I'm dealing with now and turn it for good in the end. I get so caught up with the hardship I forget his purpose and promise. So I'm tempted to forego gratitude and grumble, because I don't see how anything good could come out of this, and I just wish it would stop.

Jammer #3: Idolatry

When we struggle to put our hope fully on Jesus and his return, it means we're putting that hope, at least partially, somewhere else. Idolatry is ultimately just looking for some aspect of creation, of this world, to do for us what only God the Creator can. And the bottom line is this: when we attach our God-sized hope to that which is not God, we set ourselves up for letdown and discontentment and grumbling. Because it won't be able to deliver anything remotely commensurate with our expectations. When you're satisfied in Christ, you can be satisfied with everything; but when you're not satisfied in Christ, you will be satisfied with nothing.

Jammer #4: Comparison

Nothing kills your joy and gratitude quite like comparing yourself to another. However things measure out for you, it's always a deadly game. Either you come out feeling better than the other person—in which case you get smug and self-righteous. You're not grateful to God for his grace. You think you're awesome. Or you come out feeling worse—in which case you envy the person, maybe secretly despise the person, and then you start to grumble against God: "Why are blessing them and not me? What did I do to deserve this?"

Jammer #5: Busyness

We get so caught up in what we have to do that we miss fellowship with Jesus in his Word and in prayer. We cut ourselves off from the very means of grace that have been given to stoke our joy and gratitude. If you're not in the Word and you're not in prayer, you should not be surprised when you are also not grateful.



Reflection Questions

- Think back to this past week. Where were you most tempted away from gratitude towards grumbling? What was the issue? What was happening around you? What was happening inside you? Where was the signal getting "jammed" up? How can you reconnect and get it right?
- Historically, which of the five jammers above do you think you struggle with most? Why? Give some examples. Try to identify one practical step you can take to push back against it and move towards gratitude.

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Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with him. This value presses our church *upwards* in love for God.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for Neighbor | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal relationship with his people. This value presses our one another.

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his church *outwards* in love for the unbelieving.

Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Ladies Christmas Tea!

Start the holidays with a Christmas Tea on Saturday, December 3rd. It will be a little different this year—please bring your own Christmas mug with you for a choice of hot tea, cocoa or cider, and sign up to bring a plate of treats like Christmas cookies, tea sandwiches, or scones. Kathy Wilson will be our hostess from 1:30-3:30pm at 6181 Blossom Ave. in San Jose. If you're unable to come for the whole two hours, we'll be happy to have you with us for the time that you're available. If you're new to the church we'd especially like to meet you!

Please scan the QR code below and register by November 30th with what you'd like to bring so we can know how many to expect. We hope to see you there!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

All Church Appreciation Lunch - NEXT SUNDAY!

Mercy Hill has so many wonderful volunteers who keep all the various dimensions of our ministry thriving and fruitful. And we want to appreciate them! So after the service next Sunday, December 4th, we are planning to have a special all church lunch (think BBQ - with inside seating) as a way of saying thanks. The whole church is invited to stay after and participate as we look to particularly appreciate those who have served in various capacities throughout this last year. We hope you can join us!

Please scan the QR code below and find the link to RSVP. This will help us know how much food to prepare!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

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