

# GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING - 8

## Contagious Christianity

"Always be joyful. Pray continually, and give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus."  
- 1 Thessalonians 5:18

If you are a sour, basically grumpy, critical person--you're as much outside God's will as if you were sexually immoral.

Either the glass is half empty, or the glass is half full. It's really only a matter of perspective. But having the right perspective or attitude is critical to the quality of life we experience. Paul closes his first letter to the Thessalonians by talking about attitudes and some of the gifts we can choose to give regardless our circumstances--gifts that keep on giving.

### Welcome

Do you tend to be a "the glass is half-empty" or a "the glass is half-full" type of person? Explain

### Worship

Ask the group to share what they're thankful for this week, and spend the remainder of your time in thanksgiving to God. "Give Thanks" (68), "Thank You, Lord" (781), "Lord, We Praise You" (56), "I Will Bless Thee, O Lord" (172).

### Word

#### Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

1. What reasons are given for esteeming those in leadership positions within the church family (vss 12-13)? Practically speaking, what are some ways we can give our leaders the gift of respect--encouraging them so that their work is a joy, and not a burden" (Heb. 13:17)?
2. The instructions in verses 14-15 are not directed solely to leaders, but are the responsibilities of every member. What does this imply about the kind of relationships we should have in the body? When it comes to confronting others, are you more likely to struggle with being overly harsh or overly sentimental? How do you find balance?
3. Share some things that help you extend kindness to those who've wronged you (vs 15, Romans 12:21).
4. What does it mean to be joyful "always," pray "continually," and give thanks "in all circumstances" (vss 16-18)? How are these actions related to each other?
5. With which of these four gifts do you need to be more generous--showing respect, practicing patience, extending kindness, expressing gratitude? Explain.

### Works

Encouragement is one of the hallmarks of the community of faith. Encouragement is something we do that spiritually nurtures another Christian. It is not flattery, but rather something that enables others to walk closer to Christ. Who do you need to get alongside this week?