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T H E

S E A S O N

O F

T H A N K S

BEING GRATEFUL EVERYDAY

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Give thanks to the Lord , for he is
good; his love endures forever.

Psalms 107:1

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Season of Gratitude

T H E ———
S E A S O N
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Being Glad in the Bad

T H E ———

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I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:3-6

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Paul is writing a letter of thanks and joy despite being held in a Roman prison for his faith.

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On his second journey to bring the gospel to the Gentile world, the apostle Paul helped start a church in the city of Philippi (see Acts 16:11-40), a colony of retired Roman soldiers. The Philippians became Paul's friends and supporters for the rest of his life.

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When they heard that he was in Rome as a prisoner, they collected money to assist him and sent it with one of their members, a man named Epaphroditus. Later Paul sent him back with a letter to thank the Philippians for their friendship and support.

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Paul knew the Philippians were experiencing a lot of opposition, so he appeals to his own life as an example of how to respond to hardship with joy.

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Being Glad in the Bad

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The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Acts 16:22-24

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About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.

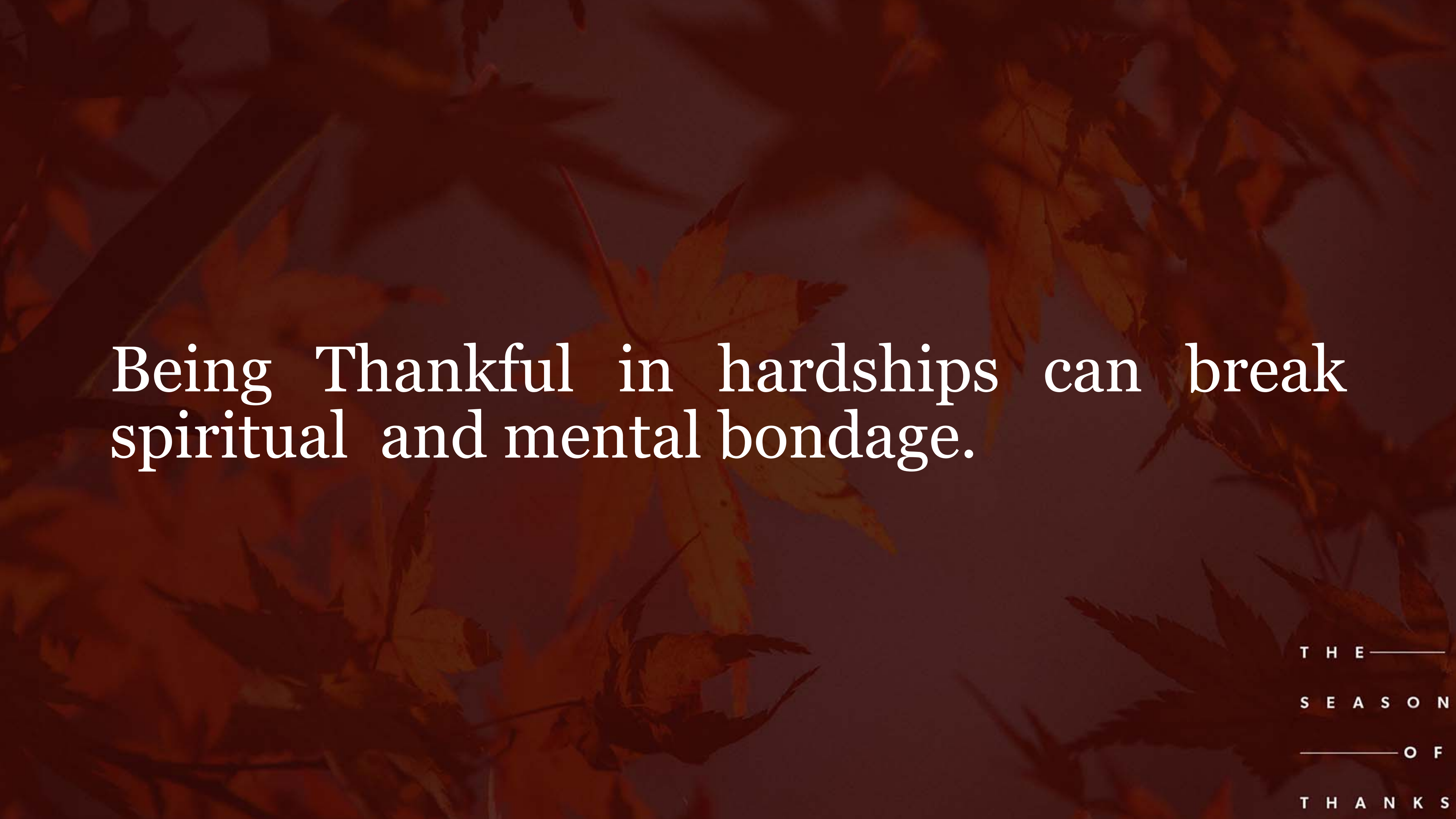
Acts 16:25-26

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The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

Acts 16:29-31

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Being Thankful in hardships can break
spiritual and mental bondage.

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Dan's Story



I was in my early 20s when I was moved to share my faith and work in humanitarian aid in Afghanistan. On a two-week trip to Iran, I was detained at the border and imprisoned for espionage – potentially for the rest of my life. Miraculously, nine harrowing weeks later I was released and since then I've spoken about my experience of faith, courage and challenge at churches, Youth With A Mission (YWAM) bases and university settings in over 100 countries.

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Dan's Story



In 2016, I was on a hike with my nephew and a friend in Kauai, Hawaii. I have no memory of what happened – in fact there's a four-week gap in my memory – but I must have stumbled as I fell about 60 feet, about 20 meters, down a rocky cliff. I split my skull, damaged my cerebellum and blood gushed everywhere. As my nephew desperately held my head together, my friend ran six kilometers as fast as he could to find help.

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Moravians Extreme Missions

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When they were told that they would not be allowed to do such a thing, Dober and Nitschmann sold themselves to a slave owner and boarded a ship bound for the West Indies. As the ship pulled away from the docks, it is said that they called out to their loved ones on shore, "May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of His suffering!"

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Consider it pure joy, my brothers
and sisters, whenever you face trials
of many kinds, because you know
that the testing of your faith
produces perseverance.

James 1:2-3

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James, brother of Jesus had witnessed true heartbreak and hardships. He implores us though to have a healthy perspective on hardship, and to respond with joy.

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Joni lived a very active life all throughout growing up. She enjoyed riding horses, hiking, tennis, and swimming. On July 30, 1967, at age 17, Joni dove into the Chesapeake Bay after misjudging the shallowness of the water. She had a fracture between the fourth and fifth cervical vertebrae and became a quadriplegic (or tetraplegic), paralyzed from the shoulders down.

Joni Eareckson Tada

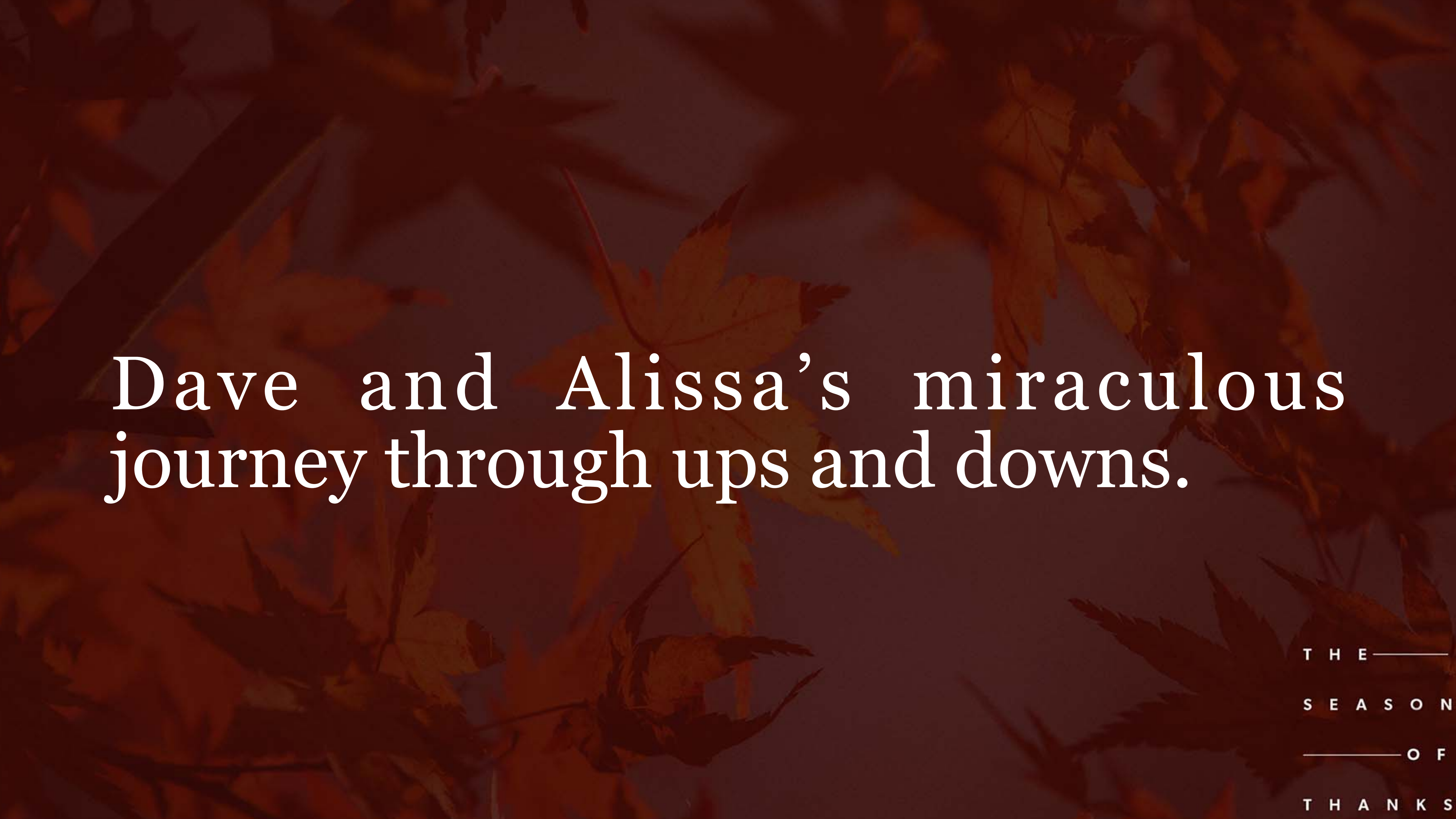


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During her two years of rehabilitation, according to her autobiography *Joni*, Joni experienced anger, depression, suicidal thoughts, and religious doubts. However, during occupational therapy, she learned to paint with a brush between her teeth and began selling her artwork. She also writes this way, although for most writing tasks she relies on voice recognition software. To date, she has written over 40 books, recorded several musical albums, and starred in an autobiographical movie of her life, and is an advocate for people with disabilities.



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Dave and Alissa's miraculous
journey through ups and downs.

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In most of these examples, the subject wasn't celebrating the fact they were going through hardships.

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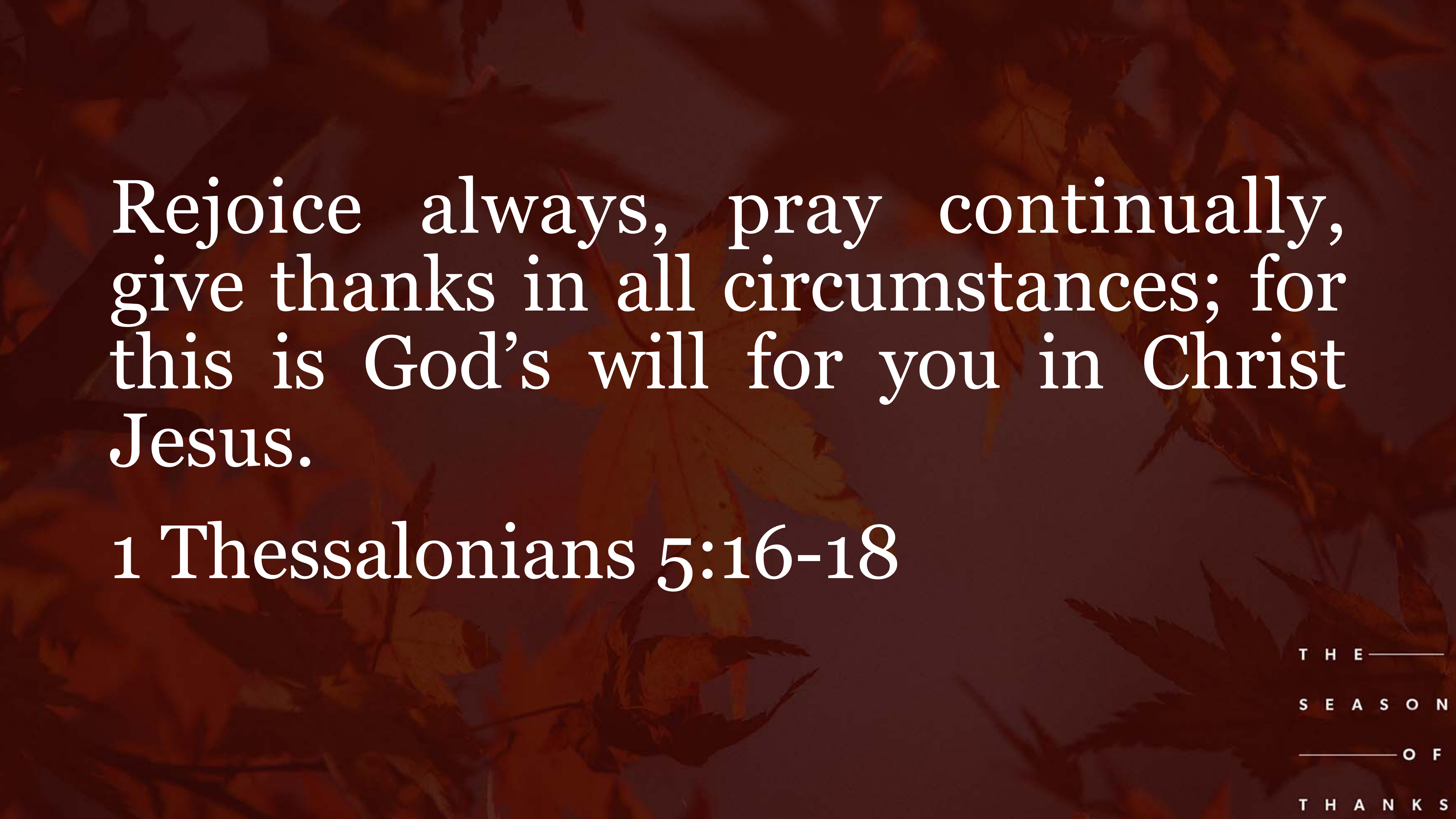
However they held true to being thankful for the source of all gratefulness — God. Their response then is gratefulness in all circumstances, and that is the true game changer.

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Rejoice always, pray continually,
give thanks in all circumstances; for
this is God's will for you in Christ
Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

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Paul was able to connect to a group of people through shared hardships.

Joni was able to connect to a group of people she may never have previously connected to otherwise.

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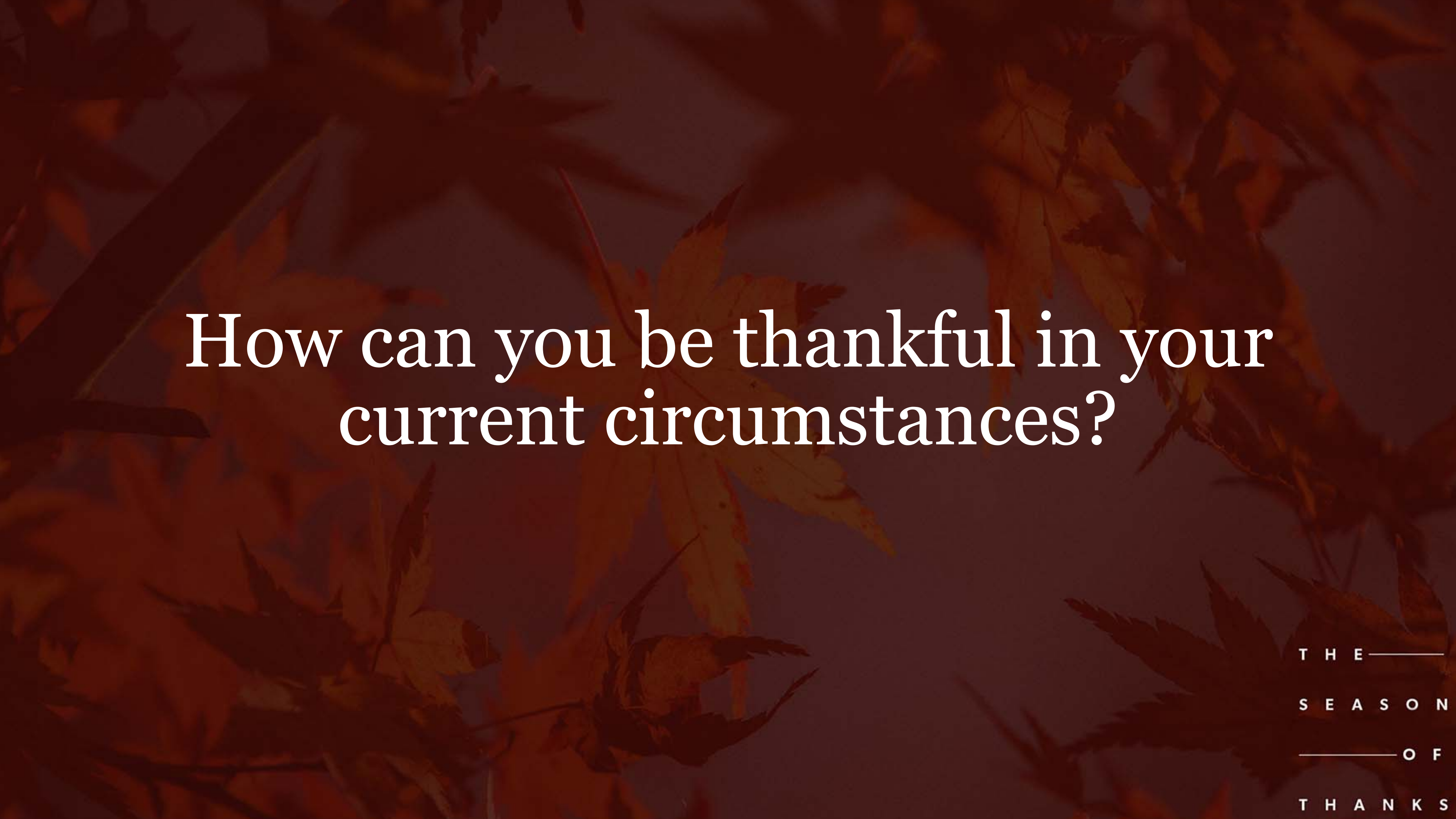
Not everything happens for a reason,
but God can and does work all things
together for my good (Romans 8:28)

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How can you be thankful in your
current circumstances?

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