

## GRUMBLING AND COMPLAINING

- How many of you have young children or know of some? (...)
- Have you noticed that young children will come right to the point if they need something or don't like something? (...)
- How many of you like it when someone else comes right to the point? (...)
- Today, we are going to look at a great prophet in the Bible who came right to the point to a people that needed some encouragement.

-Paul was writing to the Thessalonica church, trying to encourage them. To give a little background to this letter, let me tell you how this church started. Paul traveled to Thessalonica to preach the gospel. A small group of manual laborers responded positively to his message and a church was formed. 3 short months later, Paul had to leave them and head south to Corinth to continue sharing the Gospel of Christ. Four months after this, he wrote them two letters to build these young believers up in their faith, knowing they were struggling with issues that we all do at times. He was trying to tell them that you are going to have some hard days and you are going to have better days. But if you remember this about God, they'll all be good days.

-So, let's read the very first verse together on our Verse Sheet: (I Thessalonians 5:16 "Rejoice always.")

- Two simple words but is that easier to say than to do sometimes? (...)
- Does anyone remember Psalm 100 that King David wrote? Let's read the first two verses of it on our Verse Sheet together, #2: (Psalm 100:1-2 "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands, Serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing...")

- Why do you think that God put it in the Bible that we need to be joyful? (...)
- How do you feel when you are being joyful? (...)
- What kind of day are you having? (A good day!)
- But when you're complaining, or arguing and thinking about bad things, what kind of day are you going to have? (...)
- I find even for myself I have to turn myself around sometimes because my complaining can infect what's inside of me.

- A little girl told her grandmother one time: "ReeRee, our outter 'tude affects our inner 'tude!"
- Sometimes an outside situation can determine how we feel on the inside if we let it. It can determine how our day is going to be.

-Let's look at another verse in the Bible about this, #3 on our Verse Sheet, also written by Paul: (Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is *true*, whatever is *noble*, whatever is *right*, whatever is *pure*, whatever is *lovely*, whatever is *admirable* – if anything is *excellent* or *praiseworthy* – think about such things.")

**-Paul wrote this while in prison and here he is encouraging the Philippian church to think on good things! What are the 8 things he is telling them and us to think about? (They are italicized in your verse.) (Things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy.)**

**-If Paul can say this while in prison, we might want to listen.**

**-There are so many verses in the Bible about being joyful. God wants us to “think” on the good things and not to “dwell” on the things that bother us, just as Paul did here.**

**-How many of you remember the day when the preacher use to come to your house for a visit? (...)**

**-Did they call and tell you they were coming? (Usually not.)**

**-That’s right, they usually just showed up at the door, to check on you to see how you were doing. This story I am going to share with you is about a lady who was a Pastor’s daughter. She shared that when she was a little girl, she and her family lived in the state of Washington, and they would have to drive a long distance to see the members of her father’s church who lived out in the country. She said that she loved going on house calls with her dad. She loved spending time with her father and riding around in his old Model T Ford.**

**-Her father courageously painted his Model T Ford purple and yellow, much to her mother’s dismay! It coughed and hissed with such noisy enthusiasm that it made the little girl giggle. Her father told her that this Model T Ford’s usefulness was that it warned his parishioners several miles in advance that he was coming. They had plenty of time to hide whatever they were doing. She said that one of her favorite calls was to Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler’s farm. Mrs. Wheeler was the most pleasant and jolly lady she had ever known. She was very heavy and a fabulous cook. Her husband, who was not as tall as she was wide and weighed about 100 pounds less, called her his “Baby Dumpling.” She called him “Mr. Wheeler.” They had been married for more than 50 years but they spoke to each other with the tenderness of newlyweds. The little girl loved being with them. Mrs. Wheeler would always start her conversation with the words “I was thinking whatsoever lovely.” So when we would come and see her she would say: “I was thinking ‘whatsoever lovely’ and up you drove!” She would say “I was thinking ‘whatsoever lovely’ and decided to make a peach cobbler.” Or “I was thinking ‘whatsoever lovely’ when Mr. Wheeler surprised me with a kiss on the cheek.”**

**-She shared that these statements would always inspire wonderful moments of laughter with Mrs. Wheeler and it was impossible for us not to join in. So one afternoon, coming back from the Wheeler’s home, the little girl asked her father why Mrs. Wheeler would say “Whatsoever lovely” about so many things. Her father was very thoughtful and then replied, “Well, Mrs. Wheeler has a habit. One time she told me she could either think sad thoughts or glad thoughts. And she decided she would rather think lovely ones as scripture says.” He continued on that**

it wasn't that Mrs. Wheeler couldn't think of sad thoughts, she just chose to think on the good. Years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler had lost their only child of rheumatic fever at the age of 6. They made a conscientious decision of how they would cope with this loss. They chose glad over sad. And those around them were richer as a result of that choice.

**-We are all capable of increasing our own cheerfulness. Being of cheer is an attitude of mind made possible by God's power in us.**

**-Having Christ in us and the presence of His Holy Spirit enables us to see the good in life even when situations are not so good.**

**-How many of you would get upset if you heard about a robber breaking in to someone's home and taking something valuable from them? (...)**

**-Well, if you think about it, when we start complaining or arguing about anything, that is a robber of joy! It is taking the valuable gift of joy away from us.**

**-We are allowing our circumstances to rob our joy from us. Our joy is so important. Don't let complaining or arguing steal our joy.**

**-There is a verse about this in the Bible, it is #4 on our Verse Sheet. Let's read it together. (Philippians 2:14 "Do everything without grumbling (complaining) or arguing.")**

**-Is this really saying do EVERYTHING without complaining and arguing? (...)**

**-Why can this be important? (...)**

**-Let's read our next verse together on our Sheet, #5: (I Thessalonians 5:17 "Pray continually.")**

**-When you think about that do you wonder how you can pray "continually?" You have to drive a car, grocery shop, work, do laundry, etc. What does it mean to pray continually? (...)**

**-Why can this be important? (...)**

**-God knows us because He made us. He's the one Who knows what our days are like and understands we have these things to do. What this means is to keep God in our thoughts wherever we are at and whatever we are doing.**

**-If you see something beautiful, you thank Him. If somebody you know needs your prayers, pray for them. Whatever it is, you can pray continually, just by keeping God in your thoughts the whole time.**

**-Let's read our next verse together that was written by King David as he is talking to God, #6 on our Verse Sheet: (Psalm 5:3 "In the morning, Lord, You hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before You and wait expectantly.")**

**-What is he saying about God:** (I know that you are going to answer me. Whatever that answer may be, I wait for your answer. It may be different than what we prayed for, but we know that God knows best.)

**-We also know that there are so many types of prayers: Prayers of Praise, Repentance, Acknowledgment (knowing He made us, knowing Who he is, knowing He is going to help you in whatever you may need today), Intercession (interceding on the behalf of others), Supplication (asking for things you may need), and then Equipping (knowing He is going to give us all the tools that we need to do whatever His will is for us.)**

**-So, as you are walking along your day, just acknowledge His presence in your life and whatever you may be doing that day.**

**-Let's read verse #7 on our Verse Sheet (Psalm 50:15 "Call on Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor Me.")**

**-How many of you have heard the word "Mayday?" (...)**

**-Does anyone know what that means? (Help!!!)**

**-That is what the soldiers would cry out over their radios when they were in trouble and needed help.**

**-In this verse God is saying send out a "Mayday" to Me and I will listen and help you and you will Honor Me. When He delivers us from that sinful situation, we honor Him. When we are frustrated or angry and ask God to help us, when we listen to Him and obey and rely on His help, it honors Him.**

**-Let's read our last verse together, #8: (I Thessalonians 5:18 "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.")**

**-We have so much to be thankful for. Each day if we wake up, that should be enough to thank Him for because it means He has a purpose for us today.**

**-When you wake up, the first thing we need to do is tell God what we are thankful for and then continue to thank Him throughout the day.**

**-Let's read #9 on our Verse Sheet together. It tells us of some things we can daily thank Him for:**

**-Be thankful for what God *has done*.**

**-Be thankful for what God *is doing*.**

**-Be thankful for what God *will do*.**

**-Let's think about something for a moment. If someone collected a dollar from you every time you complained, but they gave you a dollar for every time you showed thankfulness or gratitude, would you be rich or poor? (...)**

**-How many want to be rich in this area? (...)**

**-At the bottom of our Verse Sheet I have written something for a reminder for all of us. Let's read it together:**

"In the happy moments, Praise God."

"In the difficult moments, Seek God."

"In the quiet moments, Trust God."

"In Every moment, Thank God!"

**-If we would do this every day, we would have a peaceful day no matter what the reason. So let us stop grumbling and complaining and give praise and thanksgiving to Him everyday!**

## GRUMBLING AND COMPLAINING VERSE SHEET

1. I Thessalonians 5:16 “Rejoice always.”
2. Psalm 100:1-2 “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands, Serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing...”
3. Philippians 4:8 “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is *true*, whatever is *noble*, whatever is *right*, whatever is *pure*, whatever is *lovely*, whatever is *admirable* – if anything is *excellent or praiseworthy* – *think* about such things.”
4. Philippians 2:14 “Do everything without grumbling (complaining) or arguing.”
5. I Thessalonians 5:17 “Pray continually.”
6. Psalm 5:3 “In the morning, Lord, You hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before You and wait expectantly.”
7. Psalm 50:15 “Call on Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor Me.”
8. I Thessalonians 5:18 “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
9. -Be thankful for what God *has done*.  
-Be thankful for what God *is doing*.  
-Be thankful for what God *will do*.

“In the Happy moments, Praise God.”

“In the Difficult moments, Seek God.”

“In the Quiet moments, Trust God.”

“In Every moment, Thank God!”