**ZIP IT!!**

**Complaining, Philippians 2:12-16; 4:10-14**

Sunday, June 12, 2022

**WE Slide 1 EO3 & GIVING UPDATE: GK area almost finished, hired Jason Wells/Pastoral Resident and have a few other projects lines up for summer/fall.** EO3 giving and general giving all on track- thank God and thank you for staying faithful to give as you’ve committed.

**Slide 2 LAST WEEK I started our ZIP IT! series off by stating that OUR WORDS are powerful, Slide 3 Proverbs 18:21- they have the power of life or death.** We can destroy people with what we say or we can build them up. **We can repel people from us/Christ with our words or we can draw them to us/to Christ.** Jesus said in Matthew 15:18–20. **Slide 4 All sin starts in our hearts/minds/what we choose to dwell on- like meat marinating in sauce/spices allows those spices to permeate the meat, so our thoughts will permeate our words/responses for good or for bad.** So, our WORDS are powerful and it’s important, as Christians, that we use them to bring life to people.

**TODAY- Slide 5 Of all the areas where we should ZIP IT! today’s is the most difficult of all because we all do it- COMPLAINING.** FB/news/politics are FILLED with complainers. **I could get every one of you to complain by simply asking you how you like the gas/food prices.** No doubt many of us spent time this morning complaining about something- church, clothes, breakfast, catching stop lights, maybe something in the service today- music, the fact I’m talking about complaining. **Not one of us is exempt from this self-focused, destructive perspective on life and today we’re going to see why God wants Christians to ZIP IT! when it comes to complaining of any kind.**

**Turn in your Bibles to Philippians 2:12, pg. 1175 and let’s hear from the guy, who next to Jesus, had the greatest reason to complain about people and the circumstances he faced- the Apostle Paul. Slide 6**

1. Serving 2-year prison sentence/for the Gospel- Jesus commanded it/now unable to do it. **Where’s Jesus?**
2. Chained to a Roman soldier 24/7, dependent on others for food, clothing, communication with other churches. **Ever feel chained to someone/thing, had to depend on others?**
3. For 2 years he didn’t know if he would live or die, or even when the decision would come down. **Ever have to wait for someone to make a decision that impacts your life? Or just wait for someone at a stop sign?**
4. Epaphroditus, one of his team members, almost died in serving Christ. **Ever have to watch someone you love suffer and not be able to do anything about it?**
5. When free- harassed/beaten almost to death/team members turned their back on him. **Ungrateful people!**

**If anyone had good reason, “permission” to complain, Paul did, but look what God has him write to the Christians in Philippi.** **READ Slide 7-10** Though Paul had every right to complain, humanly speaking, he not only chooses not to complain, he also tells us Christians that God wants us to, “Do ALL things WITHOUT grumbling and disputing.” ALL THINGS! **What does Paul mean by grumbling/disputing? Slide 11**

**GOD**

1. **CHRISTIANS, DON’T EVER COMPLAIN!, Philippians 2:12-16**
2. **What Is Grumbling and Disputing?**
3. “grumbling”- goggusmos; murmur, secret discontentment of the heart, irritation we dwell on, self-focused perspective we marinate our thoughts about life in.
4. “disputing”- dialogismos; the voicing of discontentment, the Greek word implies a questioning mind/arrogant attitude, assumes our perspective is always right.
5. It’s the huff/rolling the eyes, the venting to friends/co-workers/family, the non-specific post on FB that fuels people’s curiosity/concern/complaints about similar situations/people, directly shredding a person/company, we want everyone to know that we’re not happy/been disrespected.
6. **Slide 12** It’s the EXACT opposite of Jesus/who we we’re to follow- a humble servant in vv. 5-8.
7. **REQUEST:** don’t air your personal/work/church complaints on FB, obey Jesus and go to the person/people/company who have frustrated you; you only harm Christ’s reputation, your reputation, and the reputation of the church family you say you love.

**Notice the CONTEXT, it’s sandwiched between the command to “work out your salvation” and teaching on showing the “word of life” the Gospel to this world.** Look again at what he writes right before the command to not complain. **Slide 13-14 The reason we’re not to complain is because it’s contrary to the WORK GOD IS DOING IN US because of salvation.** Let’s break this down.

1. **Complaining Is Contrary to the Work God Is Doing in Us, 2:12-13**
2. “work out”- katerga’zomai; show it, produce the fruit of being saved, being a Christian.
3. Not “work for” your salvation, but work out, show others the salvation you already have.
4. Present Imperative- continually, day in-day, no matter how we feel or what we think.
5. Middle voice- meaning the subject initiates the action and then participates in the results- not “let go and let God”, we’re not passive in this, we’re actively involved in responding properly.
6. Kata- intensifies the “working out”; takes great effort; it’s not easy.
7. Used to described work at silver mines- worked to get every ounce of silver out.
8. Christians work to show how salvation impacts all areas- including COMPLAINING.
9. Not half-heartedly, but fully focused/all out/100%, your whole life- personal/public.

**We live this way with an attitude of “fear and trembling”. Slide 15**

1. Work out with “fear/trembling”- phobos; reverence, respect/promos; quivering; 1st for emphasis.
2. Deep respect and desire to please God knowing the work God is doing in us, v. 13.
3. Also speaks to a distrust of ourselves- we know we can’t trust ourselves to obey in our strength- we struggle in our desire and in our follow through.

**Here’s the incredibly cool part of all of this- Slide 16 God knows we lack the desire and follow through so He does that work in us. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE GET THIS!!!**

1. “God who is at work in you”- God grows your desire and gives you the power to think/life His way.
2. “at work”- energeo; present tense- day in/out; God is always working in you to produce His good pleasure. **What is that? I’ll get to it in a second, but first He works to…**
3. “to will/to work”- God produces the “want to” in us and then empowers us to obey through His Holy Spirit and Word, **Slide 17-18** 1 Thess 2:13
4. Only God’s Word changes our desires/thinking- we become what we focus our thoughts on.
5. We train ourselves to think what we think which causes us to respond how we respond- complainers, depressed, angry- all train to respond as they respond/it’s a heart issue.
6. God knows that the happiness/contentment/meaning in life you desire is only found in a relationship with Christ where you allow Him to change your desires- how you think, and then empower your responses.
7. God wants to give us the truth so He can train us to think the truth/have our minds marinate in His truth, then empower us to live out His truth.

**He does all this for His “good pleasure”. Slide 19 What is God’s “good pleasure”?**

1. “at work for His good pleasure”- eudokia; that which pleases Him. **What pleases Him?**
2. It’s not to make a better version of us- God doesn’t want better versions of us.
3. It’s making us more like Jesus- to think/respond more and more like Jesus.
4. **Slide 20** Look at what Paul says in 1:6 and look at just 4 things that please God.
5. Christian, God’s 100% committed to changing you, you’re fighting Him if you don’t want to.

**Let me see throw an illustration at you to help explain what’s going on here. Slide 21**

1. **ILLUSTRATION:** Ollie driving “bubpa’s todo”. He “works out mowing the lawn”- steering, looking around, but I’m making sure he’s actually mowing right. He couldn’t do any of that without me, but with me he can do all of it well- he just needs to sit with me.

**SUMMING IT UP: Slide 22 We team up with God by sitting with Him/His Word so He can grow our desire to be obedient and then empower us to be obedient**. **So, Christians DON’T EVER COMPLAIN because complaining because it’s** the complete opposite of what God is working in us. **Slide 23 Well, Paul’s not finished, he says DON’T EVER COMPLAIN because It Is Contrary to the Gospel We Share.** Look again at vv. 14-16. **Slide 24-26 I just want to hit this quickly…**

1. **Complaining Is Contrary to the Gospel We Share, vv. 15-16**
2. Not complaining “proves yourself”- trains you, you continue to become more blameless, innocent, children of God above reproach.
3. It goes back to the “good pleasure” that God is working in us as we spend time with Him in His Word and seek His power to be obedient.
4. As we ask Him to help us not complain we become more spiritually mature, look more like Jesus, show ourselves to be the child of God we claim to be.

**That spiritual maturity/looking more like Jesus/child of God is then seen by people in your life who aren’t Christians/who need Jesus.** Paul uses the illustration of being a “light in the world”. **Slide 27**

1. Not complaining makes the “light” we shine in this world brighter and brighter- it makes our testimony brighter and brighter.
2. People will see that we are the Christians we claim to be.
3. The opposite is true- Christians who complain will cause confusion for those in our lives who need Christ.

**Why do we want our light to shine bright? Because we will draw people to us as we are “holding fast the word of life”. Slide 28**

1. Not complaining allows us to put the Gospel out there for people to see.
2. “holding fast”- better translated “holding forth”, putting the gospel out there for people to see.
3. “word of life”- the gospel, spiritual life through faith in Christ.

**Complaining may not seem like a big deal, but to God it is!** It’s not something He produces in you and you’re to be showing others who He is. **It’s completely opposite of the spiritual maturity He is working in us and it directly impacts how effective our witness is for Christ.** People are watching us, they’re listening to us. **We need to ZIP IT! when it comes to complaining and use each opportunity to reflect Christ and our salvation to others. What are our TAKEAWAYS for today? Slide 29**

**YOU TAKEAWAYS**

1. **Do you have a relationship with God through faith in Jesus? That’s where this change has to begin.**

**Slide 30**

1. **Is God convicting you of your need to stop complaining/or any other sin? It starts with you allowing Him to change your desire by sitting with Him and His Word. Get into His Word!**

**Let’s stand and close in prayer**

**PODCAST: When is it OK to complain? Or do I always need to ZIP IT!?** Philippians 2:12-16; 1 Thessalonians 2:13