Daily Devotion #130

Complaining

Philippians 2:14 – *“Do all things without grumbling.”*

It is so easy to complain. In fact, it is easier to complain about something than it is to be happy or see the positive in something. And that pertains to how we view people as well. I don’t know exactly where I heard it, but I have heard that it takes more muscles to make a frown than it does to smile.

Our sinfulness is powerful. It has the ability to take anything and turn in upside down. If you remember the Winnie the Pooh cartoon characters, Eeyore was the donkey who never could see the positive in anything. His famous statement was, “Oh bother”. Meaning, there was no use; there is no point? Basically he was saying that life is terrible and nothing anyone does can make a difference.

Many people live just like that. But the truth is, people who do not live complaining lives don’t want to be around those who do. Mark Twain said, “When we complain, 80% of the people don’t care about our problems, and the other 20% think we deserve them.”. My mother used to say, “Don’t complain; it doesn’t do any good.”. But even though those statement are true, we still complain. And unfortunately, we complain so much that we don’t recognize we are doing it.

That was evidently the case with the Philippian church. God had done so much in them but yet the Apostle Paul found it necessary to instruct them to not grumble or complain. I’m not sure what their complaining was about, but whatever it was, it was not God-honoring.

And that is the point. Complaining says to God, “I don’t like my life” or “I don’t like the way You have made things for me”. You may say that you’re not blaming God when you’re complaining about something. That may be true in your mind, but you must remember that God is a part of and in control of all things and people who come into our lives. There is never a time when God is sitting on the sidelines watching. He orchestrates all things for His children. So to complain is to act against God and His perfect plan for our lives. There is no circumstance that God is not using for our good and His glory. So, when we complain, we are in effect rejecting His sovereign work in our lives.

The better way to live is to obey God in all things and rejoice that we have life at all. It comes down to faith in God and trusting in Him that He is working all things together for good for those who love Him and are the called according to His purposes. (Romans 8:28) And the good news is, we are in control of our attitude about the life He has given us. As much as we can choose to complain, we can choose to be content, no matter our state. (Philippians 4:11)

Beloved, do you listen to what you are thinking about? I mean, do you hear what is going on in your head? Do you recognize what is going on in your heart? Maybe you should get a spiritual stethoscope and listen carefully? Listen to what is in your heart and is coming out. It is possible that you are complaining more than you think.

God wants you and me to be content with all that He has given and done for us in this life. Let’s make it a purposeful thing to listen to what we think about, what is in our hearts, and what comes out of our mouths. That’s the only way we will correct the complaining spirit that we are so easily led to.

Others watch us and listen to us. We would never want to give them a false impression of our great and glorious God. Do what God has given you the privilege of doing today. Live the life that God has given you the privilege of living. Love the people who God puts in your path and gives you the privilege of loving. Do all of this without grumbling or complaining.