CAPITOL® COMMISSION
Gospel Hope & Spiritual Strength for Government Leaders

Why Grumble?

March 5, 2024

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Weekly Bible Study Schedule
Tuesday, March 5, 7:00-7:45 AM
House Hearing Room 3
All Welcome!
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Introduction

On my cell phone is a health application called Vigoroom. Every day I open the application met with questions: "Did you complete a high intensity exercise today? Did you take your vitamins and had an attitude of gratitude? Did you give a handwritten thank you note to someone you appreciate? Did you complain or express negative thoughts today? Reflection on each question is a "gut check" to measure how well I am doing in these and more areas. Health and attitude operate in a symbiotic system.

Cortisol is a hormone serves organs of the human body. Its service is to help regulate stress level in the body. Abundance of cortisol released in one's body can have negative impact on your body. If I consistently answer no to the question on my health application: "Did you complain or express negative thoughts today?" the risk of illnesses elevate. When looking out the windshield of our car complaining changes its view to a negative perspective about life and relationships. It dampens our mood. It clouds our judgment.

The Apostle Paul has justifiable reasons to complain and murmur, from a human perspective. He was rejected, beaten, jailed, maligned by some in the church and outside the faith. Jesus was minimized by His brothers while growing up, rejected by religious leaders and betrayed by a close friend, and hung on a cross for no fault of His own. Not in His worst three-hours on earth did He speak against people, actual He forgave and welcomed a murderer hanging on an adjacent cross who deserved death according to the law of the day. Jesus did not complain, He did declare salvation for all who would believe in Him.

Two foci this morning is from the book of Philippians 2:12-18:

- Work out your salvation
- Do everything without complaining

1. Work Out Your Salvation

2:12 – Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important.

Philippi was the first Jesus community he established in eastern Europe around 51 AD. The Jesus community begin in Lydia's home and met in house churches throughout the city. Paul taught the new community of faith the gospel of Jesus and the purposes of God. The Philippians believers partnered with Paul in teaching and practice. He instructs them to stand firm in opposition in unity of spirit, mind, and purpose; and to defend the faith, which is the Good News. (1:27-28) Persecution, resistance, threat against one intimidates the best of persons. The belief and teaching that Jesus is King resulted in persecution and threats against the church. The Roman government populated Philippi with army veterans who were committed to nationalism – a people group fully devoted to the king and his governing rule.

Paul, the preached the King of the world is Jesus. Paul's intent was not to bring a revolution against the Roman government, rather a revelation of Jesus to the heart and mind of people and culture. Thus ensued persecution against the community of Jesus followers in Philippi. The proclamation of Jesus as Lord was interpreted by the Romans as a threat to the Roman religious system of Emperor worship, specifically, king Caesar's lordship.

To stand resolved, unintimidated in the face of opposition signals that our hope in Jesus as King and Lord transcends all persecution and threats. The perseverance of the Church's faithfulness to Jesus ultimately leads to salvation. We call that place heaven.

2:13 – Work hard [out] to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

In humility he came from heaven to earth in the form of a human, lived in our likeness, and went to the cross as the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of humankind. Christ is our example of obedience by which we live our faith with awareness of our accountability to God for how we live out faith. Paul and the Philippian's shared a common salvation. Followers of Jesus throughout the world share a common salvation. Salvation from sin and death through Jesus is the individual responsibility to all who say yes to the Spirit's call, at the same time, followers of Jesus believe together as they journey together to ultimate salvation.

Be sure Paul is not saying that Philippians work hard for salvation. He is not teaching the way to faith is though spiritual earning. If it were, how hard does someone have to work? How much good is good enough for someone to earn their seat in heaven?

> *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.* Eph. 2:8

Paul is saying, the Philippians should "work out" their salvation. The process of spiritual formation is the Spirit forming us into the image of Jesus, more each day. The "work out" is active, it is a process, with a destination.

> *And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.* Phil 1.6

Participating in God's work in unity of mind and the spirit of love is what will make Paul's heart full of joy.

2. Don't Complain or Argue

2:14 – Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you.

So as you live out your faith do it in unity without murmuring and grumbling. I'm not talking about expressing disappointment, hurt, frustration, "I do not like this, I do not agree with this". Calling out to God for help, understanding, telling Him your concerns is a part of the raw humanity.

Paul draws a parallel to Israel's rebellion against God and Moses when in the wilderness. Murmuring and grumbling come from place of rebellion. It's the attitude of arrogance thinking you know better than God. That is exactly what the community of Israel did one month after crossing the Red Sea and entering into the wilderness. The people began to complain against Moses and Aaron because they were tired and hungry. Their complaints distorted present reality. They started saying they were better off in Egypt where they were slaves. Their grumbling against Moses was a perpetual problem. Moses told them their complaints were against God not him. Exodus 16:7-8; Numbers 17:5, 10) 1 Cor. 10:9-10)

2:15 – Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.

Not only did Paul call out the community of Israel, he called out the pagan's in Philippi. A faithless and rebellious culture who minimize God and elevate gods. In this context, Paul says to live blameless or harmless. The idea is not perfection, we are far from that place. It's back to spiritual progress, working out one's salvation. Each day that we become more like Jesus in

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word and deed, our light becomes brighter in a dark world. To not form more like Christ in a crooked and perverse world disfigures our witness. Children of God should stand out in darkness like stars in midnight. Followers of Jesus are called to be light-givers. Matt 5:14

> "You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

Light-givers how look like? Whats one thing you can do to give light this week? Matt 5:14.

What's one you can stop doing that is dishaping yourwitness?

advance to the day of Christ's return

Is there anything hindering your light?

Generation -perverse – Mark 8:12, 9:19

Shining in light – Dan. 12:3 – Is. 42:6 (resotred Israel)

2:16 – Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ's return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless. Start well and finish well. Come to faith in Jesus at some point in your life, and finish your life in faith. John 6:68

Blameless 1:10, importance of word of life, -- gospel message

Philippians change/God's change

2:17-18 – But I will rejoice even if I lose my life, pouring it out like a liquid offering to God, just like your faithful service is an offering to God. And I want all of you to share that joy. Yes, you should rejoice, and I will share your joy.

Certainly one of the results of working out your salvation is unity.