

Joy
Part 9 - The Joy of Thanksgiving

Philippians 4:4
"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

Read Philippians 2:14-15

We are in a collection of talks on the subject of Joy and this week we are celebrating Thanksgiving. To have an attitude of thanksgiving, you must rid yourself of any complaining or grumbling. Today we will discuss four types of complainers and four thoughts on experiencing the joy of thanksgiving.

Four Types of Complainers

1. The Whiner

The favorite line of the whiner is, "It's not fair." Whiners complain in a self-pitying way and believe that they don't deserve what is happening. David is an example of a whiner in **Psalm 73:13-14**.

2. The Martyr

Martyrs are pros at throwing pity parties. Their favorite line is, "No one appreciates me." Moses is an example of a martyr in **Numbers 11:11-15**.

3. The Cynic

A cynic believes everything is hopeless and their favorite line is, "Nothing will ever change." Solomon went through a season of this in **Ecclesiastes 1:2-4**.

4. The Perfectionist

Nothing is ever right or good enough for a perfectionist. "Is that the best you can do" is the tag-line for these naggers. Solomon must have had a relationship with a perfectionist that he writes about in **Proverbs 27:15**.

Reflect: How can you overcome these attitudes? What kind of "complainer" do you most identify with?

Four Ways to Experience the Joy of Thanksgiving

1. Admit that it's a problem. (Read Proverbs 28:13)

The joy of thanksgiving requires recognizing complaining in yourself first. Do not justify your negative thoughts and attitudes. Admit it and ask forgiveness.

2. Accept responsibility for your own life. (Read Proverbs 19:3)

God has given us the freedom of choice, but we are never free from the consequences of those choices. You can either be an accuser, excuser, or chooser. Choose to accept responsibility.

3. Remember that God is bigger than your problems. (Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

When you complain, you are saying that God is not in control. Making complaints may be viewed as questioning God's wisdom, doubting His care, and forgetting His goodness. Remember that God is bigger than your problems!

4. Develop a heart of appreciation. (Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18)

There is a lot to be thankful for in life. The greatest cure for a complaining attitude is to give thanks.

Reflect: How can you intentionally give thanks? What is one thing you are grateful for right now?

Summary

It is human nature to be negative, and it's a hard habit to break. You will stand out and "shine like a star" (Phil. 2:15) when you get rid of any whining, martyr, cynic, or perfectionist complex and develop a heart of appreciation and thanksgiving. You can truly experience the joy of Thanksgiving by giving thanks!

Prayer

Make time to pray for one another before you dismiss your group.