

THE TAKE AWAY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sunday, December 18, 2022

The Book of Philippians

Message Summary:

[Philippians 2:14-16 NKJV] *14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.*

In this passage of scripture, Paul addresses the way Christians behave and how the way they behave affects their influence in this world. Paul specifically addresses grumbling and complaining. Grumbling refers to internal murmuring, the discontent of the heart. But we know what is circling inside of your heart will eventually come out of your mouth. And that's when we start to complain verbally out loud. Now, there is a time and a place for healthy complaints. Paul is not condemning getting out what you need to vent to get to a healthy place. You need that space to be fully human, and you need counseling and godly friends who are safe. No, Paul is addressing the loop we get stuck in of grumbling and complaining that creates a negative narrative using the power of your tongue. We often turn to people before we turn to the Lord to voice our complaints when what we really need is to voice our concerns to the Lord in the safe place of the Spirit with Him. We have to learn to express fear, doubt, or disappointment in a healthy way that will not damage our witness or our influence. We have to learn to protect the light of Jesus inside of us, which is our witness to the world around us. That means we can't act like everyone else, especially this crooked and perverse generation. When people look at us, the light of our life should look like Jesus. We are made to be different!

Scriptures:

- **[1 Peter 4:8-10 NKJV]** 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." 9 [Be] hospitable to one another without grumbling. 10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.
- **[James 5:9 NKJV]** 9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

Discussion Questions:

1. What did Paul mean when he addressed "grumbling and complaining"?
2. How do we remain "blameless and harmless" in this world?
3. What does it look like to shine as light in the world?

Life Application:

This week, reread our key verses for today, Philippians 2:14-16. This passage of scripture addresses how we deal with our complaints. Ask yourself this: If you were to ask the people around you, are you known to be a vocal complainer? Do you spend more time talking about what is negative than what is positive? If there is any truth to those questions, you must address this area of your life. You are polluting the atmosphere of your own life and affecting your witness as a light in the world. It's okay if you need to vent, but do it in a safe place with the Lord first. You will probably find in most cases that you won't need to share it with anyone else. You are a representative of Jesus! Protect the shine of the light of Jesus in your life!