

A lady was picking through the frozen turkeys at the grocery store but couldn't find one big enough for her family. She asked the stock boy, 'Do these turkeys get any bigger?' The stock boy answered, 'No ma'am, they're dead.'

Show church promo for Christmas series video.

Philippians 2:14–15 (NIV) - ¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky

I'm not going to spend a lot of time today we have a meal preparing for our potluck. I was actually here before 6 this morning getting the turkey on the smoker and it is cooking now, can you smell it?

How many knows that it can be extremely difficult to be thankful when it seems like all Hell is crashing in around you?

I was reading a challenge from someone this week, I can't remember who it was but the article was something like things waiting to be preached. So today the message is from that challenge.

I'm going to give you some things to help you from being thankful. I know we all need help with that because we always do what Paul instructed us to right? Paul tells us. . .

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV) - 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (NIV):
Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Let me read this from the passion translation:

16 Let joy be your continual feast. 17 Make your life a prayer. 18 And in the midst of everything be always giving thanks, for this is God's perfect plan for you in Christ Jesus.

We started by reading Philippians 2:14–15 (NIV) - ¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky

I think Paul wrote this to a people that just hadn't mastered complaining yet. If Paul could hear how well, we have perfected complaining surely, he would change his opinion.

So, here's a few things to make you a better complainer.

If your taking notes you may want to write these down. And that's the first one:

Keep a journal, take good notes, write things down.

Make sure that you record all those things that bother you, the pet peeves you have. It's so much easier to keep track if you document them. I think you need to write down three or four things a day that just ticked you off. They can even be the smallest of issues, but we want to remember them for years to come. If you write them down, you can always go back and re-hash them all over again. How fun is that? Heck it might be worth going back to it everyday and find out the people that were real jerks that day.

Proverbs 26:20 (NIV) - ²⁰ Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down.

I love that Scripture which brings me to point number two:

Make sure you spend time practicing being frustrated and irritable, especially the things you can't control.

The stronger you label the things the better you can cultivate that grumbling, irritable spirit.

An adjective is a word that describes a noun, so use adjectives that really set you apart. Words like:

- Horrible
- Bad
- Atrocious
- Irritating
- Stupid

And when you place those words describing those people wow what impact they have.

The third point is crucial find ways to make yourself distracted. I know that is so difficult with everything we have in our lives. So, make sure that you make a conscience effort to be distracted.

I think when people are always thankful its mainly because they lack the ability to remember all the bad things that have happened in the past or else find a way not to worry about what has yet to happen.

If you want to be a real good complainer, you need to learn to look in that journal and remember those bad things and also find a way to make sure you worry about the future that you may not be able to change.

Why sit with the family and have good communication and food, when you can play on your phone, or iPad. It would be better to watch the TV by yourself then to enjoy all that.

If you give yourself too much time to focus on all that is good happening around you, you miss out on all those potential threats somewhere over the rainbow, or worse yet the bad things that you've already experienced, remember your journal?

And now for probably the most important on the list. Focus on your prayer time.

Really focus, prayer is a wonderful tool. . .for getting what you want. Stop spending all that time in worship and praising God for his attributes. He already knows what he does well. How good He is. You need to focus on those things you don't have that you so desperately want.

Since we are talking about this another would be stop reading His read, he already knows what He said He wrote it down, remember your journal? For Pete's sake spend that time reading the comics, or some love story.

And lastly, stop focusing about your health. I heard it said die young make a pretty corpse. Heck if your saved you get to see Jesus sooner.

Do you realize that the healthier people are, the more likely they are to be grateful and have a more positive outlook? And the positive people are. . .well they just seem to make more healthy decisions.

Have you ever noticed those really happy people? Always in a good mood, always smiling, always creaking jokes, always uggh happy? Don't you just want to slap them sometimes?

So, may I suggest you get as little sleep as possible because a lack of sleep can help create your anxiety and anxiety well that is like steroids for complainers.

Oh, and exercise that is poison. Exercise releases endorphins. And nobody needs these happy little chemicals floating around in their body, that will stop us from seeing the worst in people, remember those adjectives, and seeing the world as the huge cesspool that it is.

Now listen church I know these was a little tongue and cheek on Thanksgiving and trust me we need to do just the opposite of what was mentioned. We need to learn to be more thankful in all things. Yes, I said in all things.

Let me read our opening Scripture in Philippians from the passion translation also:

14 Live a cheerful life, without complaining or division among yourselves. 15 For then you will be seen as innocent, faultless, and pure children of God, even though you live in the midst of a brutal and perverse culture. For you will appear among them as shining lights in the universe,

And the next verse is the key:

16 offering them the words of eternal life.

Look what the Scripture tells us about being thankful:

Habakkuk 3:17-18 - 17 Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, 18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

In other words when it seems like nothing is going in my favor, when it looks like my year of plenty has ended, when all my animals have left I will still be thankful.

For many of us our thankfulness is determined by our circumstances.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 tells us. . .

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Rejoice when? When all is well. . .no. When everybody likes me. . .no. When I feel like it. . .no. Always

Psalm 106:1 tells us, 1 Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Ephesians 5:20 - 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Chronicles 16:34 (NIV) - ³⁴ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Colossians 4:2 (NIV) - ² Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

Philippians 4:6 (NIV) - ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Psalm 100:4 (NIV) - ⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

And then the next verse tells us why...

Psalm 100:5—Psalm 101 (NIV): 5 For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Colossians 3:16—17 (NIV) - ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all

wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Show video Spoken Word - Thanksgiving

So, let's close this service by going to two or three sitting by you and tell them what you are thankful for. And then tell them what you are thankful for them for.

Then we can go eat, but may I suggest that you don't gobble till you wobble?