

J.J.

## UNTHANKSGIVING Philippians 2:14-15

*Philippians 2: 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:  
15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;*

*Pray*

### **INTRODUCTION :**

One day, Billy received news that his grandmother died. He was very sad and was crying but he also learned that he inherited \$200,000 from her.

The following week, Billy's aunt passed away. He was very sad and cried but he learned that he inherited \$50,000 from her.

The following week after his aunt died, Billy's uncle died. He was very sad and cried but learned that he inherited \$100,000 from his uncle.

The next week, Billy's cousin from London died. He was very sad and cried but learned that he inherited \$75,000 from his cousin.

The following week after, Billy's friend visited him at his house on a Saturday evening and he saw Billy very sad and was crying. He asked, "Why are you crying Billy?" Billy said to his friend, "It's because this week, nobody died."

**Sometimes we get used to regularly getting something and if we don't get it, we get mad or sad thinking that we're entitled to it.**

### **Look at the statistics :**

- If you have food in your fridge, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of the world.
- If you have money in the bank, your wallet, and some spare change you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.
- If you woke up this morning with more health than illness you are more blessed than the million people who will not survive this week.
- If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the agony of imprisonment or torture, or the horrible pangs of starvation you are more blessed than 500 million people alive and suffering.

- If you can read this message you are more fortunate than 3 billion people in the world who cannot read it at all.

**People have forgotten what Canadian thanksgiving is all about.** They think it's about the pumpkins, the turkey and the fall colors. What is Canadian thanksgiving?

**On January 31, 1957, the Governor General of Canada Vincent Massey issued a proclamation** stating: "A Day of General Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the bountiful harvest with which Canada has been blessed – to be observed on the 2nd Monday in October.

**For years, we already know what giving thanks mean but in order to appreciate it more, we need to find out what UNTHANKSGIVING LOOKS LIKE.**

**Why is it important to know the opposite? You know it's getting chillier every morning and you wake up at 6:30 a.m. and it's still dark.** You can only appreciate the sunshine when there is darkness. You can only appreciate warm sunny weathers when there are cold dark days.

**Illustration :** Do you ever wonder why when you buy a diamond ring or necklace, the inside of the box is black or violet? It's because you will appreciate more the glitter of the gem.

**There is a connection between happiness and gratitude.**

**Quote :** You'll never meet a happy ungrateful person, or an unhappy grateful person because gratitude and happiness go together. Sometimes, happiness precedes gratitude but often gratitude precedes happiness. – **Zig Ziglar**

**The Bible says**

*1 Thessalonians 5:18 Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

**So in order to check our hearts if we're are UNTHANKFUL, we will study, SYMPTOMS, SIDE EFFECTS, SOLUTION**

## **I. THE SYMPTOMS**

*Philippians 2: 14 Do ALL things without murmuring and disputings*

Murmurings and Disputings is the exact opposite of being thankful. *(thanks in all vs. do all things without)*... so it's either we're doing one or the other.

**Etymology :**

**1. grumbling**, complaining "goggysmos"- a secret displeasure "**murmuring**" The word comes from like the cooing of doves...anything said in a low tone. Our common term today is whining.

**2. Disputing**, arguing "dialogismos" inward reasoning. It's used in the New Testament 14x and the context is "evil thoughts or imaginations". It's questionings, criticising.

**This is the kind the malicious kind of thinking.** Thinking of evil thoughts against others and that's the reason they complain. This is the reason they dispute, they argue always or if not, they murmur.

### **COMPLAINING IS THE OPPOSITE OF THANKSGIVING.**

**Earlier, we mentioned that there is a connection between happiness and gratitude.**

**Complaining leads to people becoming unhappy.**

**Quote :** All happy people are grateful. Ungrateful people cannot be happy. We tend to think that being unhappy leads people to complain, but it's truer to say that complaining leads to people becoming unhappy - Dennis Prager

### **Illustration :**

**No other generation before us have experienced so much depression than this generation.**

I believe it is caused by an infectious disease going around the world right now.

**Epidemic** is a widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time.

**Pandemic** is an epidemic of infectious disease that has spread through human populations across a large region; for instance multiple continents, or even worldwide.

**Now this disease is not an epidemic. It's now pandemic.**

**There is an infectious disease in the whole world right now and it's called "complaintinitis".**

### **What are some the SYMPTOMS of complaintinitis?**

1. Uncontrollable rolling of eyeballs
2. Sudden stomping of one leg
3. Heavy breathing – one at a time
4. Changed tone of voice depending on the circumstance : it goes low when talking with other people or it goes high to make sure everyone hears them

### **By the way, the rolling of the eyeballs is the result of tunnel vision :**

Tunnel vision – loss of peripheral vision, with retention of central vision.

But this is not the physiological tunnel vision...it's the psychological tunnel vision.

When it comes to complaintinitis – tunnel vision sees only the negative when all around it is positive.

### **Example :**

Looks at a grandiose, beautiful glass building but sees only a broken window at the right corner in the 21<sup>st</sup> floor

## II. SIDE EFFECTS

### Psychological Side Effects

- **It rewires your brain to negativity.**

Research shows by Stanford University shows that complainers damage their hippocampus – an area of the brain that’s critical to problem solving and intelligent thought. Remember, that hippocampus is one of the primary brain areas destroyed by Alzheimers.

### Physical Side Effects

- **It releases the stress hormone cortisol.**

The hormone is used for survival mode where your body is directed into a fight or flight mode. But too much of it, raises your blood pressure and blood sugar. It also impairs your immune system making you more susceptible to high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease, and vulnerable to strokes.

**(Show photo) The world’s oldest person :** was an American supercentenarian who was thought to be the oldest verified living person in the world at the time of her death at age 114 years, 195 days. On November 4, 2010, Eunice Sandborn became the world’s oldest living person. She celebrated her 114th birthday in July, 20, 2010, at her church, First Baptist, in Jacksonville, Texas. Eunice says that she not only loves everything about her life, but she also has “*no complaints.*”

### Spiritual Side Effects

#### **QUOTE : COMPLAINING DELAYS THE FLOW OF BLESSINGS**

**Biblical Illustration :** If you read the book of Exodus and numbers, the Israelites were crying out to God take them out of slavery from Egypt, God sent Moses and gave them the Promised Land. But when things got rough, they complained, they blamed God, they blamed Moses and etc.

**What would have been an 11-day journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, took them 40 years before they can enter. Why? What happened? It’s because they kept on complaining.**

*Numbers 11:1 Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.*

**NOW The worst thing about complaintitis is this is a HIGHLY INFECTIOUS DISEASE.**

**Biblical Illustration :** In the Bible, God gave the Promised Land to the Israelites. It is a land flowing with milk and honey. Moses sent 12 spies. All 12 spies mentioned that truly that it is a great and bountiful land. But there were people who occupied it. The 10 spies said that we cannot defeat them. Joshua and Caleb said, “No, the Lord is with us. Let us go and claim the land.” But the other 10 spies complained in front of the people and look at what happened.

*Numbers 14 : 36 And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned **and made all the congregation grumble** against him by bringing up a bad report about the land—*

**By the way, do you notice that people who like to complain always like to exaggerate the situation IN ORDER TO SPREAD FEAR?** Again, the twelve spies, what did they say?

Here's their report :

*Numbers 13: 27 They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. 28 But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large.*

*30 Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."*

*31 But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." 32 And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33 We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."*

**A person who has a bad case of complaintitis has a deep spiritual problem –**

- They are self-centred; (selfish, self-absorbed or wallows in self-pity)
- They are self-righteous. (thinks they are better than others)
- They are self-sufficient – lacks trust in God.

**QUOTE : Now, I'm not saying that you shouldn't do anything when you see something wrong or when you think you can improve the situation but** as Maya Angelou said :

*"If you don't like something change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude."*

And what's the attitude? **STOP COMPLAINING AND START THANKSGIVING!**

### III. THE SOLUTION

#### THE ANTIDOTE TO MURMURING

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

**Why murmur or complain?** When you can do something about it, change it. If not pray for it and give thanks to God.

Now if you are in a very sad or unfortunate situation and you are tempted to complain, **listen to this story.**

**Story :** Ravensbruck was known as one of the worst German concentration camps during World War II. When Corrie ten Boom and her sister Betsie found themselves imprisoned there, they were disgusted to discover that their barracks were infested with fleas.

When Corrie began to complain, Betsie insisted that they instead give thanks, quoting 1 *Thessalonians 5:18*, *"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

With some persuasion, Corrie finally joined her sister in thanking God for the fleas. Several months later, the two sisters expressed their surprise that the camp guards had never come back to their barracks to disrupt or prevent the evening Bible studies they held for their fellow prisoners. It was then that Corrie realized that the very fleas which she had so despised had actually been a God-sent protection from the cruel guards.

Source: The Hiding Place, Corrie Ten Boom

### **THE ANTIDOTE TO DISPUTING (EVIL THOUGHTS)**

You know the term being used by the younger generation today, "Whatever!" And it's usually used in a negative way. Now let's learn about the Biblical Whatever.

The positive Whatever!!!

*Philippians 4: 8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. 9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

### **STOP COMPLAINING! WAIT ON THE LORD! START THANKSGIVING!**

### **CONCLUSION :**

**We showed earlier that there are only two things :**

It's either we're giving thanks or we're complaining. We cannot be thankful if we're full of complaints. We cannot be complaining if we are doing thanksgiving.

Now what happens when we stop grumbling and arguing?

**We begin to shine for our Father in heaven.**

*Philippians 2: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;*

- Blameless means you are above reproach. It means it is a life that cannot be criticized.
- Harmless means innocent.

**Paul is just saying the reason we do not complain so that people won't be able to criticize us or find fault with us.**

Why? We are *the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation,*

**LISTEN CAREFULLY :** It's because we are God's children. How can we show the world that God is our Father if we are complainers, as if our God is not in control, as if God has not provided for us, as if God is not guiding us.

Remember, we are in the *midst of a crooked and perverse nation,*  
The world is in the pandemic and the disease is complaintitis. How can you say to others you found the cure, when you still have the disease?

Since this world is full of complainers, just look around you at work, at school, in your neighborhood, and if you are a grateful person and not complainer *ye shine as lights in the world;*

**You will stand out from the crowd.**

**How can we attract other people to our Lord Jesus Christ if our life is full of complaining?**

**Quote :** A transformed life is the greatest advertisement for the gospel. – John MacArthur

**Illustration :** Turn on a match in a dark room and all eyes will be on that match.

*Ephesians 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light*

**STORY :** Most of the people know that my son Zak is known for always smiling. By God's grace, he's always smiling. I was reading some entries in my journal 10 years ago and I saw this one on April 19, 2015. He was still at McGill University. Zak has a friend who came from Rwanda. His name Innocent. He was studying at McGill at full scholarship. His parents were killed at the Rwandan genocide. On April 18, a day before Zak's birthday, while he was studying, Innocent called him and asked if they could "jam". They are both into music. Innocent asked Zak to play 4<sup>th</sup> progression (guitar chords) and then Innocent started to sing, "You are more than a friend. You are a brother. Happy birthday, happy birthday man." Then he said this to Zak, "When I came here from Rwanda, I thought I will have a hard time finding a friend." Zak replied, "Man, I didn't do anything." Innocent said, "That's the point! You were just being who you are. God is shining through you."

The reason our life should be full of thanksgiving is so that Jesus will be seen in our lives.

**S.G.D.**