

CONQUERING COMPLAINING GOD'S WAY

PART THREE:

In part one and two, we discussed Philippians 2:13 that addresses something that we all struggle with from time to time; it could be called an epidemic in our society today and it is called *complaining*. Verse 13 (NLT) *For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him. In everything you do, stay away from complaining and arguing, so that no one can speak a word of blame against you. You are to live clean, innocent lives as children of God in a dark world full of crooked and perverse people. Let your lives shine brightly before them.* Then we looked at verses 12 through 18 which is talking about being light bearers.

This series deals with the four types of complainers. In part one, we studied the WHINER. In part two, we discussed the MARTYR, the CYNIC and the fourth type of complainer, the PERFECTIONIST. Then we looked at the first thing we can do to conquer complaining-- ADMIT IT! In part three we will look at the remaining four.

Number two is to ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY for your own life. Why do I say that? Because, so many times we blame others for the problems in our life that we have created ourselves. And we know that it is so much easier to blame others don't we? But God won't let you get away with that forever! He won't let you off the hook, if your heart is seeking Him and His righteousness. Look at Proverbs 19:3 (NLT) – *People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord.*” We do that don't we? We make poor choices and then become angry with the Lord when things don't work out the way we thought they should. Don't complain how the ball bounces, if you are the one who drops it. Admit you dropped it and move on.

When I cause problems in my life, I have no legitimate right to complain! I made the poor (wrong) choice! I'm the one who took the wrong turn and often against the advice of others. I'm the one who opened my mouth and inserted foot! I'm the one who made the mistakes. I have no one to blame but myself—and that is not always easy to do! Receiving consequences for my actions is often embarrassing and painful—but it is a must if you want to keep the door shut to the enemy! Therefore, bottom line, I have to take responsibility for my words and actions and learn from my mistakes to make wiser choices.. Satan hates it when you do that—when you take responsibility—it means he's losing the battle.

Remember, the Word of God says, *you reap what you sow!* That's a principle that will always be in our lives. Sow wisely! Sow life not destruction. Don't be an accuser, blaming others for your choices. Don't make excuses, saying, *It's not my fault, I just followed the advice of my friends, or it worked out okay for so and so or etc.* Change your way of thinking. Be wiser! Accept responsibility for your actions. Admit a wrong, own up to it, move forward in the grace of God and get your life where it needs to be.

Number three is to develop the ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, *No matter what happens, always be thankful, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.* No matter what

happens? Katie, you mean even the bad things that happen? Yes! No matter means just that! Always be thankful! God is faithful and He will bless you in all things as you remain thankful and trust him for the outcome. God wants you to be a THANKFUL PERSON, not a complainer.

I challenge you to be one of those kinds of people. When you start acting like a WHINER, read Paul's list of hardships that he went through in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 and starting at verse 4. And then make the same wise choices that Paul made and apply Philippians 4:11 which says, *I have learned how to get along happily whether I have much or little.* We slide right over that scripture and yet it is profound! That's the attitude of gratitude. If you have a problem with the attitude of gratitude, do some missionary work. Sign up for the next trip to Mexico or one of the South American countries. Get out of your own little culture long enough to realize that we are a blessed people. The poorest of poor in America are rich compared to people in the rest of the world.

Number four – Look for God's hand in circumstances. As a Christian, we need to stand on the truth that God is in control of our lives. He is going to accomplish His will in our lives. When we get serious about our relationship with Christ, then God is going to bless our nation. Our nation is not going to be blessed through the political area, men in high places, but God will bless our nation through His people doing what He is asking them to do. We need to develop looking for God's hand in every circumstance of our lives.

In 2 Corinthians 4:17-18, Paul had that understanding as he wrote, *For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurable great glory that will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.* Child of God, grab a hold of that scripture and don't let it go! In every difficult circumstance we need to remember that it is nothing, compared to what God has in store for you—what he has promised you.

Romans 8:28 (NLT) we are all familiar with—it is quoted over and over and says, *and we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.* Good and bad work for our good. It's a matter of perspective. Look for God's hand in your circumstances. Here is a principle that you need to know and to understand. Complaining is rebellion against God!

When I complain I am doing three things. I am questioning God's wisdom. I doubt God's care. I am forgetting God's goodness.

So I need to develop these attitudes in my life: Admit that complaining is a problem for me. Accept responsibility for my own life. I won't blame God or other people. I will develop the attitude of gratitude. I will look for God's hand in my circumstances, and I will practice speaking positively.

In ending this series, let me share with you one more thing we need to do. When we get rid of a bad habit, we have to replace it with a good habit. We have to redirect the way that we think. It all begins in the mind. What you think determines what you feel, and what you feel determines how you act. That's why we need to renew our

minds. Romans 12:2(NLT) says, *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.*

Ephesians 4:29-31(NLT) says, *Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all type of malicious behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.*

Child of God, check your speech, guard your heart, protect what enters into your mind, so that you are thinking the positive thoughts of God and speaking encouragement and building up other people instead of tearing them down. People like to be around encouragers. Let your light shine brightly before the world, and when people ask you, *How can I shine like you? How can I praise God in the midst of difficult circumstances like you do? You can begin to share with them THE HOWS!*

It's all because of a person named Jesus Christ. What he has done in my life. The changes He has brought into my life. The Holy Spirit He has given to empower me to live above the difficulties. I don't have to prove anything to people. I don't have to complain. I don't have to argue. I just have to be like a bright shining star and point the way to Jesus. Our lives should shine in such a way as to bring glory to His holy name. Is it easy to do? No, not always! But it is possible, as we turn control over to Him.

I encourage you to take a few moments after reading this to let the Holy Spirit search your soul. Be serious with God and give Him time to speak into your life. Purpose to stand before God and ask Him to clean you up and have His perfect way in your life God Ask God to heal you of this negative spirit that grabs a hold of us so often and help us to become bright and shining stars before others and not COMPLAINERS!