



Christ's Commission Fellowship Los Angeles

DGROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE
APRIL 13, 2014

Thankfulness, not Grumbling

WORD:

Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

Luke 17:11-19

What is thankfulness?

The Aramaic word is "yadah" which means to give praise. In Greek, it is "eucharistos" giving of thanks. In contrast, grumbling is "lun" in the original language which means to murmur, to growl. Or "goggyzo" to murmur or mutter with muffled undertones, to show smoldering discontent, droning in on a low constant murmur.

Are we guilty of grumbling?

If we are truly being, growing and enjoying our transformation into Christ-likeness then one of the characteristics we should develop is being thankful for all things. Thankfulness then is being grateful, while grumbling is complaining and being ungrateful.

Luke 17:11-19 tells us of the ten lepers who came to Jesus because they knew that He could heal them instantaneously. Similarly many of us today, also come to Jesus expecting instantaneous relief, instantaneous healing, supernatural interventions. . . but that is not the way it happens. When the ten lepers went to Jesus, what did Jesus say? He said "Go and show yourselves to the priests." This simply means that we too must do our part and not be mere bystanders.

There were ten lepers and yet when they saw that they were healed, only one came back to Jesus and glorify God (verse 16). Out of the ten who were healed, only one — the Samaritan, returned to give Jesus thanks. At that Jesus asked in verse 17 "*Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?*"

We have to take note that the healing did not happen when they arrived at their destination, but rather the actual healing happened as they were going. While all ten of them were healed, only one had the heart to come to Jesus and thank Him. Why this man, we may ask? What was it that drove him to come back Jesus said "*your faith has made you well*"

The Grumbings of the Israelites (Exodus)

Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

The apostle Paul is reminding us to go back to the Old Testament to learn from the Israelites for the purpose of knowing what we should not follow. We know from Exodus 3, God's plan for His people was to deliver the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt and bring them to the Promised Land. God noticed the suffering and pain of the Israelites so God calls Moses and tells him of His plan for the Israelites and to lead them out of Egypt. But Pharaoh had a hard heart and because of this God sent ten plagues. And finally the Israelites are allowed to leave Egypt with all their belongings and riches that they could carry.

These Israelites were a witness to God's power and His goodness but instead of thanking and praising Him, they begin to complain.

First, they complained that **they had no food.** (Exodus 16:2-4)

Then they complained about **water.** (Exodus 17:1-4)

Then they complained about the **manna.** (Numbers 11:4-6)

They complained about the **Promised Land.** (Numbers 13:28-29)

They complained about their **leaders.** (Numbers 14:1-4)

Every time they grumbled and complained they would always compare their present situation to the abundance they thought they had in Egypt. They had conveniently forgotten that in Egypt they were treated cruelly as slaves. They forgot that God had delivered them from slavery and the misery of their life in Egypt. They choose to focus only on the abundance they remembered.

They even complained about the Promised Land, Joshua and Caleb came back reporting of the lush abundance of the land but the ten others only reported of the people already occupying the land. The ten only saw the negative, they had forgotten that this land had already been given to them by the Lord. It was because of this attitude of grumbling and complaining that left the Israelites wandering the desert for 40 years. But despite all their complaining and grumbling the Lord remained gracious to them in the 40 years that they wandered the desert. In Numbers 14:28-30 we are told that the generation of those who grumbled against God was not allowed to enter the promise land except for Caleb and Joshua.

What is wrong about complaining? All complaints and grumbling eventually return to God. Moses in Exodus 16:8 said "*for the Lord hears your grumbings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumbings are not against us but against the Lord.*" The Israelites were never content with what they had, but continued to grumbled and complain. They continued to focus on what they did not have. They kept looking back comparing their life now to the life they had – thinking that they had a better life in Egypt.

Comparison is the cancer to contentment. We should stop complaining about the things you don't have and start praising for the things you do have and just let God's creativity work in your life. (Catalyst quote, Sean)

We too, fall into the same trap of complaining and grumbling about what we do not have instead of focusing on what we do have. All these grumbling and complaining all return to God. In the book of Jude he says, "*these people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.*" This is a warning to us Instead of filling our hearts with compliants, discontent and envy – we should develop an attitude of gratitude. An attitude of thanksgiving for all that we have and keep our focus on Jesus not on what we do not have. We should "stop complaining about the pieces you didn't get, instead thank Him for the masterpiece that He's made you." (catalyst quote, Nate)

What then is the cure to grumbling?

The cure is FAITH. "*Faith is the confidence that we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.*" Hebrews 11:1. The Israelites saw only the negative in what they were encountering and refused to look at the bigger picture that God was bringing them to the Promised Land. They lost sight of the fact that it was God planning all these for them.

Today, we too fall into the same trap. Focusing on what we do not have and forgetting that God has plans for us as He promised in Jeremiah 29:11. It is the same assurance He gives us in Romans 8:28. This reminds us that even in our worst circumstances that God allows, we should continue to have faith that He is continually working for what is good for us.

When we come to faith in Jesus Christ, our problems do not magically disappear but because we are growing into Christ-likeness then we are learning that in ALL circumstances God works for the good of those who love Him. When we choose to obey God our circumstances does not necessary change, the apostles were martyred but they followed God. God is not a genie or ATM, and it does not necessarily follow that because we follow God we will get all that we want – then our motives, our hearts are in the wrong place. We should focus our eyes on the Giver and not the gifts. If we obey God with the motive o being blessed, we forget the more important fact – that we are already blessed because of God’s presence in my life.

Hebrews 11:6 *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him for He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”* We should seek God for who God is and not for what He can give me. We have already been given the free gift of eternal life, so we should obey God not for any other reason other than we love Him. Because at the end of it all, IT’S ALL ABOUT HIM.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 reminds us to *“rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”* It is God’s desire for His people to be thankful – in everything. . . for the good things, for the most so good things, for the more challenging things because we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him. We often miss the point – we should focus not on what we want of our lives but rather what God wants for us. Many times this is our source of struggle – but Philipians 4:6 tells us *Do not be anxious about anything but in every situation, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving present your request to God.”* It is God’s desire for us that when we pray, we pray in thanksgiving. . . because in every prayer petition we must always keep in mind and by faith believe that God has great plans for us – they may not be what we expect or what we want but we should continue to have faith that God is intricately involved in our life and He is continually working in our circumstances . . . or in us. Maybe it is not our circumstances that need changing. . . but rather it is our hearts that need to be changed.

Let us be like the one leper, the Samaritan and be the one to return to God and give thanks. This Samaritan was not only healed from his leprosy but he also found Jesus Christ and was healed of his sins. Let us be the one that constantly remembers to say thank you Lord for everything.

Works: Journaling task

1. What are the things we are truly thankful for?
2. Have we ever really said “thank you” to God?
3. What are the things that are hindering us from being thankful?
4. Where are you in your faith walk? Are you constantly growing or has your walk plateaued?
5. What is the biggest leap of faith you have ever taken? What happened? What was the result?
6. Are still preoccupied with the things you do not have or the things you want to have --or are you focusing on Christ alone?