

TALKING POINTS

JOY - VISION OVER VIEW

LEANING IN

To have joy in the midst of our circumstances, we have to have vision over view - the ability to see things the way *God* sees them, not the way *we* see them.

Complaining is a key factor to being robbed of Joy in this life. It's also human nature - it's even found in the Bible. King David, Moses, Solomon and the children of Israel in the desert all complained in different ways.

Read Philippians 2:14-15

Do we recognize ourselves in any of the "complainers" of the Bible? Why is it so easy to complain?

LIVING IT OUT

In reality, complaining is rebelling against God and accomplishes nothing, so how do we fix this in our lives? Here are five disciplines in the Christian life which are essential to understand if we are going to deal with complaining:

Admit We Have A Problem - complaining is not just a bad habit, It's a sin. Every time we complain, it keeps us from doing something great in the kingdom of God.

Read Romans 1:21, Colossians 3:15

What can we do to take complaining more seriously as a sin in our lives?

Accept Responsibility For Our Choices - when it comes to blame, there are three types of people - excusers, accusers and *choosers*. We have to *choose* to take responsibility for our own choices.

Read Ephesians 4:31-32, Romans 14:12

How can we move away from being excusers and accusers to becoming "choosers" regarding our actions?

Develop An Attitude Of Gratitude - God is not asking you to give thanks for the bad things, but rather to find something to give Him thanks for in the middle of *all* your circumstances, whether good or bad.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18

What can we each be grateful to God for even in these current difficult circumstances?

Look For God's Hand In Our Current Circumstance - what we see determines our joy in every situation. When we intentionally *look* for God in all our circumstances, we *will* find Him. We have to *choose* to look for Him, to seek Him.

Read 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

Have you seen God's hand move in a difficult time? How did you become aware of it?

Become Encouragers - in a world of bad news and discouragement, we need to become people of good news - Jesus is alive, He's on His throne, He's coming back. You have the power to breathe life into people every day - it's your choice.

Read Ephesians 4:29, Thessalonians 5:11

Can you share a time when someone's encouragement made all the difference to you?