

How to Outgrow Grumbling

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[0:00] Why don't you remain standing as I read our text for this morning. It's from Exodus chapter 15, beginning in verse 22. Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur.

They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter. Therefore it was named Marah.

And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried to the Lord, and the people showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the Lord made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them. Let's pray. Lord God, as we open your word, please open our hearts. Lord, give us a spirit of eagerness to obey, eagerness to learn and to lean in, and to hear from you, to know you, and to follow you.

Father, we are so grateful for this time. Let us not waste it, God. Give us attentive ears. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. We'll dismiss our kids to children's ministry, and the rest of you can be seated.

[1:14] As I mentioned this morning, we are going to talk about the issue of grumbling. Grumbling, talking in particular about the, this is the most friction-y children's exit I've ever seen.

Like, this one, they usually go off without a hitch. This one did not. Is this, is this Grumbling's fault? Is he's the one that's in charge back there? Yep. Yep, that makes sense. All right. We're talking about grumbling today and outgrowing a grumbling tendency.

That's because one of the main features of the book of Exodus and the generation of people delivered from slavery was that they were habitual grumblers.

It all began back in Egypt when Pharaoh increased the burdens in hopes of silencing the people. And they went, in Exodus 5, they went and started to grumble.

They say in Exodus 5, 20, they met Moses and Aaron who were waiting for them as they came out from Pharaoh. And they said, Again, in chapter 14, we see with their backs up against the Red Sea, the Egyptian army coming in hot, the people once again complained.

[2:33] Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians. For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness. And then we have three more times in Exodus 15, 16, and 17.

Again, in Exodus 32. And then carrying over into the book of Numbers, we have a bunch more complaining and grumbling. In fact, we have 15 instances throughout the story in which Israel sets out to grumble against Moses or the Lord.

Now, we don't need to know what to do with this data because we have a New Testament text that tells us explicitly. So, if you have your Bibles with you, you can turn to 1 Corinthians 10 or you can just look up here on the screen.

We've got it here. At 1 Corinthians 10, the Apostle Paul writes, beginning in verse 1, For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink.

For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them, God was not pleased. For they were overthrown in the wilderness.

[3:46] Now, these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were.

As it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. We must not indulge in sexual immorality, as some of them did, and 23,000 fell on a single day.

We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer.

Now, these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. So, we know exactly what to do with all this data about grumbling.

The problem of grumbling in the Old Testament, in particular in the book of Exodus, is meant to instruct us to see the danger of grumbling, and to decide and resolve not to be a grumbling people. [4:47] Now, you might ask, what goes bad when people grumble? Well, you know, you can synthesize all of the data we have in Exodus and Numbers and say basically three things. Number one, grumbling greatly offends the God who has promised to take care of them and never leave them or forsake them.

So, we see time and time again that God is definitely offended by their grumbling. We also see that grumbling wearies God's workers. As you might expect, Moses' greatest challenge wasn't where to find water or where to find food or how to deal with the Egyptian army.

Moses' greatest challenge was consistently handling and walking with and shepherding a grumbling people. This is all kind of represented in Numbers, chapter 11. In one of the instances that was on the list just a moment ago, we read this in chapter 11, verse 10.

Moses heard the people weeping throughout their clans, everyone at the door of his tent. I'm not sure if I can back all this up in this sermon, but in all of my studies, I noticed that their grumbling was almost always in their tents.

They weren't even doing it like kind of to Moses. They would all kind of retreat in their little triangulated huddles of grievance and complain to one another. So, that's what's going on here.

[6:04] And it says, And the anger of the Lord blazed hotly, and Moses was displeased. Moses said to the Lord, Why have you dealt ill with your servant? And why have I not found favor in your sight?

That you lay the burden of all this people on me. So, the grumbling has caught on. Moses is wearied by their lack of faith and begins to have a struggle of faith himself.

So, two things about grumbling. One, it greatly offends God. He's been amazing to us. He's been so good to us. He's promised to never leave us or forsake us. And when we grumble, we're really kind of telling him, No, I don't believe any of that.

Grumbling really wearies God's workers. But one of the things I think that you need to really understand about grumbling is that it really sort of opens the door to other sins.

I was doing some reading about some recent research that came out regarding marital affairs. And unsurprisingly, but it was interesting to see it, you know, spelled out so clearly, those who cheated often had previously gone through periods where they had fixated on the failures of their spouse or fixated on the lack of health in their marriage and so on and so forth.

[7:18] And the man who was interpreting this study in his writings, he said that people give themselves a discount on bad action by persuading themselves that the current situation is worse than it is, not sustainable, so on and so forth.

And this is very common. This is very common, not just in that particular sin, but just in general. What you'll find with grumbling, and we see this in the text as well, is that grumbling sort of makes disobedience more acceptable and makes obedience look like harder than it really is.

And if you're in a situation where you're overcoming some kind of addiction or life-dominating sin, I could just basically read your mail right now and tell you kind of how you talk to yourself throughout the day, especially if you have a particular time in which you fall to this sin regularly, which is often the case.

Suppose you are drinking too much. You're drinking every night. You need to stop that. What's going on there in part is you are adding up all of the difficulties of the day.

You're keeping a list, and then at the end of that you're saying, I need something to unwind. I need something to get my mind off of all of this and so on and so forth. So in many respects, grumbling is sort of like the on-ramp to a lot of other sins.

[8:32] In Exodus 32, we see this golden calf thing, and it just feels like when you scan it really quickly, it feels like we went from zero to 60. Like, how in the world did we, what is this golden calf doing here?

Why are people, you know, how did we get here? And the answer is that they grumbled their way into pure hedonism. And this is actually extremely common.

If they were to, perhaps some of them did, even in the moment, look up and say, wait a minute, how did this happen? Why are we all naked dancing around a golden calf?

You know, and the answer would be that they grumbled themselves into making that kind of behavior acceptable. So I really want you to know that grumbling is just a terrible thing.

It offends God. It wearies the people who are trying to lead you and bless you. And it also sort of moves you into more vulnerability to greater sins. The truth is, and I think maybe some of you know this, grumbling can eventually become a person's entire personality.

[9:38] There are some people who just don't know how to have conversations that aren't deeply seasoned with grumbling. You know, we've all been to the kind of mid-tier Mexican place where all the food is actually the same.

Right? It's like they're rearranging it, but it's all the same. Right? And you could literally just put blindfolds on and scramble everything up and move the plates around and everybody would be eating the same thing. You know, it's just like how do you want your beans to look?

You know? And that's because, you know, in those kind of mid-tier places, they all use the exact same ingredients over and over again. What you'll find with people that haven't kept a gate on their grumbling is that over time this is just a seasoning that they use to season their conversations, to season their perspective, and so on and so forth.

And so basically you've had one conversation with this kind of person. You've had a million. They all taste the same. It's focusing on what's not right, what other people have done to them, how this didn't work out, or so on and so forth.

And this is maybe number four reason why you shouldn't grumble is like before you know it, it becomes like your personality. And then you'll start wondering, why don't I have any friends? And rather than take responsibility for the fact that that's because you are kind of, you know, sorry, fart an elevator, you could take ownership of that.

[10:55] Like, it's you. That's why. You know, it's you. But no, you'll grumble about that too. And you begin to distance yourself from the capacity to make honest assessments about your own personality.

And you begin to lose all perspective on, like, what you might change in your life, so on and so forth. So lots of reasons to stop grumbling. How do we do that? Well, in the Bible, most of the time when a behavior is just straight up, like, forbidden, like grumbling is, we're given an alternative behavior that we're supposed to do instead of that.

And biblical counselors talk about this as putting off and putting on, putting off one behavior, putting on another behavior. The classic example that people use, because it's just so clear and spelled out, is Ephesians 4.28, which says, So attitudinally, what's the put off and put on?

He's putting off taking from people and putting on giving to people. Actionably, he's putting off stealing, not earning his money, and putting on behavior of earning his living.

So this is very common in scriptures. This is the basic approach for much of biblical counseling, is we need to identify the behavior we need to stop and figure out what the positive behavior is that we need to put on.

[12:20] Here's another verse like that that's kind of closer to our conversation about grumbling. Philippians 4.6, That's the thing we're not supposed to do.

But in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. So we put off anxiousness, and we put on prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

And that gives us a hint, as I mentioned in our call to worship, which about half of you were here for. It gives us a hint, because in the call to worship, I said, well, what is the thing we're supposed to do besides grumble instead of grumbling?

And the Bible calls the thing we're supposed to do instead of grumbling lament. Lament. Okay, that's the thing we're supposed to be doing. The Bible is not ever telling a person in pain to just grin and bear it, or to stop grumbling and put on a stiff upper lip.

It tells you, like, no, your situation's bad. You should complain. You just need to know how to do that in faith and not in unbelief.

[13:24] And this is what the Bible says is to put on, to put off grumbling, put on lamenting. One resource defines lamenting this way. A lament is a prayer expressing sorrow, pain, or confusion.

Lament should be the chief way Christians process grief in God's presence. I would say Christians process disappointment in God's presence, or Christians process discomfort.

I want to qualify this definition a little bit more in a minute, but let's go ahead and keep pressing forward. Let's look back at the text again. Exodus 15, 22. Now, you've got lamenting and grumbling side by side in this passage.

Do you see that? Do you see that? You've got one expression of grumbling, which is the people. People grumbled against Moses.

And then you've got lament, the very next thing. You've got, and Moses, and he cried to the Lord. That's really all we're talking about, friends. We're just talking about the difference between grumbling and lamenting is really where you send the postcard in many respects.

[14 : 57] I believe that we were created to live in constant conversation with God, and I believe that sin has removed our kind of capacity to do that without thought, so that now we spend our days talking to ourselves.

When the very same things we're telling ourselves we should be telling God, we can do this with grumbling, by grumbling to other people or grumbling to ourself, when we really should just be complaining to God.

We were built to talk to God all the time. And I've tried to train myself over the years to just walk in ongoing conversation with God, and I do that with just these little redirects, because I'll just, you know, you know me, my brain's a busy brain, and I'll catch myself worrying and thinking about this or that.

And what I have tried to train myself to do over time is to realize I had just written a letter, I just didn't address it properly. I just identified a problem, something I'm concerned about, something that I'm not happy with, something I need to change or whatever.

And insofar as I don't say, dear Lord, at the beginning and in Jesus, you know, insofar as I'm not addressing that to God, that's a grumble. But when I can just catch myself in real time saying, okay, Lord, that's the thing, or what's next?

[16 : 15] And I just try to keep talking to God throughout the day, because I was made to do that, but sin has made that, forced that to become sort of a conscious thing when I don't think it always was a conscious thing.

So that's grumbling and lamenting, basically. I want to make sure you see that there are some things that they have in common. I've already hinted at this. The first one is that both grumbling and lamenting are forms of complaint.

We don't need to shade that. Again, we don't need to act like it's not complaining. It is. One of the Psalms of lament would be Psalm 142. With my voice, I cry out to the Lord.

With my voice, I plead for mercy to the Lord. I pour out my complaint before Him. Psalm 52. Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not yourself from my plea for mercy.

Attend to me and answer me. I am restless in my complaint. So both grumbling and lament are complaining. One is good.

[17 : 11] One is bad. The other thing that they have in common is that they both flow from legitimate needs or desires. I think it's important to understand that the Hebrews were complaining about stuff that was really bad.

They were going to die if the situation didn't change. Pharaoh's army is charging. They have no place to run. We don't have any water, which you need. We don't have any food.

We see that in this particular passage, they had actually gone three days without water. They were at the very, very end. So one of the things to understand is that grumbling and lamenting are both reactions to real problems.

And they're real problems that you can't solve on your own. So I'm talking today about instead of grumbling, lament. But that's really about the things that you can't fix.

The opposite of grumbling over something you can't fix is to lament over something you can't fix. But what you should do if you're grumbling about something you can fix is you should just fix it. You should just go fix it.

[18 : 18] But many times there are things in life that aren't like that. And we all have, because of God's programming in our hearts, we all have various not only needs but legitimate desires.

And so what I want you to understand is that when you are struggling with something like infertility or singleness or relative poverty, or, you know, I wish my husband would do this or I wish my wife would do that or even taxes, when there's a legitimate beef that you have no control over, you're going to do one of two things.

You're going to grumble or you're going to lament. You've got to do one of those two things. So let's make sure we're not imagining that we can just take our mind off the problem.

That's not what's going to happen. What's going to happen is that you're going to fall into grumbling if you're not intentionally taking your complaints to God. I think the third thing that I would mention that they have in common is that, you know, grumbling isn't just always like acute and hard and loud and spicy.

Sometimes it's just a low kind of, you know, sub kind of, you know, murmur. In the same way, I think sometimes when you hear the word lament, it just sounds so highly emotional that you think that it's this category that should only be reserved for when your dog dies or something, you know.

[19:36] But no, just as grumbling is a range of, it can be a two. It's just a complaint to God given by faith asking him to intervene for the situation.

So sometimes when I hear the word lament, I think of a highly emotional thing. And I think, man, I just, there aren't many things that I would feel that much emotion over. And I realized, no, that's not, we're talking about the form, not the intensity.

The form is simply, where is my complaint going to? So those are three things that they have in common. Now let's compare and contrast what the Bible says kind of about what grumbling is and what lamenting is and all that.

And the first one would be, there's a difference in the direction of the complaint. There's a difference in the direction of the complaint. We see in all these texts related to the Hebrews that when they were grumbling, they grumbled against Moses.

They really were grumbling to one another about Moses. Psalm 106 is another one of these texts that talks about the Exodus generation.

[20:46] And in verse 24, it says, Then they despised the pleasant land, having no faith in his promise. They murmured in their tents and did not obey the voice of the Lord. So grumbling is typically horizontal.

It might be inward. It might be outward. But it's typically dealing on a human plane. Lamenting is really just the same issue, right, just expressed directly to the Lord.

The grumbler complains to himself or to others. The lamenter makes his appeal to God. We saw that in the instance we saw just a moment ago in our passage.

Psalm 142 is an example of this vertical lamenting. With my voice, I cry out to the Lord. With my voice, I plead for mercy to the Lord. I pour out my complaint before him.

I tell my trouble before him. So one of the things that's different between lamenting and grumbling is the direction you're aiming your complaints.

[21:45] There's also a difference in the direction of the cure. There's a difference in the direction of the complaint. There's a difference in the direction of the cure. What you'll see with grumbling is a romanticizing of the past.

Very often, a looking back and a romanticizing about what had been as if the previous state was wonderful. You know, in Exodus 16, one of the grumbling sections, the Hebrews say, The whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

The people of Israel said to them, Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full. For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill the whole assembly with hunger.

So grumbling looks back and says, Boy, I wish my life would just go back before this thing arose. And it romanticizes the past.

This is another thing I would say. We are romantic people. You're going to romanticize something. And if you don't discipline your mind to think first the kingdom of God and eternity, that's where your romantic imagination should go.

[22:55] I was talking yesterday at the Knox barbecue about the imagination of C.S. Lewis related to heaven. And this is the difference between a complaint and a lament. A complaint looks backwards and romanticizes the past.

And this is why some of us old guys need to be careful with nostalgia. Because, yes, my life, my childhood was better than yours, actually. It really just was.

But we need to be careful. That's a root of grumbling. To look back and think, Why can't we just go back to, you know, 1985, when we had a good president and we were, you know, Coke was still, had sugar in it and so on and so forth.

Ecclesiastes 7, 9 through 10 says, The end of a matter is better than the beginning, and patience is better than pride. Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the laps of fools. Do not say, Why were the old days better than these?

For it is not wise to ask such questions. So, we have to be careful, some of us, with our nostalgic tendencies. It's a real deep spot of grumbling for some of us.

[24 : 01] We look back and wish that we had just been able to return to that. And, of course, we are romanticizing what it was. We're not remembering it as clearly as it was, surely as the Hebrews were not remembering their slavery as clearly as it was.

But, in the Psalms of Lament, you'll see that rather than romanticize the past, going back, there is an expectation of future grace. In Psalm 22, which is just full of real complaints against the Lord, you see when he begins to make the turn to faith and express that it's all future-oriented.

I will tell of your name to my brothers in the midst of the congregation. I will praise you. From you comes my praise in the great congregation. My vows, I will perform. And, you see, all of these future-looking words emerge out of a prayer of lament.

It's like, how do I know I'm lamenting and not grumbling? Number one, who are you talking to? And, number two, what's the end goal? Because, here's how I'd put it. The grumbler is always trying to go back, and the lamenter is trying to break through.

The grumbler is always trying to go back. The lamenter is trying to break through. They understand that the hardship is actually preparing for them an eternal weight of glory that surpasses all the difficulties, right?

[25 : 15] They understand the hardship. The wilderness is a part of life, and they just are hoping to break through into the final stage. They're forward-looking. Just real quickly, another area where these two things differ is the role of despair.

Despair is like a vulture that wants to eat you. And there's this passage in Genesis 15 where Abraham offers a sacrifice to the Lord and sits there by it all night, and the birds, the vultures, keep wanting to descend and eat this thing.

And when you have been disappointed, when your life is broken, when you're really hurting, you're kind of like that sacrifice, just a little splayed out on the ground. You're highly vulnerable. And the thing that wants to eat you is despair.

It wants to get you just to surrender to self-pity, surrender to the darkness. And so grumblers just embrace that.

They make no effort to shoo away the birds of despair. They just let them land and start picking at their heart. But a lamenter, one of the main things he's doing is he's shooing away those birds.

[26 : 22] He's trying to fight despair. He's doing what he can to not give up on himself, on God, and so on and so forth. So another one that we'll go through really quickly is just discipline.

The grumbler is just letting his or her emotions run the show. What I feel is really all there is. The lamenter is skeptical of his feelings and knows that he has to preach to his own soul.

He's not going to let his feelings just define the whole thing. A big part of lamenting is, I'm not going to just let my emotional side take over.

I'm going to say truth to myself. I'm going to preach to my own soul. So in Psalm 42, for instance, David says, Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you turmoil within me?

Hope in God. He tells his feelings, his soul, his internal state what to do. So there's a difference in discipline between a lamenter and a grumbler.

[27 : 25] And then a big one is just the data set that these two people have in common. When you grumble, essential to grumbling is that you're reducing the data you're considering to basically this situation.

Whereas when you're lamenting, because it's an act of faith, you are including all of God's past faithfulness to you as data that's informing the process.

So the grumblers are always forgetful. Now, a good question, I don't have an answer to right now, but a good question would be about causality here.

Does forgetfulness lead to grumbling or does grumbling lead to forgetfulness? All we can say is, is that when we look at the grumblers in Exodus, they are very forgetful. They are just quintessentially leaky buckets.

They just can't look back even a few days before and see that God was faithful to them. This is just appearing over and over and over again in the scriptures where, as the later writers of the Bible

assess the Exodus generation, they talk about them as being forgetful over and over again. [28:43] And of course, they were experiencing all of these tremendous miracles in short succession and something just, and we know what that something was ultimately. They just weren't able to ever grab the past evidence and say, even though it was like last Wednesday, and say like, God did this for me, therefore I know I can trust him.

Whereas when you see a lamenter, they'll grab stuff a thousand years old. Stuff they don't, they weren't even necessarily present for. The psalm that we read earlier, Psalm 22, one of his past acts of faithfulness that he's looking at from God is that you made me.

Well, he didn't remember that, I would imagine, you know, didn't remember being knit together. They'll talk about the God of our forefathers. There is something about these two things, and this is what I would say is the big difference, is grumbling has no capacity to just grab like last Wednesday's file or whatever, and say evidence that God is trustworthy.

Whereas lamenting, it seems like the whole program is surrounding this constant reminder that God is faithful. We throw out things, and we don't mean for them to be platitudes because they're true, but when we talk about gratitude as being just this fundamental, it really is, and you might get tired of hearing that and think, well, I don't really know why it's a fundamental.

Well, maybe none of us actually completely understand why, but we can just see that all the people who eat this get cancer, or all the people who are around this chemical get cancer, and yet, and all the people who have this vitamin don't get cancer, and we could just say, well, we don't really necessarily understand the mechanism, but here's the deal.

[30:30] Grateful people just don't grumble, and we can probably just leave it at that and say we need to be careful not to become forgetful people. Now, look back at the text one more time to Exodus chapter 15.

So I want you to see kind of the central thing that we have to be thankful for. Moses cries to the Lord, what shall we drink?

And this unusual thing pops up in this story. the Lord showed him a log, and he threw it in the water, and the water became sweet.

Okay? Nearly all commentators that I consulted are quick to point out that in this log, we have a foreshadowing of the cross. One commentator says, the wood made the water sweet because it came from God's tree.

This reminds us some of the other trees in Scripture. The life-giving tree in the Garden of Eden, Genesis 2.9. The tree of life in the New Jerusalem with leaves for the healing of the nations, and especially the tree on which Christ was crucified, the tree that heals our bitter sin.

[31:53] So God in his wisdom is foreshadowing the cure to all bitterness, the cure to all forgetfulness, the main evidence that we have that we can trust God, and he's foreshadowing the cross in this particular moment.

He's like, see that piece of wood? Throw it into this bitter situation, and now that bitter situation will become sweet. And you might think, why do we do communion every week? And why are we always, well, here's why we do communion every week.

We are forcing ourselves to land on the pinnacle of God's revelation to us. We're forcing ourselves to land on the truest truth, and that truest truth is exemplified, pictured, and manifested in the fact that God became man to willingly offer himself up as a sacrifice to be tortured, in fact, so that in that torture he could receive God's wrath for our sins, so that in the cross we see God's wrath against sin, we see God's love for us, and so on and so forth.

We see everything here. And we do that because if you keep reminding yourself, this is what the Bible seems to teach us, if you keep reminding yourself that God intentionally bled for you when you were his enemy, you can take that piece of information and look to that as evidence that he can be trusted in every other way.

Right? That's what we do week after week. At least one of the things we do week after week is we say, if he did this, you can trust him. That's what Romans 8.32 says.

[33:34] He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

The basic math of Providence Community Church really for 20 plus years has been that if God took such good care of us while we were his enemies, we can have confidence that he will take care of us now as his sons and daughters.

I think one of the things that we want to miss, not miss in this text is that here's the deal. These people came to this water and it was like disgusting to them and it needed to be fixed for them to have anything to do with it.

Do you understand that apart from Christ, you're gross to God? You're offensive to him. That you are full of sin and that you may think that you're among the better people that walk the face of the earth and that may be the case but God's not judging you based on the other schlubs that you share the earth with.

God's judging you against the God-man, Jesus Christ. And so you and I, apart from Christ, are gross to God. We are the bitter water. And then God, through the cross, transforms us.

[34 : 52] Some way, there's an interaction that happens and we'll get into all that here but God transforms us through the cross so that we are not disgusting to him. Rather, we are attractive to him.

And we who were once enemies become his sons and daughters. And I think that's important not only because it proves that God can be trusted, but I also think it's important because I am always trying to answer this question to myself.

Why don't people lament more and grumble less? or why don't people just more frequently talk to God?

Why don't people end all of their sentences with, begin all their sentences with dear father, all their self-thoughts? And why are we going through life acting like talking to God so little throughout the day?

And I would say that one of the reasons is that your mind and your heart may not have caught up to this glorious truth of the gospel. And you might think of yourself more as the bitter water than the sweet water.

[35 : 59] You might think of yourself more as something that God isn't interested in more than someone whom God loves. That seems to be a pattern in scripture. When we're told to pray, we're often told pray because God likes you.

In Christ, God loves you. For instance, in 1 Peter 5-7, cast all your cares on him. What's the end of that?

Well, now it's up here. Stop. Cast all your cares on him because he cares for you. Maybe one of the ways we escape out of grumbling and move into frequent conversation with God about our cares is just to remember that because of what Jesus Christ has done, not only do I know I can trust God, but I know that God sees me as he sees his son.

He has a real love and esteem for me. Not because I've earned that or deserved that in any real moment at any time, but Christ paid for that.

Why do I have to stop? Why do I have to talk to myself or talk to others when I talk to God? Why aren't I talking to God more often? Am I hiding from him? Do I? If I've forgotten Romans 8-1, therefore there is now no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus?

[37 : 18] Do I understand that because of the cross God loves me? This is really the key idea in 1 John 5-11.

And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life and this life is in his son. Whoever has the son has life.

Whoever does not have the son does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.

Why does he want them to know that? Well, lots of reasons I'm sure, but look what verse 14 says. And this is the confidence that we have toward him that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. See, I think that fundamentally getting off of a grumbling dirt road and onto the lamenting freeway is just a matter of understanding have you been made new in Christ so that he no longer sees you for your sin but sees you for his son's sake?

[38 : 38] Have all of your sins been washed away by the blood of Jesus so that his righteousness is now the primary thing God sees? If so, I have somewhere else to take my complaints beside my neighbor or my own head.

I have the God of the universe who has decided in his wonderful kindness to make it possible for me to call him Father. And he knows my frame he knows that I'm dust and he's not going to be

surprised when I'm getting whiny and complaining and going through hard things or imagined hard things.

He is eager to talk with me through that and talk with you through that. And so I present the cross to you as two things essentially as we lead up into communion. One is absolute proof that he will take care of you.

He's already invested far too much to let you go. And number two, the cross should make you in complete gratitude without any self-congratulations, the cross should make you feel confident enough to boldly approach the throne of grace.

And there, give God your cares for he cares for you. Let me pray. Father God, we pray that you would make this change in our hearts.

[40:04] I'm sure all of us are aware of either the temptation to grumble or that grumbling has become a part of our lives.

And Father, would you replace that with prayer? In particular, the kind of prayer that is referred to as a lament in which we express our complaints to you in faith.

and we, Lord, in expressing our complaints to you also, keep in mind all that you have done for us.

We look forward to, in faith, your deliverance and your care for us in this particular situation.

But Lord, through your spirit, would you just shift us from grumbling people to praying people? And would you hold up the cross of Jesus Christ both as evidence that you are willing and able to care for us?

Lord, now as we partake in this table and all who are followers of Jesus Christ come and partake of the bread and the blood that you would allow them, God, to taste and see everything that has just been said so that even their senses are filled with reminders of your great love.

[41:13] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Come.