

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Celebration - Week of October 26

Introduction

Probably not one of us is above grumbling at times. It may be that we are disappointed in the way something at work is being handled. Things are mismanaged and we feel like we could do a better job. Maybe the new guy/gal is fast-tracked to promotion ... and they have not paid their dues. Or it may be, we are just plain tired and have no energy to celebrate. Exhaustion is depleting us of joy *and* gratitude.

What about you? In the life of the church there are times it is hard to see the big picture and remember why we are here, what our mission is and what Christ has commissioned us for. All the new is causing things to shift, new methods being introduced, roles being changed. We can't keep up and find it hard to celebrate new people coming through the door. Why is this? God seems distant. We may even recognize an ill-spirit encroaching ... a spirit of grumbling ... taking us to a place where we don't want to be, a place of complaining instead of celebrating. The question is, are we going to stay in that place?

Background

The first two verses of Luke, chapter fifteen, sets the scene for three of the most memorable parables Jesus taught: the story of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son.

“Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with such sinful people—even eating with them! (Luke 15:1-2).

Do you find yourself in a grumbling mood these days? Not so eager to smile and celebrate. Heart toughening a bit. Everything seeming out-of-order, even muddled. You hear some of the negative words coming out of your own mouth and for the first time in your life, cynicism introducing itself to you.

Read Luke 15:1-10. As you read, ask yourself where you are in the story today.

- Who is listening?
- Why does Jesus share these parables?
- What do his teachings say about friends, rejoicing and celebration?

Now, Read Luke 15:11-32

- Where are you in this story? Are you the one asking for your inheritance now? Are you honoring your parents? Are you the father dividing the estate ahead-of-time, before his death... do you struggle with disrespect on the part of some of your children? Are you the older brother struggling with jealousy and passive aggression?
- What does true repentance look like?
- Where/when does anger show up? How does the father in Jesus' story give us a glimpse of how our heavenly Father deals with us in our grumbling and bitterness?

Consider This

If there is anyone who modeled humility it is Jesus Christ! Why does the apostle Paul say we are to emulate the attitude of Jesus when he left heaven and came to earth?

“Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross” (Philippians 2:3-8).

If the Lord Jesus Christ had not taken our place on the cross, there would be nothing to celebrate. But he did ... Hallelujah! He is the way, the truth, and the life. He *is* our joy, our exceedingly great reward! Christ alone can help us change the direction and mood of our life. We don't have to live in the hell of grumbling and complaining. And because of Jesus' ultimate gift of sacrificial love, “God elevated him to the place of highest honor, and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under

the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9-11)". This is worth celebrating; for when prodigal sons and daughters come home, heaven celebrates. And we should too.

In Closing

Read **1 Timothy 2:1-8**. What must be on our prayer list, according to these verses?

Is your life recognized by *rejoicing*? The anecdote for grumbling is prayer, and the overflow of prayer is gratitude. We can learn to *re-joy* in the Lord. How?... through worship, prayer, service, generosity, study, and introducing friends to Christ. The practice of these disciplines will help us reset an attitude of joy. Today is the day to turn from grumbling.

"Hell begins with a grumbling mood, always complaining, always blaming others ... but you are still distinct from it. You may even criticize it in yourself and wish you could stop it. But there may come a day when you can no longer. Then there will be no you left to criticize the mood or even to enjoy it, but just the grumble itself, going on forever like a machine. It is not a question of God 'sending us' to hell. In each of us there is something growing, which will BE hell unless it is nipped in the bud." ~ C.S. Lewis

Pray

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

October 26: Jeremiah 49:23-50:46, Titus 1:1-16, Psalm 97:1-98:9, Proverbs 26:13-16
October 27: Jeremiah 51:1-53, Titus 2:1-15, Psalm 99:1-9, Proverbs 26:17
October 28: Jeremiah 51:54-52:34, Titus 3:1-15, Psalm 100:1-5, Proverbs 26:18-19
October 29: Lamentations 1:1-2:22, Philemon 1:1-25, Psalm 101:1-8, Proverbs 26:20
October 30: Lamentations 3:1-66, Hebrews 1:1-14, Psalm 102:1-28, Proverbs 26:21-22
October 31: Lamentations 4:1-5:22, Hebrews 2:1-18, Psalm 103:1-22, Proverbs 26:23
November 1: Ezekiel 1:1-3:15, Hebrews 3:1-19, Psalm 104:1-23, Proverbs 26:24-26

CELEBRATION

Text: Luke 15:1-10, 1 Timothy 2:1-6

Plain Truth

The Church's mission is to bring the

_____, angry, and _____ to
Jesus so they might _____ and
heaven _____.

1. Do you have a _____ spirit?
2. Have you found _____ in the _____ so you can _____ when he _____?

"Commitment Sunday for Vision 2:28 is November 23rd."

October 26, 2025