

Psalm 22

In our waiting room times, it is easy to become focused on what we want and what we don't have. This type of thinking, left unchecked, turns to discontent. A discontented heart reveals itself with whining, complaining, and murmuring. Once these attitudes are present, we lose perspective of our circumstances. Here are a few things that I have found to be true when discontent settles in the heart:

1. **We start looking at what others have.** As we begin comparing what we don't have to what others have, it allows for a spirit of unhappiness to take a hold of our hearts, driving our emotions and feelings. We begin to think...*if only I had something different, of something would change, then I could be happier.*
2. **We begin to doubt God.** We doubt His goodness, His love, His promises, His presence, His power, His ability to work things out and provide. In essence, we begin to doubt the very character of God.
3. **We forget to look for the purposes of God.** We neglect to wait with expectancy for the His answer. We don't lookout for the all the ways that He is fulfilling and working out His plan for our life. We don't take time to consider how He is shaping and molding us through the wait.
4. **We fail to submit to God.** As we complain, we are saying that we simply don't like His way and reject His plan and authority in our life. We desire our way.

I believe that the only cure for whining, complaining and murmuring is to express gratitude to God for His many blessings, His ways, and His timings. We can't whine and worship at the same time. We have a choice to make.

Read Philippians 4:4-8.

Use the questions that we discussed last week as you meditate on these verses. Think back through this week's lesson. As you do, prayerfully ask God:

- What thoughts did I bring in from yesterday that this verse needs to rearrange?
- What heart attitudes have I been carrying that this verse needs to redirect?

I would love to challenge you with one more thing this week that God is teaching me. This one is a wee bit harder to apply, but there is so much joy and contentment that comes with this! Look at your Tuesday notes. One of the things I mentioned is that I am trying to be intentional about praising God as I go through my day, even for the small mundane things. Well...I would

love to challenge you to go a little deeper with your praise. How about praising God for the difficult things you go through...the inconvenient things you experience....the wait that you are in. Here are a few examples had to stop and praise God for this week:

- For being an empty nester and a husband gone on business or the week
- For a lost wallet
- For an incredibly exhausting week

I want to leave you this week thinking about this excerpt taken from Stormie Omartian's book, *The Prayer That Changes Everything*.

"One of the secrets of experiencing the power of praise is to make a decision that you will worship God no matter what your circumstances are. When you get to the place where praise comes automatically, no matter what is going on, you will come to know God more intimately. And when you do, you won't be able to stop yourself from praising Him. It's easy to praise God when great things happen or when you see answers to your prayers, but what about when everything is going wrong? What is your first reaction to difficult or bad things that happen? If you blame others, yourself, or God, this only compounds the problem. It leads to more distress, misery, and difficulty. If you, instead, refuse to react to your problems in the flesh and move immediately into the realm of the spirit by praising God, things will turn out differently. When we make our first reaction to what happens in our lives a reaffirming praise to God for who He is, we invite His presence to inhabit the situation and His power to come and change things. This is the hidden power of praising God. God wants you to exalt Him and not your problems. The more you praise Him, the more you are centered on Him and the more you will be relieved of the burden of those problems. This doesn't mean you are not pretending they don't exist. It means you are saying, 'Although I have these problems, I know that You, Lord, are greater than they are. You created me. You are my heavenly Father. You are a good God. In You is everything I need for my life, and I choose to exalt You above all.' When you become convinced of the power of praise in every situation, and understand all that is accomplished when you are a true worshipper of God, your life will be changed forever."

Application:

Write out what God is teaching you this week and what steps you are going to take to apply it in your own life.