

Shaping Holy Hearts, Chill and be Still

How quickly we forget!

I was lamenting the fact that I don't have any windows in my office to my hubby last week. His response caught me short.

"Well, you didn't even have a job a month ago," he said.

Boom! He was right. I have a job I love in my community. How in the world could I find something to complain about in the middle of this amazing blessing?

Ahh, the human factor. No matter how hard I try, my humanity sometimes gets the best of me. And it's been that way since the beginning. Adam and Eve had everything anyone could even think about, yet they wanted more. (Genesis 3)

The fall in the garden led to grumbling. Today, I think we have taken grumbling to new heights never seen before. People will complain about anything! I once saw a social media post with a little boy covered in chocolate. His mom shared it for fun. Almost half the comments were complaints about how messy he was, how much chocolate he ate, or that he was in a diaper only. The beauty of that sweet moment was lost in a cloud of complaints.

Read Exodus 16:3-9

Israel is out of bondage. They are on their way to the land promised to their ancestor, Abraham, 100's of years ago. They have seen the miracles of their God, including the Passover of the death of their firstborn. There is much to celebrate! (Exodus 11-15)

Yet two months into their journey, they are complaining about food, for the second time. They have "bread from heaven," but they want more; now they need meat.

Israel complains to Moses and Aaron, but Aaron clarifies that they are complaining to God. Their disrespect for all He's done is incredible. But God! Even in their grumbling, He shows so much love and grace and provides for their wants and their needs. He does also offer a test of obedience as well.

Read Philippians 4:10-13

I have a friend who is so good at waiting on God. I admire her for many reasons, but I am in awe of her ability to be content in waiting. She trusts God so fully that the waiting room is a place of joy for her. Because she knows God's timing is perfect. She waited for her husband; today, God has given her exactly the right man for her to spend the rest of her earthly life.

Here's the thing: I absolutely believe God's timing is perfect, and am living proof of that fact. Yet, I still try to make things happen on my own. I want to be more like Paul. He had a seemingly perfect life before he met the Messiah on the road to Damascus. (Philippians 3:4-6) Paul has

learned to live joyfully in whatever circumstances he is living in. He puts all of his confidence in Christ, knowing that is where he finds his strength.

Friends, our abundant life is found in Jesus. We can't count on the abundance of the world, but we can absolutely rely on God's abundance! Whether we have need or we have plenty, he will meet our needs.

Grumbling comes easier than joy these days. In fact, grumbling comes naturally, but we have to be intentional about our joy. Joy is a choice! Grumbling is too; it's just easier to go there. Years ago, I wore a rubber band around my wrist. I would try to remember to snap it when my thoughts went toward the negative, like complaining or grumbling. It took a while, but it did help me think more positively. But it was a process; it took time to get there. And it was very intentional.

What can you do to be more intentional about joy? Is it a rubber band? Or something else? That's our challenge this week. Find a way to be more intentional about joy.

Prayer - Abba, how quickly we forget your goodness, your love, and your holiness. Again and again, we think we can do it on our own. Over and over you just love us, offer grace and show us the way toward you. We are sorry that we forget, and we ask for your forgiveness. Thank you! Thank you for second, third and more chances. We love you! Amen.

Dive deeper

Read Exodus 14:10-20

My brain (and, let's face it, my mouth) is constantly busy. Sometimes during my prayer time, I can't be still enough to hear God. Israel had that problem too. AS Pharaoh and his men got closer to the Israelites in the riverbed, they were terrified and cried out to Moses.

"Don't be afraid, Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. Those Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still." Exodus 14:13-14

God will fight for us! We need only to be still. I love this so much. I don't have to fight for peace, He is fighting for me, I just need to be still. You don't need to fight for confidence, strength, love, or whatever it is you need today. He will fight for you! You need only to be still.

Our world thrives on busy and getting things done on our own. But you don't have to anymore. There is freedom in waiting for Him. We are free when we are content in our circumstances!