

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

September 18

2022

Make No Provisions For Sin.

Have you ever heard the story about the father who leaves his son at home on Saturday afternoon because his son was not feeling well? He tells his son, “Don’t go swimming with your buddies.” The son says, “Yes sir!” But when the dad returns, he notices his son playing with the other boys. He stops the car, calls his son over, and says, “I told you not to go swimming.” The boy responds, “But I didn’t intend to go swimming. I just came down to watch, and I fell in.” The dad began feeling sorry for his son until he noticed he had his bathing suit on! to which his son explained, “I brought that along...in case the temptation got the best of me.”

Truth is, we can make sin easy. Can’t we? If you struggle with lust or looking at pornography, you probably shouldn’t pick up that magazine with those pictures in it, even though there may be an interesting article in it. If you struggle with alcohol, you probably shouldn’t find yourself at a bar with your friends or be around them while they’re drinking, even if you’re determined not to drink. If you struggle with gossiping, then perhaps getting your haircut by the town gossip is not the place for you, even if she’s the

best hairdresser in the area. If you don’t want to cheat on your spouse, then you probably shouldn’t take another woman out to supper, talk with her on the phone, or message her about her day, even if you don’t think it’s going to lead to anything. And you can apply that to any other sin you’re struggling with.

We fool ourselves. We lie to ourselves. We justify ourselves. We say “I’m not going to do this,” but we inch closer and closer. And we make sin easy, in case "temptation gets the best of us." If we’re honest with ourselves. We want to sin. So, we get as close to the borderline as possible and we bring our “swimming trunks with us” just in case. But Paul says in Romans 13:14 “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.” In other words, don’t make sinning easy. Don’t make it convenient for yourself. Sin doesn't just "happen" without any context.

Don’t forget that Satan makes the path to sin easy. Jesus says to enter the difficult and narrow way that leads to life, because “wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.” So, don’t even pick up the magazine. Don’t even go to the hairdressers. Don’t even call or message her. Why would we even want to? It's not difficult to avoid drinking poison, is it? Instead, we really need to focus on “putting on Christ." Making provisions for the Lord. Scheduling time to get in the Word each day (Meditate on it, pray through it). Spend regular time in prayer. Make ourselves accountable to others.

✍️ Curtis Cooper

Stop complaining!

Me to others: "Stop complaining."

Me to myself: "You first!"

God to me: "Do ALL things without grumbling and complaining."
(Philippians 2:14)

How is that going for you? Let's put this in perspective:

"Live in America without grumbling and complaining" - How is that going?

"Pay taxes... submit to those in power... be a good citizen... be a good neighbor... wait in line at Walmart without grumbling and complaining" - How is that going?

"Go to work every day without grumbling and complaining" – How is that going?

"Be married... Have kids... Have friends... without grumbling and complaining." – How is that going?

"Be a part of the church without grumbling and complaining." - How is that going?

Me in my mind: Surely what He means is "Do some stuff without grumbling and complaining, but not everything... that would be impossible!"

That's not what He said.

"Grumbling and complaining" is a phrase that harkens back to the Israelites when God delivered them from Egyptian bondage. They were delivered from rigorous slavery. They were given water,

mana, God's presence, and God's law. They were given everything but weren't thankful for any of it. They murmured and complained against it all! Even though God said, "You are my children!" they sure didn't look or sound like children of God! They were just complainers. Do you remember what happened to them? They wandered in the wilderness until that generation died and missed the promised land.

The church at Philippi was a great church, but from what I can tell from this letter, the biggest struggle was disunity. Two women, Euodia and Syntyche (Philippians 4:2), were not getting along. What does grumbling and complaining do for the unity of the church? It destroys it. If we are always grumbling and complaining about them, we're not going to be united with them. We just need to stop being selfish and seek their best interest (Philippians 2:3-5).

Complaining shows a lack of gratitude, patience, trust, and resistance to change. Complaining is a destructive attitude of dying people. So, I'd say we could all use a little less complaining in our lives. This week let's challenge ourselves and work on complaining less and giving thanks and trusting God more.

✍️ Curtis Cooper

Belleville church of Christ

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www.bellevillechurch.net

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

Brad Phillips..... (765) 720-2816