



PARKSIDE CHAPEL

LIFE NEWS



DASHBOARD WARNING LIGHT

The weekly newsletter article of Parkside Chapel
parksidevisalia.org

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I have found that there are two types of people. Those who immediately deal with the warning lights on their dashboards and those who say, "I can hold off for a while." All sorts of lights, check engine, low gas, wiper fluid, etc. are displayed.

Recently, someone else was driving my car. After five minutes of them driving my car, I got a phone call. They asked me, "Did you know that your check oil light was on?" I replied, "Yeah, it has been on for weeks." This was very concerning to her. I knew it was on because I had forgotten to reset it after my last oil change, but she didn't know that. She was concerned about the car and her safety. It was a warning light I had been ignoring for weeks, which could have been dangerous.

Sometimes we ignore similar warnings in our own lives. Maybe we've been snippy for weeks with our kids and co-workers. We apologize, but nothing has changed. Or we have been sad off and on but can't pinpoint why. Lots of different "dashboard warnings" can indicate different things. How about this one? You find yourself complaining about things a lot more. "I can't believe this person did this!" "How could this person even think that was smart?" "Why does this always happen to me?" "If one more thing happens to me...!" It is like that old Charlie Brown cartoon with that, "Woe is me" attitude.

Complaining is most often times focusing on the negative things instead of focusing on what God is doing or

has promised to do. Scripture speaks to this in several places, yet it might be most clearly stated in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." Those three phrases: rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances are hard, especially when life seems out of control. It would be a lot easier to focus on the negative and get some pity from people than to rejoice, pray, and give thanks.

The reality is that bad stuff does happen. Paul, in this letter, isn't asking you to ignore it. He is asking you to bring it to Jesus (grieve if needed) and allow him to speak to the situation. The Bible is asking you to fix your eyes on Jesus. You see this with David over and over again in the Psalms. He complains to God, and then you see him begin to rejoice and give thanks.

Is there a dashboard light going on with your complaining? Do you need to repent or grieve and bring it to God? In this season of gratitude, as we prepare for Thanksgiving, let us make a fresh start, changing our attitudes to that of giving thanks in all circumstances. No matter what is going on in our life, let's take the eternal perspective and not just complain about the negative. Let's not keep looking down at our problems, but let us fix our eyes on Jesus.

My friends, rejoice, pray, and give thanks... for this is the will of God.