

The Secret to a Worshipful Life Part 1

“He is considered to be one of the greatest pioneer missionaries of all time. He was the son of a minister with such brilliance that he taught himself to read at the age of three, and by his tenth year he knew Latin and Greek and was a serious student of theology.

At the age of 16 he entered Brown University and graduated three years later as the valedictorian of his class. While at Andover Theological Seminary he could not get away from the words of a missionary appeal, ‘Go ye into all the world.’

So in 1810 he helped form the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and, two years later, he and his new wife, sailed for India. But when the government refused to allow them to enter the country, they went to Burma, where they worked for six years before winning a single convert.

During those years they were plagued with ill health, loneliness, and the death of their baby son. Then he was imprisoned for nearly two years, during which time his wife faithfully visited him, smuggling to him his books, papers, and notes, which he used in translating the Bible into the Burmese language.

However, soon after his release from prison, his wife and their baby daughter died of spotted fever. So he withdrew into seclusion into the interior, where he completed the translation of the whole Bible into Burmese.

Then in 1845 he returned for a visit to America, but the burning desire to win the Burmese people sent him back where he cried out, ‘I will not leave Burma, until the cross is planted there forever!’ And just a few years later, he died.

But when all was said and done, thirty years after his death, Burma had 63 Christian churches, 163 missionaries, and over 7,000 baptized converts, and one hundred years later, on the anniversary of his death, Burma had some 200,000 Christians. His name of course was, Adoniram Judson.”

Now folks, I don't know about you, but I'd say ol' **Adoniram Judson** had a pretty cool life as a Christian, you know what I'm saying? In fact, so much so that I'd say **now that** is A Life Worth Living For, amen? But that's right folks, **we've got a problem**. You see, even though God's the same God and we're just as much His children as Adoniram Judson is, most Christians read the Bible in one hand and take a look at their life in the other and say, "Man, something's missing here. Something doesn't match, something's not right. What's going on? Why do these people like Adoniram Judson get to have an amazing walk with Jesus Christ and here I am keep fumbling around in the dark? I don't have a life worth living for. I've got a life worth giving up!" But people of God, I here to tell you, it doesn't have to be that way! Wake up! This is the incredible news. That kind of life, a life worth living for like Adoniram Judson had, is available to every to every single Christian!

Therefore, in order to help you and I stop living lives worth giving up and start living lives worth living for, we're going to begin a study entitled just that, "**A Life Worth Living For.**" And what we're going to do is take a look at **four different keys** that I believe are absolutely pivotal if we're ever going to have lives like Adoniram Judson had.

And folks, it's pretty simple. The **first key** that unlocks **A Life Worth Living For** is when you and I finally discover **The Secret To A Worshipful Life**. And people, I'm here to tell you that this was the same discovery I had to make right off the bat as a brand new Christian. You see, I came out of the heavy metal bar scene full of drugs and sexual immorality. Therefore, it was a no-brainer that when I gave this life to Jesus that I needed to make a "clean break" from the life **I was living**. However, I had a problem. You see, I like being around people but here I was dropping all former ties and starting all over. So there I was, excited about Jesus but lonely and depressed. I was stuck in *Hee-Haw* theology. I'm sure you have been there before. You know, "gloom, despair, and agony on thee. Whoa! Deep, dark depression, and lots of misery." Well, then my sister Terri came out from Kansas to disciple me. However, I continued with my whining and complaining of "poor me, poor lonely me." And apparently she had had enough and I must admit that I was quite emotionally draining to be around. But, she said something to me that changed my walk with the Lord forever; something that once and for all altered the course I would take with God. Terri looked straight at me and said, "You need to make up your mind right now, before you go any further in your walk with Jesus. Who are you going to glorify? God or satan?"

And people, I'm here to tell you that if you and I are ever going to have a life worth living for, then I need to challenge you like my sister did to me long ago. **Who are you going to glorify?** Who will you worship with your life? God or satan? And what comes out of your mouth reveals who it is. But don't take my word for it. Let's listen to God's.

Luke 6:43-45 "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks."

Now folks, according to our text, Jesus made it abundantly clear as to how you and I can tell whether or not someone is being a bearer of good fruit or bad fruit, or in other words, what their true colors were, right? What did He say was the indicator? It was what is coming out of their mouths, right? Not their doctrinal statement. Not the clothes they wear. But the words coming out of their mouth.

And people, I'm telling you it's the same thing when it comes to worshipping God. You can **say** all you want that you worship God, but what comes out of your **mouth** reveals who you're really glorifying. And in case you don't know, like my sister told me, you have two choices. Every single day as a Christian you are either glorifying God or you're glorifying satan, **with your mouth!**

Therefore, it's pretty simple. If you do nothing but constantly whine and complain with your mouth, stop kidding yourself. You're not glorifying God, you're not glorifying satan. **Why?** Because think about it people. Isn't that what the devil does to God 24 hours a day 7 days a week? Doesn't he whine, doesn't he complain, doesn't he make accusations against God for doing this or doing that? Of course he does! He's the devil, the great accuser **or complainer!** And so if we complain like the devil, stop kidding yourself, we're glorifying the devil. And I don't know about you, but I'd say a life that glorifies the devil, is not a life worth living for, amen?

Therefore, if we're going to stop glorifying the devil and start glorifying God, I'd say we better look at the harmful affects of complaining against God, how about you? Hey, you're not complaining are you? And people, it's pretty clear. The **first affect** of complaining is that **It Affects You**. And the **first way** complaining affects you is that **It Shrivels the Heart**.

Proverbs 12:25 "An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up."

Proverbs 15:13 "A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit."

Proverbs 17:22; 18:14 "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. A man's spirit sustains him in sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear?"

Wow! Now folks, maybe it's just me but I'd say drying up the bones is pretty bad, you know what I'm saying? **And here's my point.** What caused that to happen? Not a happy cheerful heart that expresses kind words, but a what? A crushed broken heart that apparently **has no kind words**, like this lady.

“A New York woman was at her hairdresser's on Park Avenue getting her hair styled prior to a trip to Rome with her husband. She mentioned the trip to the hairdresser, who responded, ‘Rome? Why would anyone want to go there? It's crowded and dirty. You're crazy to go to Rome. So, how are you getting there?’

‘We're taking Continental,’ was the reply. ‘We got a great rate!’

‘Continental?’ exclaimed the hairdresser. ‘That's a terrible airline. Their planes are old, and they're always late. So, where are you staying in Rome?’

‘We'll be at this exclusive little place over on Rome's left bank called Teste’

‘Don't go any further. I know that place. Everybody thinks its going to be something special and exclusive, but it's really a dump, the worst hotel in the city! The rooms are small, the service is rotten and they're overpriced. So, what are you doing when you get there?’

‘We're going to go to see the Vatican and we hope to see the Pope.’

‘That's rich,’ laughed the hairdresser. ‘You and a million other people trying to see him. He'll look the size of an ant. Boy, good luck on this lousy trip of yours. You're going to need it.’

A month later, the woman again came in for a hairdo. The hairdresser asked her about her trip to Rome.

‘It was wonderful,’ explained the woman, ‘not only were we on time in one of Continental's brand new planes, but it was overbooked and they bumped us up to first class. And the hotel was great!’

They'd just finished a \$5 million remodeling job and now it's the finest hotel in the city. In fact, they were overbooked, so they apologized and gave us their owner's suite at no extra charge!

'Well,' muttered the hairdresser, 'That's all well and good, but I know you didn't get to see the Pope.'

'Actually, we were quite lucky, because as we toured the Vatican, a Swiss Guard tapped me on the shoulder and explained that the Pope likes to meet some of the visitors and if I'd be so kind as to step into his private room and wait, the Pope would personally greet me.'

Sure enough, five minutes later, the Pope walked through the door and shook my hand and spoke a few words to me.'

'Oh, really?' the hairdresser replied sarcastically. 'What did he say?'

He said, 'Where'd you get the lousy hairdo?'"

Now that hairdresser had a big problem didn't she? And can anybody guess what it might be? She had a problem with complaining, didn't she? **And here's my point.** It didn't just affect a hairdo, it affected her what? It affected her heart right? How do we know? Because let's be honest people, how many of you would want to hang out with that hairdresser? Yeah, nobody, right? Hanging out with a person like that dries up the bones, right? **Why?** Not just because she makes a lousy hairdo, but because she has a shriveled heart **as was evidenced by her words**, by her mouth, right? And people, if we're not careful, a life of constant complaining will suck the

spiritual life right out of us. It will dry up our bones just like that, just like the Bible says!

So the question is, “How does a person get this way?” How do we go from one moment to having a happy cheerful heart that shares kind words to a crushed broken heart that has no kind words? Well, I think it happens something like this. You see, when we go through any experience, good, bad, or ugly, we have a choice to make. We can either focus on God and put our faith in Him that trust that He knows what He’s doing and thus keep on praising Him with a **positive attitude**. **Or**, we can focus only on the situation, doubt God, and start complaining and develop a negative attitude. And people, once you choose to only see the negative, the negative is all you will see, like this guy did.

“Jim Smith went to Church service on Sunday morning. He heard the organist miss a note during the prelude, and he winced. He saw a teenager talking when everybody was supposed to be bowed in silent prayer. He felt like the usher was watching to see what he put in the offering plate and it made him boil.

He caught the preacher making a slip of the tongue five times in the sermon by actual count. As he slipped out through the side door during the closing hymn, he muttered to himself, ‘Never again, what a bunch of clods and hypocrites!’

Ron Jones went to Church service one Sunday morning. He heard the organist play an arrangement of ‘A Mighty Fortress’ and he was thrilled at the majesty of it. He heard a young girl take a moment in the service to speak her simple moving message of the difference her faith makes in her life.

He was glad to see that the Church was sharing in a special offering for the hungry children of Nigeria. He especially appreciated the sermon that Sunday—it answered a question that had bothered him for a long time.

He thought as he walked out the doors, ‘How can a man come here and not feel the presence of God?’

Both men went to the same Church service, on the same Sunday morning. Each found what he was looking for. What do we look for on Sunday morning?”

But more importantly, what do we look for in each and every day?

Where is our focus? People of God, when are we ever going to learn that we are never at the mercy of our circumstances and complaining is something we **do not have to do!** It’s a choice! Just like those two men you can either focus on God and trust that He knows what He’s doing and thus keep on praising Him with a positive attitude **or** you can focus on your self, start whining and complaining when you don’t get what you want, and develop a negative attitude. And once you do that, not only is the negative the only thing you will see, but now you’re running the risk of shriveling up your heart.

So how can you tell when a person is either heading down this deadly road or maybe is already well on their way there? Well, what did Jesus say? What we store in our hearts, dictates what our mouths speak. Therefore, the process of a shriveled heart begins with complaining.

Oh, but that's not all. The **second way** in which **Complaining Affects You** is that **It Springs forth Bitterness**.

Hebrews 12:14-15 "Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord. Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many."

Now folks, according to our text, you and I as Christians not only need to be working at living peaceful holy lives, but we need to simultaneously watch out for what? That we don't end up living bitter poisonous lives, right? **Why?** Because what did the text say? Bitterness doesn't just affect you, it affects the people around you right? Let's be honest. How many of you have ever run across a bitter person? One, we're they a joy to be around? No! And two, did the bitterness just stay with them? Are you kidding! It oozed from them, right? It affects everyone they encounter!

So the question is, "How does a person get this way?" How do we go from one moment living a peaceful holy life to a bitter poisonous life? Well, believe it or not folks, **it begins with complaining!** We've already seen that once a person **chooses** to not trust in God in their circumstances and start whining and complaining instead of praising, they develop a shriveled heart. But the danger is the longer you let this go on and on and on and keep

complaining, whining, and grumbling, it will ultimately spring forth bitterness. And then rather than immediately turning around at this first warning sign and getting our focus back on God, we instead justify our path to bitterness with statements like these. “You have no idea what they did to me! You have no idea the trials I’ve had to endure. The pain they’ve caused me was totally unfair! Who are you to tell me to just trust God! How quaint!” But people when are we ever going to learn that we are never at the mercy of our circumstances and bitterness is something we **don’t have to live with!** It’s a choice! Either focus on God and trust that He knows what He’s doing or refuse to trust in God keep that root of bitterness growing. But people, the Scripture is clear. Bitterness will always inflict a deeper wound on the person who harbors it, than the person to whom it’s directed to, like this couple found out.

“A man who had car trouble on a lonely road asked a farmer to tow him to the nearest garage.

On the way his wife was complaining to her husband the fee the farmer charged. ‘It is scandalous,’ she said, ‘to charge us ten dollars for towing this car for only three miles.’

To which her husband replied, ‘Never mind, dear. I’m having my revenge—I’ve got my brakes on.’”

People of God, how many times do we have to get fooled like that couple before we learn what the Scripture is trying to tell us. The whole time

you think you're getting your revenge on that person by being bitter and holding that grudge, you're actually damaging yourself! In fact, let me clue you in on the truth. The person you're holding that grudge towards, maybe even years ago, has probably long forgotten about it! You're the one who's being destroyed by constantly carrying around the pain! **Why?** Because somewhere along the line you refused to trust in God in that He knows what He's doing and instead hold on to a grudge and keep that root of bitterness growing.

So how can you tell when a person is either heading down this deadly road or maybe is already well on their way there? Well, what did Jesus say? What we store in our hearts, dictates what our mouths speak. Therefore, the process of a bitter heart begins with complaining.

And in order to make sure that we are all on the same page and clearly understand that a life of complaining **really is a choice**, consider this amazing truth. "If a man has Limburger cheese on his upper lip, he thinks the whole world smells." Yet, if he would only flick the stinky cheese off his lip, what would happen? Life would smell good again, right? And people, when it comes to a life of complaining, it's just like that. Sometimes we just need to flick off that negative attitude by trusting in the fact that God knows

what He's doing and guess what? Just like that, the world doesn't stink anymore and life is good and there's no reason to complain!

People of God, don't you see what's going on here? Not all of our battles are against flesh and blood. There's more going on here than meets the eye. The devil wants you to join him by shaking a fist at God. **How?** By accusing Him saying, "God You're no good. You don't know what you're doing. I know what's right. I know what I need and I'm going to whine and complain until I get it my way! And besides, there's no way to go through life without complaining. It's impossible!" But people, hello, **one** God said to so it is possible, and **two** look at the life of Adoniram Judson. Did he have a perfect life? Did things always go his way? Are you kidding! Let's not just look of the fruit. Let's look at the pain.

"One of the world's most horrible 17 months of imprisonments was endured by Adoniram Judson. Little food was given to him. His feet were bound to a large bamboo pole, his hands to another, and at night his feet were lifted higher than his head. Thus he was to swing suspended on the small of his back, his feet tied to a raised pole.

His heroic wife brought little bits of food to him, although she and the baby were near death at times themselves and eventually died from the rigors of life in Burma. What was Judson doing during these days in prison?

Translating the Bible, hiding his work in a hard pillow which nobody investigated. Many times, smitten down with disease and at death's door, he breathed out the prayer, 'Lord, let me finish my work. Spare me long enough to put Your saving Word into the hands of a perishing people.'

For pure physical suffering for the sake of the Gospel, Judson must be near the top of most lists. On one occasion, pitifully weak and emaciated, he was driven in chains across the burning tropical sands, until, his back lacerated and his feet covered with blisters, he fell to the ground and prayed for a speedy death.

For almost two years he was incarcerated in a prison too vile to house animals with vermin crawling everywhere. Fellow prisoners were whipped and, worse still, led forth at three in the afternoon for execution. He never knew what day would be his turn.

And speaking at the dedication of the Judson Memorial Church in New York City, a son, Edward, spoke referring to his father: ‘Suffering and success go together. If you are succeeding without suffering, it is because others before you have suffered; if you are suffering without succeeding, it is that others after you may succeed.

Adoniram Judson probably illustrated this truth as much as any man who ever lived.”⁶

Now folks, maybe it’s just me but if anyone had a “right” to complain it was Adoniram Judson, right? But people, what did he do? Somewhere along the line **he had a choice to make**. And apparently he chose once and for all not whine and complain against God but to worship God! That’s the secret! He chose to glorify God, not the devil. And because of that, what happened? God used that man in a mighty mighty way.

And people, I’m here to tell you that it’s the same choice with you and I. If you’re sick and tired of reading the Bible in one hand and looking at you’re life in the other thinking something doesn’t match up here, then you too need to choose once and for all, what kind of life you want to live. A

whiny crybaby sad excuse for a Christian life that whines at the slightest infraction, or a life that worships God glorifying His name no matter what comes your way. And if you choose to glorify God, then you'll not only discover **The Secret To A Worshipful Life** like Adoniram Judson did, but you'll be empowered to finally have A Life Worth Living For!

To find the way to God, to understand the *truth* of God's Word, and to receive the gift of eternal *life*, begin by repentance and faith through a prayer like this:

“Dear God, I understand that I have broken Your Law and sinned against You. Please forgive my sins. Thank You that Jesus suffered on the cross in my place. I now place my trust in Him as My Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”
