

your life – are your actions portraying a sick heart? If complaining has become a way of life, then return to Christ and ask for help – and try these things:

Avoid Complaining by:

- 1) **ASSOCIATING WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE.** I loved to complain at Harvest. “Bad Company corrupts good morals.” Cream in the coffee
- 2) **SPEAKING WORDS OF LIFE.** Proverbs 18:21, “The tongue has the power of life and death.” The prayer request gossip
- 3) **GIVING THANKSGIVING FOR WHAT YOU HAVE.** 1 Thessalonians 5:18, “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Conclusion: Imagine if we understood the power of peace in this body. We would be so tight, nothing could tear up apart – no tool of the devil, no wolf in our pack of sheep, no storm of circumstances that life may bring. So let’s make sure we:

- Don’t lie
- Don’t repay evil
- Don’t judge
- Don’t complain
- DO HOLD FAST TO CHRIST!

Let’s pray.

Announcements:

1. Creekside Connection
2. Giving
3. Guest services
4. Elder Nominations

Appendix:

“A Christmas Carol”

On Christmas Eve in 1870, during the Franco-Prussian War, an intense battle was taking place between French and German soldiers. Suddenly, a French soldier jumped from the trenches, exposing himself to the enemy’s fire. Before either side could figure out what to do, he began singing *Cantique de Noel—O Holy Night* in English. Each side stood frozen as he sang of the birth of the Messiah. As the last chords of his solo faded into the night, a German soldier emerged from his hideout and began to sing *From Heaven Above to Earth I Come*, a popular Christmas carol in Germany. Both sides apparently joined together to sing an Austrian carol, and fighting ceased for the following 24 hours.

No one is really sure that this event actually happened like this but there is enough evidence to piece together a story and believe that a story similar to this did once occur. Those soldiers obviously had some pretty great differences between them, and yet they were able to lay those differences aside for one night in order to celebrate something they had in common: Christ.

How often are we more marked by our differences than by our commonalities? How often do we allow petty arguments with a friend or a family member distract us enough so we lose sight of the true significance Christmas represents.

This Christmas season, I challenge you to lay aside your quarrels and qualms and look to Christ. As you sing your favorite Christmas carols this year, choosing to live above about pain some person may have caused you and remember why Christ came to earth. Christmas is all about God himself forgot the sinful shame His people had caused and reconciling them to Himself.

Think of the sacrifice that the French soldier took just to set down his gun and stand on the top of his barricade and begin singing a song of peace. Not only did he lay down his weapon, but he put at rest his fears and anger to recall to Himself, his comrades and his enemies the true source of peace – Jesus Himself!

Be like that! Take the challenge of that man’s example to overcome your own fears and animosities so you may come close to those who have hurt you and even closer to the God who sent His son to save you!