

# Growing Stronger Together

## Attitude • Message 3

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### August 31, 2025

#### Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- Pray for hope rooted in God's providence.
- Pray to live by faith, not fear or control.
- Pray for a deeper relationship with Christ day by day.

#### Scripture Reading:

*Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.*

#### Philippians 2:14-15 (NLT)

#### A. Introduction: Series Title, *Growing Stronger Together*

**(Exodus 16:1-2. C/R: Exodus 14:31; Philippians 2:14)**

Today's message is entitled **Attitude**, based on Exodus 16:1-12.

1. *Attitude* refers to our outlook and our approach, especially when facing hardship or suffering.
2. Our attitude affects our relationships - with God and with others.
3. **Philippians 2:14 (NLT)** - *Do everything without complaining and arguing,*
4. How does this apply to our passage? Setting the scene: Jews were enslaved in Egypt for 430 years; they were harshly oppressed and cried out in distress due to their suffering.
5. God heard their cries, called Moses to lead Israel out of their oppression in Egypt. (Exodus 3)
6. Pharaoh released the Israelites following God's display of power through plagues, then changed his mind and sent soldiers after them, trapping Israel beside the Red Sea.
7. Moses held his staff over the sea and God parted it, allowing the Israelites to pass through on dry ground; when Egyptians followed, the sea collapsed, drowning them (Exodus 14)
8. **Exodus 14:31 (NLT)** - *When the people of Israel saw the mighty power that the LORD had unleashed against the Egyptians, they were filled with awe before him. They put their faith in the LORD and in his servant Moses. [Would this attitude last?]*
9. After passing through the Red Sea, the Israelites traveled for three days in the desert with no water, then finding water that was too bitter to drink (*Marah*=bitter). [Exodus 15:22-25a]
10. The people complained and turned against Moses; Moses prayed, and God provided a piece of wood that Moses threw into the water, and it turned the water sweet. (Exodus 15:25)
11. Then they traveled to the oasis of Elim, where they found twelve springs. (Exodus 15:27)
12. You might expect this repeated display of God's power and provision would cause the people to trust Him wholeheartedly and embrace Moses as leader without reservation.
13. That's not what happened: following the water crisis, the Israelites faced a food crisis.
14. **Exodus 16:1-2 (NLT)** - *Then the whole community of Israel set out from Elim and journeyed into the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Mount Sinai. They arrived there on the fifteenth day of the second month, one month [!] after leaving the land of Egypt. There, too, the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron.*
15. By this time, all the food the Israelites gathered before leaving Egypt was gone, so they are starving in a desert wilderness with nothing to eat; what did they do? Complained!
16. APP.: Do you ever complain? Against whom? God or other people? What results?

## B. Effects of our Attitudes (Exodus 16:3-12)

### 1. Resenting circumstances creates **MISTRUST**.

(Exodus 16:3. C/R: Psalm 106:24-25; Philippians 2:14-15; 1 Thessalonians 5:18)

1. **Exodus 16:3 (NLT)** - *"If only the LORD had killed us back in Egypt," they moaned. "There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death."* [Numbers 11:4-6; 14:1-4, 27-28]
2. These Israelites, away from Egypt for only a month, remembered they had plenty to eat while enslaved, but forgot the bondage, the beatings, the misery of their forced labor.
3. They acknowledged God set them free, but complained about His care for them, saying He should have killed them in Egypt instead of having Moses bring them to this desert to die.
4. These people preferred their former enslavement over their current famine, and they had developed no confidence in God despite His delivery of them from Pharaoh's grasp.
5. These complaints show that these people did not know God, His nature or His character.
6. They were self-centered instead of God-centered; their feelings toward God were controlled by their current circumstances instead of their previous experience with Him.
7. APP.: Do you forget God's past faithfulness in the midst of present problems?
8. Focusing on your problems and resenting God for not removing them will lead to mistrusting Him and doubting His love and care for you.
9. APP.: Do you complain when God delays providing what you ask for?
10. A complaining spirit reveals a lack of trust in God; it shows you don't know His nature.

### Another effect of our attitudes...

### 2. Recognizing God's response builds **FAITH**.

(Exodus 16:4-8. C/R: Romans 5:3-4; James 1:2-3; 1 Peter 1:6-7)

1. Instead of punishing Israel for their grumbling, God graciously provided them a miraculous abundance of food in an incredible way!
2. **Exodus 16:4a (NLT)** - *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Look, I'm going to rain down food from heaven for you. Each day the people can go out and pick up as much food as they need for that day."* [Sun would melt what was left, then it reappeared the next morning.]
3. What was this food? *Manna*, which in Hebrew means, *"What is it?"*
4. It was referred to as *grain (or bread) from heaven* and the *food of angels* (Psalm 78:24-25)
5. Manna was white like small coriander seeds and appeared shiny like gum resin; it tasted like honey wafers. [Exodus 16:31; Numbers 11:7]
6. It could be ground or pounded into flour, boiled in a pot or baked into flat cakes, which tasted like pastries baked with olive oil. (Numbers 11:8) [Sounds good, doesn't it?]
7. God's response in providing this *manna* was proof to these people that He did care for them and *would* provide for them; He would sustain their lives! (Nehemiah 9:15)
8. APP.: Have you seen God provide for you? Reflecting on God's provision, recognizing His response to your situation builds faith, which enables you to trust Him in difficulties.
9. **James 1:2-3 (NLT)** - *Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.* [Ill.: Seminary tuition - *prove provide*]
10. God did not punish Israel's complaining, but He would *test* their commitment to obey.
11. **Exodus 16:4b (NLT)** - *"I will test them in this to see whether or not they will follow my instructions."*
12. God's test required daily collection of manna; none kept overnight. (No leftovers!)

13. If they ignored God's instructions, what was kept would be full of maggots and stink by the next morning. (Exodus 16:16-21) (Required daily trust!)
14. One exception: **Exodus 16:5 (NLT)** - *"On the sixth day [Fri.] they will gather food, and when they prepare it, there will be twice as much as usual."* [for the Sabbath, the 7<sup>th</sup> day]
15. The test of obedience was actually a test of relationship: would the people obey God's directions because they honored Him (gather for one day), or would they hoard extra in case God didn't continue to provide? (Become maggot-ridden when we don't trust God.)
16. APP.: Do you live by faith, trusting God, following His instruction, or do you rely on self?
17. **Exodus 16:6 (NLT)** - *So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "By evening you will realize it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt."*
18. These complaining people would be dramatically reminded of God's power and goodness because- *That evening, vast numbers of quail would fly in and cover the camp (Exodus 16:13a)*, showing God's willingness to provide bountifully (tastefully) for them.
19. **Exodus 16:7 (NLT)** - *"In the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, [1<sup>st</sup> mention] because he has heard your complaints, which are against him, not against us. What have we done that you should complain about us?"* [Moses sounds defensive, doesn't he?]
20. When we don't believe that God has a purpose for every problem in our lives, we will look for someone to blame. [APP.: Stop asking God "why" and start asking "what" He wants you to learn from your difficulties.]
21. *Glory* (Hb. *kâbôd*, kaw-bode´ means weight, abundance, splendor, magnificence); it refers to the Presence or Person of God. (His identity and personality)
22. **Exodus 16:8 (NLT)** - *Then Moses added, "The LORD will give you meat to eat in the evening and bread to satisfy you in the morning, for he has heard all your complaints against him. What have we done? Yes, your complaints are against the LORD, not against us."* [God's glory, His Presence and His nature would be revealed in His gracious gifts.]
23. Moses repeats the word *complaints* five times in verses 7-9, highlighting Israel's critical attitude toward God, who would show His *glory*, His nature, by providing for these grumbling people, thus revealing His *grace* (unmerited favor - our salvation).
24. Their complaining reveals dissatisfaction with God, lack of a trusting relationship, a scarcity of faith; they have a demanding attitude toward Him, lacking in appreciation.
25. APP.: What is your attitude toward God?

### A further effect of our attitudes...

#### 3. Remembering God's providence develops **HOPE**.

(Exodus 16:9-12. C/R: Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 12:12; Hebrews 10:36; 1 Peter 5:7)

1. **Exodus 16:9-10 (NLT)** - *Then Moses said to Aaron, "Announce this to the entire community of Israel: 'Present yourselves before the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.'" And as Aaron spoke to the whole community of Israel, they looked out toward the wilderness. There they could see the awesome glory of the LORD in the cloud.*
2. Other descriptions of God's glory suggest there was some sort of luminescence, a glowing or shining brilliance within the cloud (Mt. Sinai; Exodus 24:15-17; Ezekiel 10:4; 43:2)
3. The people may have thought they were about to be judged, punished for their attitude.
4. **Exodus 16:11-12 (NLT)** - *Then the LORD said to Moses, "I have heard the Israelites' complaints. Now tell them, 'In the evening you will have meat to eat [quail; Exodus 16:13], and in the morning you will have all the bread you want. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'"* [Instead of punishing, He provided, displaying His glory.]
5. God's providence is His intimate involvement in your life and His care for all of your concerns, providing for you through His sovereign power.
6. He sees our needs and ignores our complaining and negative attitudes - that's His glory!

7. Manna stopped coming after the first day Israel ate crops in the Promised Land (Joshua 5:12)9. ILL.: In my experience, God provides when I can't provide for myself, but often ceases miraculous intervention when I can. EX.: Washing machine and dryer.

8. **Philippians 4:19 (NLT)** - *And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. [glory!]*

9. APP.: Do you see God at work? That's His glory reflecting on your life, giving hope!

- **Memory verse: James 1:2-3 (NLT)** - *Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.*