



MISSION CREEK

Alliance Church

Gratitude

1. Recognizing and Reframing Complaints

- The speaker shared a story about a pastor who was complaining about small negative issues despite having a **revival** in his youth group. The speaker also admitted to complaining and having an "embarrassingly low" whining point.
- **Question:** Can you identify a recent situation where you focused on a few negative things and missed seeing the good or "revival" God was doing? How can you practice consciously reframing your perspective to focus on the good, even when facing negativity?

2. Finding Joy in Adversity

- Paul, despite being in prison, repeatedly used the word "Rejoice" in his letter to the Philippians. His profound reason for joy was knowing that God would use **anything** that happens to him for good to make Jesus more real.
- **Question:** What current adversity (at work, at home, in your family) are you facing right now? How can you actively look for God working through that difficulty to make Jesus "more real" in your life?

3. The Irony of the Gospel

- The sermon highlights the amazing irony that the very things meant to stop the gospel's spread—like Paul's imprisonment—actually caused it to grow.
- **Question:** Have you ever seen God use a challenge, setback, or mistake (maybe even your **disobedience**) in your life to unexpectedly advance His good purposes? Share that story with the group.

4. Taking Risks for Christ

- The speaker suggests that we experience God most powerfully when we take **risks** for His sake, putting us "so far out on a limb that only He can hold us up". The example of Terry missing a multi-million-dollar meeting to mentor students was given.
- **Question:** What adversity or discomfort might you be avoiding right now because you are afraid of "stepping out in faith" (e.g., being more open

about your faith, starting a small group)? What miracle might you be missing out on by avoiding that risk?

5. Joy vs. Happiness

- The text differentiates between joy and happiness: happiness is about **circumstances** ("based on what's happening around us"), but joy comes only from God and is eternal.
- **Question:** Describe a time in your life when your circumstances were terrible (low happiness), but you still experienced a profound, God-given sense of **joy**? What was the source of that joy?

6. Adversity as Opportunity

- The speaker states that adversity does not mean God has abandoned us or is punishing us; instead, it is an "opportunity for us to see God at work **orchestrating good from evil**".
- **Question:** The story of the inventor who lost his company and then found his true calling teaching Sunday school is a powerful example. Looking back, can you identify an adversity in your past that you now praise God for, because it led you to a better place or a clearer calling?

7. The Infinite Yes of God (Redemption)

- The sermon concludes with the concept of the "infinite yes of God"—that our pain, crises, despair, and even our disobedience can be made to serve God's good purposes.
- **Question:** The cross is presented as the ultimate "big NO" that God turned into His "biggest yes of all". How does this truth—that God can **recreate** what we have ruined —change how you view the most negative or scary thing you are currently dealing with?