

# *“Too Blessed to Complain”*

## Psalm 23

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Guest Minister

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From the Pulpit

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# “Too Blessed to Complain”

Psalm 23

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Many of us at some time in our lives have encountered the holy stranger, we meet them by the side of the road.... you had a flat tire ... you've run out of gas.

You meet them in the grocery store.... when you get to the checkout counter and you have more groceries than you have money (and you counted very carefully before you arrived at the counter) so you know how much you have. And just as you reach to put things back, someone sees you as you are trying to put things back and the stranger says, “I’ll cover that for you.”

Holy because they enhance our lives.

The Holy Stranger comes offering something that is there and meets us in our time of need.

They are Holy and Strange because we never get their name; we never in fact truly know who they are, just when we need them, they're there.

Sometimes they change our lives momentarily and then again, they change our lives drastically.

Sometimes they change the trajectory of a life .... this Holy Stranger.

**There was a young man who sat on a stoop in a train station in tears.**

**He was going from his mediocre high school in Daytona Beach Florida to better high school in Jacksonville.**

**He had enough money to purchase his ticket but his bag, his suitcase had no handles on it and he couldn't take it with him. They wouldn't permit him to take it on the train because of some regulations. He would have to send it and that meant more money.**

**He didn't have any more money.**

And so, he sat there on the stoop wondering what he was going to do.... and a Holy Stranger walked up.

He is known only as someone dressed in denim.

He asked why the young boy was crying and he finds out.

And they move to the counter and the Holy Stranger, reaches into his billfold and takes care of the ticket to transport the trunk so that boy could go to a better high school – to Jacksonville.

And the boy never saw him again.

Never got his name.

*Who is that boy?*

His name was Howard Thurman.

Howard Thurman just happens to be one of the great religious geniuses of any century.

Howard Thurman, Dean of Marsh Chapel, Boston University and Dean of Rankin Chapel, Howard University. One of the co-founders

of one of the first interracial churches in this country; mentor to Martin Luther King and hundreds of other young men and women.

He's a legend.

Tons of books, if you ever want your mind stimulated about God and the things of God, pick up anything with the name Thurman on it. If you ever want to have your life changed and transformed just pick up anything by Howard Thurman. *Jesus and the Disinherited* ....

If you want your prayer life inspired, I dare you to read anything by Howard Thurman. But Howard Thurman never would have arrived were it not for the.... Holy Stranger.

**Isn't it interesting to trace the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King to a man dressed in denim overalls. Howard Thurman never got his name but he never forgot him. In the dedication of his book, (Howard Thurman's) *With Head and Heart*, his autobiography is dedicated to the man in overalls at the train station, is to the man who restored my broken dreams, 65 years ago.**

There are Holy Strangers....

I ran into a Holy Stranger a few years ago.

As our paths crossed. I asked her, "How you are doing today?"

And her response was, **"I'M TOO BLESSED TO COMPLAIN!"**

THATS MY MOTION THIS morning, that we are too blessed to complain. From the youngest to the oldest, we are too blessed to complain, is my motion this morning. I'm too blessed to complain.

**I will never forget those words.**

**I am moved by these words, when I look at the 23rd psalm.**

In this 23rd Psalm, I see David giving a second to the motion, too blessed to complain.

The 23rd Psalm is often referred to as the *nightingale* of Scripture

And I see that it begins with blessings...

**The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want.**

He makes me to lie down, not just in pastures, but *green* pastures.

He restores my soul.... Blessings .... we are blessed people this morning.

Just like this Psalm, we ought to start out our day with “blessings.”

Aware of our blessings....

Stevie Wonder was once asked if there was anything worse than being blind.

His response, “having your sight and being blind!”

We can have sight and not see our blessings, all around us.

In fact, if we do say anything at all we see curses and complaints and we tend to focus on the negative much more than we need to.

We wake up in the morning and before the day is started good, instead of saying good God, it's morning was that a good lord it's morning before the day gets going good we had destroyed it with negative thinking, with get up complaining about all the stuff that we have to do today that we should've done yesterday.

Before we see the bright morning sun we have darkened the day.

We've got to see a blessing first.

I have a morning exercise and I submit to you this morning that that every morning when I wake up now to try it out. If this doesn't work for you try and find something else that makes you feel blessed. I get up and I just stretch and thank God that I woke up. I inhale deeply.

And I thank God. There are a lot of folk who need a machine to do that for them.

Then I go to the kitchen and get a glass of water.

Swish it around in my dry mouth.

And thank God for clean fresh water.

There are a lot of folk in other countries who only have contaminated water to drink.

This weekend, I went into my spare bedroom - and thanked God for my home and my family and my children.

Though there is often no one there, I'm still grateful for those times past.

I'm grateful for this weekend to have them with me.... again.

Thank God for the person living in your house.

If you can go into another room in your house and *someone else is there*.

**Thank God for them.** Even if you are angry and upset.

Be grateful that they are there.

Even if you are angry and upset.....Get over it.

Someone right now has nobody....

Wishes to God that they had that somebody you are trying to get rid of.

But it doesn't stop there.

And then I pinch myself.

Not too hard. Just enough so that I can feel it.

Somebody wishes they *could* feel anything at all.

### **Too blessed to complain.**

Count your many blessings. Name them one by one.

Count your blessings ...

See what God has done

Too blessed to complain.

No, not ever.

It's got green pastures.

There's a shepherd there.

It's got still waters.

Righteous paths and the valley of the shadow of death.

We've got enemies.

Those things we complain about.

Valleys and enemies....

Too blessed to complain, ever.

No, not ever.

Trouble in my way

Gotta cry sometime.

Sometimes I feel like a motherless child.

I don't care how holy and saved you are,  
sometime sometimes you feel like a motherless child.

I'll close with this. (Let's call some witnesses....)

Too blessed to complain ever

No, not ever.

Come here Job. "I prayed that God would take my life

I wondered why I was ever born

I was in so much pain."

Come here, Mary and Martha.... Our grief took control of us.... and  
we blamed Him.

**'Master, if you had been here our brother would not have died.'**

Sometimes it's not pain.

Sometimes it's the grief.

Sometimes it's the burden.

It's the challenge that makes us complain....

Come here Jesus.

"Father. If you would just take this cup from me. "

I don't want Jesus was playing in the garden.

Have you have felt like quitting...? have you ever felt like giving up  
...? have you ever felt like stopping not just in the garden but on the

cross? "my God, my God. why have you forsaken me?"

Have you ever asked WHY?

Too blessed to complain, ever.

No, not ever... but always too blessed to complain, only.

I'm too blessed to complain, finally.

Trouble comes, but it doesn't mean you have to camp out there.  
Some folk just want to have a pity party...

The nightingale scripture doesn't end in complaints, and you shouldn't either.

I like the way it ends....surely.

Surely,

Surely. **Mercy** shall follow me always...And I will dwell...

Too blessed to complain.

Do you not know that even your troubles can be a blessing?

You've found that out, I'm sure.

Even your dark clouds can be a blessing.

There was a fellow who ended up shipwrecked on an island all by himself.

He was moping and groping complaining, but he decided to make the best of a bad situation, so he built himself a hut.

When it appeared like nobody was going to come and rescue him,  
He decided he was going to go and look for food.

While he was gone his little hut, caught fire and burned completely up.

Smoke billowing up in the air.

Something strange and unusual happened the next day.

A ship arrived and they were able to rescue this shipwreck man.

When he asked them, **“how did you know I was here?”**

Their response was, “we saw your smoke signal, last night.”

**Even your troubles can be a blessing!**

**I'm too blessed to complain....**

Weeping endures for a night.

But JOY .... Comes in the morning.

Too blessed to complain.

This is just the beginning. Trouble in my way. I have to cry  
sometimes....

Some glad morning when this life is over.

I'm still too blessed to complain.

When we all see Jesus

Blessings just started.

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