

Complaining Only Makes Things Worse

We may know it by different terms -- such as griping, grumbling, whining, or belly-aching. In the King James version of the Bible, the common term used was "murmuring." But regardless of the word we use to describe it, complaining always has the same symptoms. The dictionary defines it as "an expression of unhappiness, dissatisfaction, or discontent." Complaining is the outward expression of discontent from within.

As we look back into the Old Testament and see how God dealt with the Children of Israel, we discover that the Lord always considered their complaints as an act of unbelief directed toward Him. When they complained about their circumstances, their type of food, and even at Moses, God was displeased because they weren't thankful for what He had provided them. He was disappointed that they refused to trust in Him to provide, protect, and direct the order of their lives. "Now when the people complained, it displeased the LORD; for the LORD heard it, and His anger was aroused. So the fire of the LORD burned among them, and consumed some in the outskirts of the camp" (Numbers 11:1).

Complaining is Evidence of Unbelief

Regardless of whatever circumstances may cause discontent or dissatisfaction, complaining is always an expression of unbelief toward God's order in our life. You see, the whole premise of Christianity is that Jesus becomes the Lord (boss) of our life

and our circumstances. They are in his hands. Thus, if believers complain, it really becomes an accusation against our Lord, in whom we've trusted our lives. "...for the LORD hears your complaints which you make against Him. And what are we? Your complaints are not against us but against the LORD" (Ex. 16:8). (See also Psm. 106:24-26)

Complaining is unbelief in God's Word which says "...all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). If the Christian really believes that the Lord is in control of their life, and is working "ALL THINGS together for our good," he will stop complaining and start thanking the Lord for the plan He is working together for us.

Even when the Devil comes against our faith with trials that are "not so good," God will even turn these situations around and "work them together for good" as we remain steadfast in faith. Don't become bitter and start complaining, but continue to praise God and give thanks to God "in spite" of all things. This will prevent the Devil from overcoming you with discouragement and will send him fleeing. "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:18).

Thanksgiving is the expression of gratefulness and faith in God, and is the very opposite of complaining. Giving of thanks expresses appreciation for what God has done, what He has promised, and the confidence that He is directing our life with

His order and provision. God will answer prayers and work in the behalf of the thankful (Psm. 50:14-15).

Complaining gives Place to the Devil

The Apostle Paul warned Christians to avoid the danger of complaining. "...nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer" (1 Cor. 10:10). In this Paul indicated that complaining actually gives place to the Devil in our lives and opens the door to destruction by Satan (the destroyer). The Devil thrives in an atmosphere of complaining. Complaining can literally invoke a curse of destruction as it did in the lives of the Israelites who were destroyed in the wilderness.

The Israelites kept complaining that they were going to die in the wilderness (Num. 14:2-3), so the Lord finally got fed up with their whining and actually allowed their complaints to come upon them. He said, "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. Say to them, As I live, says the LORD, just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above" (Num. 14:27-29). The Lord allowed the Destroyer to answer their complaints with the very destruction that they confessed and predicted.

Complaining is Not for Christians

The Apostle Paul tells Christians to do all things without complaining (Phil. 2:14), and the epistle of Jude places complainers in the same category as ungodly sinners who will inherit judgment: "...to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds... These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts..." (Jude 1:15-16). Complaining is commonplace in the lives of unbelievers who have no trust in God, but Christians should be people of faith, filled with gratefulness and thanksgiving.

Besides this, the Bible teaches all believers to dwell upon the "good and virtuous" things (Phil. 4:8). So if all Christians obeyed this scripture, what would they find to complain about? Complaining is evidence of not obeying God's Word.

What about the root of complaining? As said previously, "complaining" is an expression of discontent. Therefore, if Christians were "content" in Christ Jesus as Paul said we should be, they wouldn't have anything to complain about. "...for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content" (Phil. 4:11). (See also 1 Tim. 6:8, Heb. 13:5)

I use to think people complained because they had a lot of problems. But I have come to realize that they have problems because they complain. Complaining doesn't change anything or make situations better. It amplifies frustration, spreads discontent

and discord (which God hates - Prov 6:16-19), and can invoke an invitation for the destroyer to cause havoc with our lives.

How important it is that believers guard the words of their mouth! The scriptures tell us that our words are literally the basis for whether we are justified or condemned. Realizing this, we should eradicate negative words, griping, or grumbling, and fill our mouth with praise and thanksgiving!

"But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matt. 12:36-37).

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*Unless otherwise stated, all scripture references were taken from
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