

The Terrible Consequences of Complaining

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When it comes to complaining, God has said:

James 5:9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned...

1 Peter 4:9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.

Jude 16a These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts;

Philippians 2:14 Do all things without complaining and disputing,

Simply enough, God has said it is evil to complain either against Him or against each other. The idea is not hard to understand; so why do we do it? We all struggle with learning not to complain. We know that this was Israel's great struggle (1 Corinthians 10:10 – nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.). In Numbers 14:1-5; 26-34 we read about the curse on Israel entering the Promised Land. This curse (that they would die in the desert) came about because they complained when the ten spies brought their negative message to the people. You may recall that two of the spies (Caleb and Joshua) brought the exact same news, but they viewed it through eyes that remembered the Divine power of God. A whole generation was destroyed because of complaining.

There are three “Don’ts” of complaining.

1. Don't Tempt God – In Deuteronomy 6:16 Moses told the people "You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah." He was referring to their complaining in Exodus 17:1-7. Complaining tempts God to bring about the very fate we complain about. God is tempted to punish us severely when we complain because God HATES ingratitude and a lack of confident faith.

2. Don't Tempt Yourself – In Genesis 4:4-8 Cain was upset about his sacrifice not being accepted. While the word “complain” or “grumble” is not used, the idea seems clear that Cain's attitude plummeted because he was upset that his sacrifice was not accepted. We may compare this to complaining, and then conclude that complaining is damaging to yourself. The more you complain, the worse the situation of which you are complaining becomes. As with Cain, we may do sinful deeds mindlessly when we are caught up in complaining

3. Don't Tempt Others – We read in Numbers 14 how God destroyed Israel because of their complaining. However, in Number 14:36-37 we are told that it was the complaining of the ten spies that began this catastrophe. There is something important in that message: your complaints frustrate others and stir others to their own complaints. Effectively, ten men caused the deaths of millions by complaining. We need to know that even if we are not thinking of ourselves, others are lost when we complain.

CONCLUSIONS: Complaining solves nothing. If the situation that causes complaint is fixable, complaints don't help to bring about a solution, but instead prevent resolution. If the situation is not one that can be fixed, complaining will certainly make it worse. Complaining causes souls to be lost.