

**Don't Complain: The Hardest Command For Us To Obey**  
**By Carey Scott (edited Brian Haines)**

The Bible is full of commandments that can be called difficult. Jesus teachings in Matthew 19 are called hard. It is hard to turn the other cheek. One command that we do not always appreciate as hard is this: Philippians 2:14 "Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world"(Philippians 2:14-15).

Is it normal for us to be complaining so much about everything? Complaining (whining) seems to be the norm for our society. Have you noticed how many conversations are complaints about our government, the economy, the taxes we pay, and even our weather? Why don't we think about this for a few minutes? The Bible shows us that this is a reproach on us amid a crooked and perverse generation. Some Christians complain about the sermon being too long, too dry, or too pointed. Others complain that the congregation is too small, too large, too cold, or too impersonal. When one reads the pages of the Old Testament, he will immediately notice that complaining was a grave sin that brought great judgment from God.

The Israelites were an excellent example of those who loved to complain. Though God had delivered them from Egyptian slavery and took care of them, they were still dissatisfied. They wanted the food back in Egypt. They cared more about good food than freedom from slavery and the food God provided for them. They had a hard time trusting in God.

Not much has changed today. Many choose to be unhappy, ungrateful, and selfish. They don't hesitate to show their discontent about everything they don't like, for they are full of complaining. They forget that God hates a whining heart. Whining is the opposite of joy and gratitude. God wants His children to be content, grateful, and joyful!

Perhaps our society has ruined us. It seems that our way is the only way that matters. We want everything done to suit our own needs. We're so focused on our vanity and selfish desires that we become angry when we don't get our way. We often complain, at times, with venomous demeanor. Have you noticed that those who love to whine and argue, behave like children in many ways? They easily give in to this sinful pattern.

It all starts in the heart with our thoughts, moving quickly to negative spoken words. Sadly, many don't realize that when they whine, they are actually complaining against God, their Creator! Let us be careful!

In John 6:43, Jesus warns us not to complain among ourselves. But this warning doesn't stop Christians from complaining and disputing against each other. Not only do we make our own lives miserable, but we also make others miserable who do not deserve it.

Why do we complain? We complain when we are short-sighted. We complain because we view our circumstances from a temporal perspective. That is, our minds are set on the material things of this world, and not on the things that are above in heaven (Colossians 3:2). God wants His children to be blameless and innocent without blemish (Philippians 2:15). Now here is something you need to realize.

Complaining disqualifies one from being a child of God. Why? Because we become blemished and are no longer distinct from this crooked and twisted generation. Complaining destroys the Light that we are supposed to shine.

So what is the remedy for whining? We must learn to set our minds on things that are good and positive (Colossians 3:2). We must invest the best of our time in daily Bible reading, prayer, and worship. It is a pleasant and positive start! It demands that we fill our minds with that which is pure, good, godly, and holy (Philippians 4:8) rather than dwelling on the negative (how difficult life is and how heavy are my burdens). The way we feed our mind will depend upon our attitude of heart.

We can choose to dwell on the bad and ugly or look for the good in everything and everyone! There is always so much good to look for and be thankful for! We whine when our faith is weak. In the Old Testament, the Israelites complained and grumbled about everything instead of humbly approaching God with prayer and thanksgiving. They even accused God of taking them out of Egypt to let them die. What selfish people! Their faith indeed was small. Does that sound familiar? Do we not often react like immature and spoiled children before our God instead of focusing on the big picture, looking at all the options, having our eyes fixed on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2)?

We complain when we are mistreated and are not getting what our hearts want (Are we not worthy of better?). We think we deserve everything and demand that others drop everything to attend our needs. If they do not, then we whine. We feel better when we demand that others treat us with more respect, more honor, more support, and more consideration because we deserve it. Who says we deserve all these things? We are in no way more special than others. We delude ourselves when we think that we are.

Philippians 2:3-4 "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself, do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interest of other".

Romans 12:3 "For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith".

These passages are pretty clear. So, why do we continue to complain? It all comes from selfish motives. Look around you and notice how many people on the face of this earth are suffering and have less than we have. Why not be grateful for all the material blessings that we do have! It is far more than we deserve. Why not learn to be content in all circumstances and be grateful as Paul did (Philippians 4:10-13)?

Don't be a whiner. Be content and grateful! We must do all things without whining or complaining. Bear in mind that everything we do must be done heartily as unto the Lord without complaining (Colossians 3:23). Do you suppose God owes us anything? Of course not! So be careful when you complain, because you are telling God that He owes you something that He is refusing to provide for you! Whining will take away our fellowship with God (Philippians 2:15).