



## Philippians 2:14-15 – Why Is Grumbling Worse Than COVID-19?

April 5, 2020

### 1. What does the Old Testament teach us about grumbling?

#### A. Grumbling is contagious and deadly.

*And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing up a bad report about the land— Numbers 14:36 (ESV)*

*...the men who brought up a bad report of the land—died by plague before the Lord. Numbers 14:37 (ESV)*

#### B. God tests us to see if we will trust Him or if we will grumble against Him.

*They said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?" Exodus 14:11 (ESV)*

*"...and the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" Exodus 15:24 (ESV)*

*"...and the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you*

have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” Exodus 16:2–3 (ESV)

**C. Grumbling about our circumstances is ultimately grumbling against God.**

*...but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” And Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?”*  
Exodus 17:1–2 (ESV)

**D. God judged the sin of grumbling.**

*...and the people complained in the hearing of the LORD about their misfortunes, and when the LORD heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp.* Numbers 11:1 (ESV)

*Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, “Oh that we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.”*  
Numbers 11:4–6 (ESV)

*Then a wind from the Lord sprang up, and it brought quail from the sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day’s journey on this side and a day’s journey on the other side, around the camp,... While the meat was yet between their teeth, before it was consumed, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord struck down the people with a very great plague... Now those who died in the plague were 14,700, besides those who died in the affair of Korah.*  
Numbers 11:31, 33, 49 (ESV)

**E. The New Testament tells us we should learn from the sins of God’s people in the past so we don’t repeat them.**

*We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.* 1 Corinthians 10:9–11 (ESV)

## 2. Why is it wrong to grumble when life gets difficult?

*Do all things without grumbling or disputing,... Philippians 2:14 (ESV)*

### A. We know God is working His good plan in our life.

*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12–13 (ESV)*

### B. As Jesus didn't grumble about the hard parts of God's plan for His life, we should not grumble about the hard parts of God's plan for our life.

**Grumbling** — Emotionally expressing dissatisfaction with our life or our circumstances, either under our breath or out loud to other people. It is also called murmuring or muttering.

**Disputing** — Intellectually arguing with God or with other people, usually because we think we deserve something better.

### C. God judges grumbling.

*Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. James 5:9 (ESV)*

## 3. Why must Christians repent of grumbling?

### A. Grumbling stunts spiritual growth.

*...that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish..., Philippians 2:15 (ESV)*

### B. Grumbling diminishes our ability to share Christ in this world.

*...that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,... Philippians 2:15 (ESV)*

## 4. How do I change the sinful pattern of grumbling in my life?

- A. Repent of my grumbling and pray for grace to change.
- B. Keep a grumbling journal.
- C. Allow your loved ones to gently tell you when you grumble.

### Life Group Questions

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1. What good things have you done in your family as a result of everyone staying at home? What is the difference between grumbling and disputing? When are we allowed to do them?
2. Read Numbers 13:30-14:4, 14:2-23, 14:33-35. The grumbling of ten of the spies that explored the Promised Land was lethal and highly contagious. It led to an entire nation rebelling against the Lord. As a result, that generation never entered the Promised Land. What do these verses teach us about the danger of an attitude of grumbling instead of gratitude? What devastation have you seen grumbling cause in families, businesses, and churches?
3. Moses in Numbers 14:26-27, and Paul in Philippians 2:12-13 tell us that grumbling about our circumstances, is actually grumbling against God who put us in those circumstances. We must remember God always has a good purpose for allowing us to face tough times. What good things has God done through hard times in your past? What good purposes may God have for us as we go through tough times as a church, community, and nation?
4. Read Psalm 105:25-27. God eventually judged the grumbings of ancient Israel. James (James 5:9) tells us God still judges grumbling today. Why does God take grumbling as serious business? How does that change the way you think of grumbling today?
5. Read Philippians 2:15, According to Paul, how does grumbling stunt our spiritual maturity? How does grumbling blunt the effectiveness of our witness?
6. What part of life do you find it easiest to grumble about during COVID-19? How does God want us to handle those feelings of frustration? If we share them with other people, how should we share them?
7. What do these verses teach us about grumbling and how to move beyond that habit in our life? Jude 16-23, 1 Peter 4:9, Numbers 11:1, Lamentations 3:39-41, Timothy 2:8, James 5:9