

**Series:** “Join The Rebellion” The Book of Numbers

**Date:** July 17th, 2016

**Lesson:** Complaining

**Text:** Numbers 11-12

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## **Lead Teacher Welcome and Game (for 10 min at 9:15 & 11:15)**

Lead Teachers, as all the students and leaders come into the room, please welcome them with the music continuing behind you.

**As they are coming in, give them a couple of really brief announcement reminders like:**

- Don't forget about Summer Camp coming up August 1 - 5. If you're going to camp, make some noise!
- This Wednesday Night we're going to be talking about getting a glimpse of HEAVEN! You heard a challenge last Wednesday about how everybody counts to God, so go out, get them, and bring them to hear this important message.

For now, enjoy your connecting with your group? You're Connect Group Leader (students, give them a high five), has some important questions for y'all to hang out and catch up. Go!

**Come up with a simple game lasting for no more than 5 minutes for Connect Groups to compete each other:** This morning, you will play the PowerPoint Game “WHO CARES?” Each team will have 10 questions on the Video Screens. Each leader will have a sheet of paper to take down the answers from his group. Connect Groups will compete as a team. Leaders cannot look at the screen, so they must trust and write down the answers of their students. Every team only has 5 seconds to answer each question once it is read. At the end, we'll reveal all the answers. Team with the most right answers wins.

## **Connect Group Introductions (for 5 min at 9:25 & 11:25)**

- **Welcome** and personally speak to **every** student, **especially** first-time guests.
- Discussion starter questions you could use:
  - 1) What all have you done this summer so far? What has been your favorite part?
  - 2) What else do you have planned for this summer?
  - 3) Are you coming to camp? Who do you know that needs to come with us?
- Ask them if there was anything that was cool that happened this past week, and tell them of anything interesting that has been going on in your life lately.
- **Go over the Newsletter** and **Daily Devos** on your table with your students.
- **Pray** to begin the morning together.

## **Lead Teacher Introduction (for 10 min at 9:30 & 11:30)**

**Introduction:** Lead Teachers, share a story about when something happened in your life that you complained about, but God worked it all out for His glory and your good.

### **Here is a story from me personally that might help:**

When Michelle and I lived in GA, we bought and moved into a our first home together. We picked it out together, we loved it, it felt like home to us from day one. Two weeks after owning our home, Michelle called and frantically told me there was water everywhere! Our washing machine's return/drainage hose came out of the wall and spit dirty water all over our upstairs laundry room, which ran down to our main floor, which ran down to our basement. Once all was said and done, we had over \$10,000 worth of damage in our new home a newly married couple. We felt like we had a lot to complain about. We really did try not to complain, but with all our flooring ripped up, blower fans running day and night, etc, it was really difficult not to complain. After 3 months went by, the insurance company hooked us up with better flooring, better paint, and a better home than we had before. After seeing the big picture, we had nothing to complain about!

### **Explanation this story in relation to the lesson:**

This morning, we're going to read a story from the book of Numbers about God's people complaining. As we read these stories, they really will look like a bunch of crybabies to us, but that's only because we now see their big picture that they didn't see yet. And when we see the big picture of our life, we will see we didn't have anything to complain about either.

### **Transition into Lesson:**

As we talk about this, open your Bibles and get into conversations with one another from these discussion questions. Remember, our Sunday Connect Groups are not about teachers lecturing, students just listening, or a time of question and answer. Instead, our goal is teachers asking questions and students to engage in conversations and discussions. So students, feel the freedom to speak up, answer, ask more questions, as we want everyone to be a part of the discussion.

### **Show the Numbers Video from "The Gospel Project" Two Options:**

"Read Scripture" Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tp5MlrMZFqo>

"The Book of Numbers" Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zebxH-5o-SQ>

## **Connect Group Discussion #1 (for 30 mins at 9:40 & 11:40)**

**Connect Group Leader Note:** The purpose of this section is to go over this Number's narrative about the complaints of God's people.

***Please study this lesson, internalize it, pray through it, and own it so that you don't have to just read the answers or the teaching points from this curriculum. I realize you will need to read the questions of course, but the more the students hear the answers and the teaching points from your heart, the more they will want to memorize it as well and let it sink deeply into their hearts!***

***We are well aware you will not be able to get to or through every single question in the curriculum. Please do not even try! We put more questions than you need into the curriculum because we know that some questions will connect with some groups better than others. Please prayerfully study which questions to facilitate your Connect Group through.***

## **INTRODUCTION: (for 5 mins starting at 9:40 or 11:40)**

- What is your best definition of “complaining”?
- What have you probably complained about the most in your life?
- What did you complain about last week?
- What is the opposite of complaining?
- How do you think God feels about people complaining?

## **BIBLE: (for 15 mins starting at 9:45 or 11:45)**

- How much of the Bible’s storyline can your Connect Group tell from Genesis to where we are?

**Read Numbers 11:1-3 (many Connect Group Leaders have found that the students reading the passage silently to themselves is the most effective).**

- **What are some possibilities of what the people of God were complaining about?**

They could have been complaining about being on the journey again since they just left the mountain which was where they were for a whole year. They could have been complaining about being in the wilderness instead of back in Egypt. They could have been complaining about the heat, lack of food, etc.

- **Why do you think God got so angry about their complaining that He sent fire to burn around their camp? Was God right to do this?**

Teaching Point: God was showing them that complaining is actually a serious sin. Complaining is a sign of a lack of faith in His goodness, provision, and blessing. God has promised to be our God to give us everything we need. When we complain, we are saying that God isn't keeping His promise of provision. By fire, God was showing them that an ultimate lack of faith will result in His fiery judgment in hell. God was being gracious to them by only allowing His fire to burn outside their camp. It was His sign of what would happen if they lived a life that lacked faith.

- **Why did God finally let the fire die down when Moses prayed to Him?**

Teaching Point: Moses was God's appointed leader for His people. In the same way that Jesus is now not only our appointed leader, but He is also our Lord. Jesus is the only one who can save us from the fiery judgment of God (salvation), and Jesus is also the one who can give us joy when we're tempted to complain. Jesus is the Better Moses!

### **Read Numbers 11:4-9.**

Teaching Point: Notice how God's people were complaining again! This time it was specifically about their food. They talked as if everything was better in Egypt, but they forgot that they were slaves in Egypt!

- **Does it seem ridiculous to you that they started complaining again right after God sent the fire? How do we in our own lives start complaining again quickly after God teaches us not to? Why do we do this?**

The reason we complain so quickly is because we are sinners so deeply. The root of every sin is unbelief (a lack of faith in God). We are constant complainers because we are born sinners. Our sin is our reason why we complain, but its not our excuse to complain. The more we grow in our faith in God, the less we will complain!

### **Read Numbers 11:10-15.**

**Teaching Point:** Everyone struggles with complaining. You've got to understand, no matter who you complain to and no matter what you complain about, all complaining is ultimately to God and against God! Notice how Moses didn't complain about God, but he brought His complaints to God. There is a huge difference. Complaining happens when we aren't praying. Prayer kills our complaints.

- **What were the complaints Moses brought to God?**

Moses cried out to God about the people, and it had all become too much for him to handle on his own.

- **When have you felt like this in your life?**

- **How did God provide for Moses? Read Numbers 11:16-18.**  
God gave Moses 70 men to help him lead the people.

### **Read Numbers 11:31-35.**

- **What was God trying to teach the people by sending Quail that ended up poisoning them?**  
Teaching Point: God was teaching the people that He will always give us what we need to accomplish His will at that time in our life. The reason God wasn't sending Quail during the time was because it wasn't healthy for them. The reason God isn't giving you your complaints may be because you don't need that thing, that person, or that whatever at this point in your life. God always gives us enough to accomplish His purpose in our life at that time. If we don't have what we need to accomplish His will, then we pray and ask Him for it. We never have an excuse to complain!

### **Read Numbers 12:1-16.**

- **What was the sin that Miriam and Aaron committed?**  
Teaching Point: Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses' marriage and Moses' leadership by saying, "God speaks through us just as much as He does through Moses." Miriam and Aaron were complaining about Moses' leadership. God called Moses, Miriam, and Aaron into His office (the tent of meeting) and had a "come to Jesus" talk with them. God told Miriam and Aaron not to question the leadership He had given to Moses.
- **Why do you think God chose leprosy as the way to punish Miriam?**  
Teaching Point: We don't know why God chose just Miriam or the disease of leprosy to judge their sin of complaining against God's ordained leadership, but we do know that leprosy was often an analogy of sin in the New Testament. God may have been showing both Miriam and Aaron that complaining is worse than a serious disease like leprosy. Leprosy may kill you, but heart of complaining may be a sign of a lack of salvation that would bring eternal death in hell.
- **Who's leadership does this lesson teach that we are not ultimately to complain about or rise up against?**  
Those who don't submit to the Leadership of Jesus by following Him will be judged by God. Salvation is faithfully following Jesus as our Lord.
- **What does this passage teach us about complaining against leadership in the church?**  
Teaching Point: We should take complaints against church leaders very seriously. Don't listen to or join in on complaints against your church leaders. If you do have something against a church leader, Scripture teaches us to go to them personally and be honest. From this passage, God has shown us the seriousness of complaining against God-ordained leadership.

## **GOSPEL: (for 5 mins starting at 10:00 or 12:00)**

### **Read Philippians 4:13.**

- **What does this verse have to do with today's lesson?**

Teaching Point: Philippians 4:13 is usually interpreted to mean that "I can do accomplish anything in life I want to because Jesus is in me." With our lesson today, this would mean that we could even live a life victorious over complaining. But when we hear this verse talked about, we hear much larger accomplishments than just complaining, right? Doesn't complaining seem to be at least we could accomplish through Jesus? Well, let's read the context of this passage.

### **Read Philippians 4:11-13.**

- **What is the theme of this passage? In other words, what is the pre-context to Philippians 4:13?**

Teaching Point: Paul here in this passage is talking about contentment or the lack of complaining. He's saying that people have a problem with contentment when they are rich or when they are poor.

- **How could a rich person have a problem with complaining? How could a poor person have a problem with complaining?**

**Teaching Point:** All people have a problem with complaining. For the rich, the more you have, the more you will want! For the poor, you don't have anything so you can complain about many things you don't have. But notice what Paul is saying. This is awesome! Paul is saying all we can do "all things" in Christ who strengthens us...especially conquer complaining and have contentment! In other words, Philippians 4:13 is all about how to do the most difficult things in life through Jesus, and Paul is pointing out that contentment is one of the most difficult ways to live! We can even conquer complaining through Jesus!

- **If Jesus died on the cross for all of our sin, does that include our complaining? Does that mean that God can forgive us of our complaining? Does that mean that Jesus can conquer our complaining? (2 Corinthians 5:15-21)**
- **If Jesus rose from the dead to give us a powerful life of obedience, does that mean that His resurrection gives us power to live a life of contentment, trust, and faith in God? (Ephesians 1:18-20)**

- **What all in Jesus' life could Jesus had complained about? How did Jesus not complain with everything He had to complain about?**

Jesus lived a life of struggle, hated against, and temptation (yet without sin).

Jesus had a so much to complain about every day, but He never did! The only way that Jesus never complained was because He trusted His life to His Father to give Him everything He needed to accomplish His ministry (1 Peter 2:22-23).

## **PERSONAL: (for 5 mins starting at 10:05 or 12:05)**

- **From today's lessons what are the 5 biggest motivators or reasons why we cannot live a life of complaining as a follower of Jesus?**
- **What stuck out to you the most from today's lesson?**
- **What remaining questions do you have from today's lesson?**
- **From this lesson, how can we pray for you this week to live this out?**
- **How could you summarize today's lesson in 1 - 2 sentences?**

## **Closing by Lead Teacher (5 min at 10:10 & 12:10)**

God made it very clear in both Numbers 11 and 12 that complaining isn't just sin, but it is a very serious sin. **A life of complaining reveals a lack of faith.** God gave His people serious judgments for complaining like raging fires and leprous diseases. God was ultimately showing His people where complaining comes from (our sinfulness), and what a life of complaining will lead toward (punishment in hell without salvation).

Thank God that Jesus died for all our sin including complaining. For those of us who have given our lives to Jesus, we seek to live a life of faith and following Him since He Himself is our contentment. If we have Jesus, we have no other real needs since He is our everything for eternity.

God will give you everything you need to accomplish the purpose He created you for. When we complain, we are saying that we need more than what He's given us. When we complain to anyone about anything, its ultimately against God and His provision. Trust God for HIs provision, ask God for your needs, and take your complaints to Him as prayer requests. Life a life of contentment and joy because you have Jesus!

## **ANNOUNCEMENT REMINDERS**

- **CAMP:** All this month camp price is \$350. Register with your \$100 deposit to reserve your spot and this pricing.
- **This Wednesday Night:** You will hear a message this Wednesday night about heaven. Make sure to bring lost friends so that they can hear this message, give their life to Him, and spend their eternity with Him!
- You are not dismissed until your Connect Group Leader dismisses you.