



GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Spring Quarter - Lesson 10 - Week of June 5, 2022

Lesson: NO GRUMLINGS!

Bible Verses: I Corinthians 10:6-11; James 5:9

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

- What do you think about when you have nothing else to think about?
- Where does your mind naturally wander when you have down time?

DISCUSSION

Key Term Definition: Grumble - A complaint uttered in a low and indistinct tone; to utter complaining remarks.

How big of a deal is grumbling? In the city of Corinth, about 2,000 years ago, there was a problem with church members grumbling and complaining. People felt it was their God-given right to gripe and moan about anything they did not like or understand. Sound familiar? In an effort to bring about a **seismic** shift for the future of the church, God reminded them of their sins.

What is fascinating about Paul's warning to the church at Corinth is the way he reviewed the history of Israel and pointed out some of its lowest moments. One by one, Paul projects a picture as he warns the Corinthians not to repeat the mistakes of their ancestors. Paul writes in I Cor. 10:6, "Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did." The 40 years Israel spent wandering in the desert was a time they would have preferred to forget. They had highlights they loved to remember. But the 40 years of wandering was something they wanted to leave in the past. When Paul brought this up, it would have been as uncomfortable as asking someone to talk about their hemorrhoid surgery during the course of a dinner party.

Paul lists four sins the people of Israel committed while they wandered in the wilderness. Here are the first three:

- Idolatry
- Sexual immorality
- Testing the Lord

Each sin had serious consequences. They were behaviors unfit for God's people in the days of Moses, in the days of Paul, and they are unfit for us today as well. Do you agree that idolatry, sexual immorality, and testing God like the Israelites did are sins?

Here is the reality: all three of these behaviors would be seen as sin and dealt with immediately. The question then becomes why do Christians practically ignore the fourth sin Paul addresses in this passage (I Corinthians 10:6-10)? Why don't we take this one as seriously as the other three? Paul points out Israel's sin of idolatry, sexual immorality, testing God, and finally their grumbling.

1. What place does grumbling have among such huge and obvious sins?
2. Why would Paul include grumbling in the same list as idolatry and sexual immorality?
3. What damage is caused by grumbling?
4. How common is the sin of grumbling?

When we grumble, we adopt a negative attitude about many things. We can always find something bad to say. We have the uncanny ability to see the dark cloud in the middle of every silver lining.

Paul is simply communicating God's heart on this topic. If you read about what happened when God's people were stuck in the wilderness for 40 years, it becomes clear why Paul emphasizes this sin. Grumbling was one of their most consistent and damaging behaviors. This sin plagued the people of Israel all through their history; it may be damaging the church.

Some of us make grumbling a habit. Whether we are moving along in traffic or have been served a late meal, it is like we have the gift of grumbling and feel we ought to exercise it. Are you prone to complaining?

Ezekiel 21:6 speaks of groaning. What is the difference between grumbling and groaning? God commends groaning but forbids grumbling. In a nutshell, groaning is complaining to God; grumbling is complaining about God. Groaning happens to God's face; grumbling happens behind God's back (we think).

In scripture, the place where people groan is on their knees where they have been driven by sorrow, suffering and adversity. The difference between grumbling and groaning has a similar effect on intimacy, whether with God or with people. Groaning in suffering builds intimacy. Grumbling destroys intimacy.

Grumbling is also contagious. People with a negative, grumbling spirit will inevitably look for other grumblers to join them. Are you a grumbler?

We should seek to encourage people. When we develop the habit of affirming others, a seismic shift occurs. We can replace grumbling with encouraging words. We can also replace grumbling with gratitude. What are you grateful for today? What good things come to the grateful? Gratitude explodes from our hearts when we are reminded of God's generous gifts. What is your gratitude health score?

Prayer Focus: God, help me to grumble less and to be more grateful.