

Judges 8:1 - Thursday, November 1st, 2012

(1) Now the men of Ephraim said to him, "Why have you done this to us by not calling us when you went to fight with the Midianites?" And they reprimanded him sharply.

- Don't feel bad, if you're one who doesn't feel bad for these men of Ephraim who sharply rebuke Gideon for excluding them from the victory.
- The reason I say that is because the tribe of Ephraim are the quintessential complainers, as evidenced here by their audacity to complain.
- The truth of the matter is, what should have been met with an unspeakable joy, is instead inexplicably met with an unthinkable complaining.

- This begs the question of why? Why is it that some people will complain about everything, while at the same time do absolutely nothing?
- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a bit as I try to take and tackle this question, as I see this dynamic across the board in every arena of life.
- I've seen it in the marriage arena, the parenting arena, the business arena, and especially the ministry arena, where it's more pronounced.

- In my experience over the years, I've made a number of observations as it relates to why it is that people will complain about everything.
- For lack of a better way of saying it you could safely categorize it as chronic complaining in that it is continual on the part of the complainer.
- So, what follows are five of these observations concerning why it is that people complain like these men of Ephraim complain to Gideon.

- 1. People complain because of their rank pride in wanting to be in the spotlight, when they don't get what they want, they complain about it.
- These men of Ephraim wanted to take the credit for this success in victory of the Midianites, so much so that they even accuse Gideon of it.
- If that weren't bad enough, they wanted the glory from the battle, without having the guts for the battle. Better said, "no guts – no glory!"

Charles Spurgeon – "When there is a success, everybody thinks that he ought to have been in it, and blames somebody else that he was away. It is not quite so clear that had these complainers been invited they would have welcomed the invitation. Those who grow angry because they cannot claim a share in the honor, are usually the very persons who would have had least taste for the conflict."

James 4:1-3 NIV What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? (2) You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. (3) When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

- 2. People complain because they're guilty of the very thing that they themselves are falsely accusing others of.
- I find it interesting that they would accuse Gideon of the very thing that they themselves were guilty of, namely, wanting to take the credit.
- Actually, Gideon is in good company with another humble man of God named Moses, who had many people complaining about and to him.

- To add insult to injury it would be Moses' own sister Miriam, and brother Aaron, then some time later, his own cousin by the name of Korah.
- The common denominator with Gideon and Moses is that they were both reluctant to do what God wanted, to the point where they said no.
- These men of Ephraim, like Miriam, Aaron and Korah before them, were guilty of the very thing that they were falsely accusing Gideon of.

- 3. People complain because they have a false sense of the role of their own importance over others.
- Notice how that this is all about them, as evidenced by how they say; "why have you done this to "us," and "why didn't you call upon "us."
- I believe it's also evidenced by how sharply they reprimand Gideon. The reason being is people are sharp with those perceived as inferior.

- 4. People complain because they falsely believe that they are somehow entitled, and owed, and it comes packaged with, life isn't fair.
- These men of Ephraim, who were known for being the most negative of all the tribes of Israel, had become this way thinking they're owed.
- Whenever I adopt this mindset of thinking that the world owes me, or God owes me, because I'm entitled to it, I'm in for a rude awakening.

- 5. People complain because they don't like what they hear God say, and or what they see God do.
- If you peel back all the layers of this complaint and false accusation, what you'll find at the core is that they don't like the way God did this.
- This is textbook in the sense that they are complaining against God and who He would choose to use in order to bring about this victory.

- The bottom line is that complaining and accusing should never characterize a Christian by taking up residence in the life of a Christian.

Philippians 2:14-16 NIV (14) Do everything without complaining or arguing, (15) so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe (16) as you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.