

"The Complain Drain"

*"Do everything without complaining and arguing,
so that no one can criticize you.
Live clean, innocent lives as children of God,
shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people."
Philippians 2:14-15 (NLT)*

I. A Master Class in Complaining: The Children of Israel in the Wilderness

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| 1) Exodus 14:10-12 | When they saw the Egyptian army pursuing them at the Red Sea. |
| 2) Exodus 15:23-24 | At Marah, when they found the water bitter. |
| 3) Exodus 16:1-3 | Complained about a lack of food. |
| 4) Exodus 17:1-4 | Complained about a lack of water at Rephidim. |
| 5) Exodus 32:1-35 | Demanded Aaron make them a golden calf. |
| 6) Numbers 11:1-3 | Complained about their food being manna and quail. |
| 7) Numbers 11:4-34 | Complained about their hardships in the wilderness. |
| 8) Numbers 14 | Questioned God's ability to lead them. |
| 9) Numbers 20:1-13 | Questioned God about providing water at Kadesh. |
| 10) Numbers 21:4-9 | Complained about the hardships of their journey. |

II. Some Root Causes of Complaining

1. Pain or discomfort

"Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them." 2 Timothy 2:3-4 (NLT)

2. Being inconvenienced

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If any of you wants to be My follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow Me.'" Matthew 16:24 (NLT)

3. Having to wait

"Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love." Ephesians 4:2 (NLT)

4. Lack of trust in God / Fear

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding." Proverbs 3:5 (NLT)

[Jesus] "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in Me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." John 16:33 (NLT)

5. Selfish worldview

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33 (KJV)

III. How to Train to Not Complain

1. **RECOGNIZE** when I fall into the habit of complaining

"Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others." Proverbs 12:15 (NLT)

2. **PRACTICE** showing **GRATITUDE** every day.

*"Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."
1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT)*

3. Adopt God's **WORLDVIEW**

*"For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever."
2 Corinthians 4:17-18 (NLT)*

Paul's "small troubles" 2 Corinthians 11:24-28	
1) 5 times received 39 lashes	2) Dangers from rivers, robbers, the wilderness
3) 3 times beaten with rods	4) Hunger, thirst, cold
5) 3 shipwrecks	6) More

4. **PRACTICE** speaking for **ENCOURAGEMENT**

"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them." Ephesians 4:29 (NLT)

IV. Advice for Travelers

1. Be **FLEXIBLE**

"Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time." Acts 16:6 (NLT)

2. Be **PLEASANT**

"Since God chose you to be the holy people He loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience." Colossians 3:12 (NLT)

3. Enjoy the **JOURNEY**

[Jesus] "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10b (NKJV)
"...Don't be dejected and sad, for the joy of the LORD is your strength!" Nehemiah 8:10b (NLT)