



## Discussion Questions for the week of November 20

### BIG IDEA:

When Christians complain, we aren't any different from the rest of the world. We fail to shine & point the way to God. Let's get our eyes off the temporary & on the eternal, our tongues will stop complaining & start thanking.

### SUMMARY:

Life is full of problems. Big ones & little ones. These problems often distract us from giving thanks. The number one sign of this type of distraction comes from our mouths: We complain. To break ourselves of the habit of complaining, we must be renewed inwardly by fixing our eyes on the unseen. When we complain, we are simply voicing that our circumstances are not aligning with what we think we deserve or desire.

**Leader's note: Read Numbers 13 & 14 before group. Be ready to give an overview of events and order of events to your SG this week.**

### ICE BREAKER:

Who was the last person you thanked? What did you thank them for?

### DISCUSSION:

1. This week's topic is complaining. What are some *specific* things you typically complain about? Consider the following categories & share specific examples with the group.

- |                        |                                   |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A) Annoying relatives  | E) Stress at school               |
| B) Issues with friends | F) A crush who doesn't notice you |
| C) Things that break   | G) Things you can't afford        |
| D) Physical appearance |                                   |

3. Would you consider complaining to be a bad habit for you personally?

4. How do parents & teachers usually respond when you complain? Is that different from how your friends respond when you complain? What do you friends usually do when you complain about something?

5. Why do you complain? Why would your parents or close friends say you complain? What are some areas that you are often tempted to argue and complain about?

Let's all turn to Numbers 13. We are going to start reading at verse 25. So, Leaders recap events that led up to this point in the narrative. Read vs 25-33 aloud.

6. Can a student summarize what is now happening with Israelites in the desert?

7. Who believes they can take the land God has promised? Who believes otherwise?

8. Read Numbers 14:1-4 and see what happens next. What has now infected the camp?

*Complaining*

9. Read Numbers 14:5-8, what do the people think of those choosing not to complain?

*Want to stone them*

10. Does anyone have examples of ungratefulness spreading like a virus in their own family, friend group, class? How do you treat someone trying to bring everyone back to "who God is/what is true"?

11. Read verse 11 of Numbers 14. What does God make to be the root of their complaining?

12. Does God see the Israelites as justified in their responses? Are they justified in their doubt? How is complaining doubting God? What does your complaining say to God? What message about God are you sending to those who hear your complaints? What message are you sending the God?

13. What do the Israelites believe about God?

*The Israelites have not even attempted to take over the land. They are just believing God will get it wrong. They do not find Him faithful. They do not have reverence or right view of their Maker.*

14. So when you are complaining you are: \_\_\_check all that apply\_\_\_?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Believing God got it wrong | <input type="checkbox"/> -Short sighted in understanding His plan        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ungrateful                 | <input type="checkbox"/> -Entitled                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hurting your witness       | <input type="checkbox"/> -Leading others to stumble (infecting the camp) |

15. What would be the antidote or 'antivenin' for complaining?

16. How do we cultivate or grow a heart that wouldn't dream of complaining?

17. If we continued reading in verses 26-34, we would see how seriously God takes the complaints of the people. (Leaders can summarize) Is trust a big deal to God? Is humility a big deal to God?

18. Did God give the people what they wanted? ... Did the people want God's best?

19. How can you want God's best? How would we express that and search that out? What is keeping us from having a thankful heart daily?

20. What can you do this week to fix your eyes on what is unseen & be inwardly renewed day by day?

### APPLICATION:

How can we get rid of this complaining disposition?

We are about 30 days from Thanksgiving- start a list 1-100, keep the list by your bed. Each day challenge yourself to write down 3 things your thankful for that day. You can go over and you can write the same thing more than once but do it daily. You will likely thing of 100 before Thanksgiving.

Looking for a memory verse? Read: Matthew 5:14-16, Philipians 2:14-15, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18