



Parent Resources

Complaining: A Formal Complaint

Would it be hypocritical if I took a little time to complain about complaining? I hope not, because I'm tired of it and I have to say something. The whining, the sense of entitlement, the lack of perspective; it's exhausting.

Complaining accomplishes nothing.

Complaining focuses entirely on what is wrong instead of what is right.

Complaining is not looking for a solution, it's convinced that it is the solution.

Complaining wastes time.

Nothing can escape complaining. Now, let me clear something up. This is not me looking out into the world, frustrated at all the complaining I see going on. Why would that surprise me? Of course people are selfish and feel entitled. The world has always been that way and I don't see it changing anytime soon, so that is not what is frustrating me. What's frustrating is when I see all these same things in myself. This is my own heart. **This is my struggle**, and I'm guessing (if you were being really honest) it's your struggle too. I'm tired of all the ways I am giving into this culture of complaining. I'm tired of whining. I'm tired of feeling entitled. I'm tired of losing perspective. But how do I combat complaining? What's the solution?

In his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul says, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (5:18 NIV)

This, I believe, is the solution to complaining. Complaining happens when, in the midst of frustration or disappointment, we refuse to acknowledge the gifts in our own life. Paul is commanding us to take a step back so we can see the whole picture. Then, we will be able to see and acknowledge our struggles, but we won't lose perspective of what we do have. Paul is saying, no matter what is going on in life, **make time to express gratitude**. This is the best way to combat complaining.

So, what would it look like to fill your space with gratitude in order to take space away from complaining? Take a little time to discuss these questions as a family.

Discussion Questions/Activity

1. What do you have to be thankful for right now? Write down at least 10 things.
2. What are the three things on your list you are most thankful for? Share those with your family.
3. How can we, as a family, focus more on gratitude this week? How will that help us avoid complaining?