

Complaining

(Bad for Your Health!)

On 4/16/26, an article by Dr. Tatiana Denning was published in Epoch Times entitled “The Science of Complaining: How It Harms Your Brain.” The Bible teaches us not to complain. We will touch on that in a moment. But, I thought it would be helpful to mention the scientific evidence of how complaining is harmful to our health and our relationships with others.

Sure, we all have complained at times. It is very easy to develop a habit of complaining. But, what feels normal, and sometimes even feels good, can be very damaging. The following are some of the things with which habitual complaining is associated:

- 1) It changes how we perceive the world and ourselves (negatively).
- 2) It leads to tension, irritability, and feelings of sadness.
- 3) There is a greater incidence of feeling angry, anxious, and focusing on what is wrong. Psychologists call this “rumination” which is repeatedly dwelling on negative experiences.
- 4) A greater difficulty regulating emotions.
- 5) An increase in stress.
- 6) More of a focus on ourselves (self-focused).
- 7) Higher levels of “cortisol” that increases inflammation in our bodies.
- 8) A disturbance of an area of the brain called the “prefrontal cortex” that controls decision making and self-control. It also activates the “amygdala” which governs fear and our emotions.
- 9) An increased production of brain proteins (amyloid and tau protein deposits) that are associated with the development of Alzheimer’s disease.
- 10) A decline in memory and cognitive function (ability to remember and reason).

Some things the Bible has to say about complaining:

- First, an example of grumbling and complaining by the Israelites, after God miraculously delivered them from slavery in Egypt by inflicting **10** mighty plagues on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but not on Israel - Exodus 14:11, 15:23-24, 16:1-3, 17:1-2, 32:1-4; Numbers 11:1-6, 14:1-4, 20:1-5, 21:4-5. Now for just some of the consequences for their grumbling after God repeatedly blessed them with His protection, water, bread from heaven, meat, parting of the Red Sea, etc. - Exodus 15:25-26, 32:25-28; Numbers 11:1,33, **14:20-38**, 21:6-9.
- Philippians 2:14-15 - Don’t complain so we can be a light for God in this dark world.
- James 5:9 - Don’t grumble or you will be judged for doing so.
- 1 Peter 4:9 - Be hospitable to others instead of complaining or grumbling.
- 1 Corinthians 10:1-12; Psalm 106:24-27 - Don’t grumble like the Israelites did when they were wandering in the desert and received serious consequences as examples to us. God does provide a way out when we are tempted (1 Corinthians 10:13).
- Matthew 7:1-5 - Those who grumble often have a judgmental and condemning heart.

So, what can one do who struggles with the habit of complaining?

- † Pray and study God’s Word regularly for His teaching, direction, protection and power (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 3:3).
- † As you become aware, confess it and ask for forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:9).
- † Train your brain (Philippians 4:4-9; 1 Peter 1:13; Romans 12:1-2; Isaiah 26:3-4; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5).
- † Don’t be selfish but consider the needs and feelings of others (Philippians 2:3-4).
- † When you focus on your blessings, your perspective changes from a spirit of discontent to one of gratitude! (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; 1 Timothy 6:6-7; Colossians 2:6-7; 4:2; Hebrews 13:5).

◆A heart of thankfulness is the cure for complaining◆