



## THE POWER OF COMPLAINING

J.J. Turner, Ph.D. ©

It has been said that there is one department in church that is never short of visitors: *"The Complaint Department"*. Why? Because everybody is prone to complaining. "It's too hot." "It's too cold." "The sermon was too long." "The sermon was too short." "They are always talking about money." "We never hear much about money." Complaining is powerful; usually not in a constructive way.

Many years ago Jeremiah asked, *"Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?"*(Lam. 3:39). Lou Holtz, a famous coach and TV commentator, said, *The man who complains about the way the ball bounces is likely the one who dropped it.*" Jude described those causing division in the church as *"murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lust; and their mouths speaking great swelling words...."* (Jude 16).

Complaining cost the Jews an expedient trip into the Promised Land. Instead of going over immediately to possess the land, they had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years while all the complainers died. Read Numbers, chapters 11—14. *"And when the people complained, it displeased the Lord: the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindle; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp"* (Num. 11:1).

There are numerous attributes of those who continually practice negative complaining:

1. Those who complain the most usually work the least.
2. Those who complain the most rarely offer solutions.
3. Those who complain fail to practice brotherly love.
4. Those who complain rarely see their own faults.
5. Those who complain usually aren't praying for others.
6. Those who complain many times withhold forgiveness.
7. Those who complain rob others of peace and joy.
8. Those who complain discourage others.

How about YOU? Are you a positive-solution complainer or a negative complainer described by the above 8 characteristics? How would those who know you categorize you? ( ) Positive ( ) Negative