

The Hidden Sin in Our Homes, Part 1 | the fruit

I. The Hidden Sin in Our Homes Is Complaining.

- The reasons complaining is often hidden.
 - There are many parents who don't see anything wrong with complaining as long as the child isn't complaining about something the parent has done.
 - It's easy for us to see *some* complaining for what it is while being completely blind to others. For example, though it may be easy to see the whining in others, we're too often blind to our own. Or our ear can pick up certain kinds of whining, but — even when it's coming from the same person — we miss other kinds of whining.
 - It's easier to address the *fruit* of complaining without dealing with the much more significant *root* of complaining.
- Merriam-Webster defines it as “*to express grief, pain, or discontent*” or “*to make a formal accusation or charge.*” The meaning in the Scriptures is consistent with those definitions. Some complaints are clearly sinful while other uses of the word “complaint” are acceptable.
- Genesis 3:12; Numbers 11:1; I Corinthians 10:9-11; Philippians 2:12-16; Jude 1:16

II. Identifying Sinful Complaining.

- Secular sources define various categories of complaining. However, they fail to accurately categorize our family's sinful complaining the way God does. Secular sources believe that it's good to complain if the people want to see what they define as a beneficial change.
- Most of the time members of our family complain they *definitely* want to see some change. But just because they want to see change doesn't make their complaining inherently good.
- This is why — I believe — so much sinful complaining goes unnoticed in our homes . . . we obviously believe our grumbling has merit, and so, therefore, it is excused or encouraged.
 - The Israelites were hungry, they were thirsty, they had to wait 40 days for Moses to return from the mountain, there were giants in the land . . . whatever the complaint, they wanted something to change. They wanted food and water and for Moses to get back and to not have to run giants out of the Promised Land.
 - But their complaining was a sin.

III. Lifework

- Any time someone in your house (including you) makes a statement that expresses any kind of dislike, disagreement, or discontentment, take a moment to consider the possibility that the statement they just made was sinful complaining. I'm not saying that all such statements are sin, but we need to be more diligent to uncover the sinful ones. And that starts with being observant. Last night my daughter was relating an anecdote from the children's program at our church. And I had to say, “Ivy, please stop over using the word ‘like.’” Well, it took me saying that a couple times, and then later in her account, before the word even escaped her lips, she recognized that she was about to say it, and instead said, “Wow, I really made a habit out of that.” Sometimes just paying attention to the problem is all it takes to get us thinking correctly about it.
- Take some time to think about what makes a complaint sinful. You have to be intentional about this. You announce to your homeschooled children that it's time to take out Math and they respond with an immediate, but low-key, “Ugh.” Is that okay? Does that glorify God? If it doesn't, why is it wrong? You need to be able to answer these questions before you can have a valuable conversation with your kids.