



BiG iDEA SMALL GROUP DiSCUSSiON GiDE

Small groups that focus on the Big Idea for the week can use this guide to apply the message to life and take action. Feel free to use whatever parts of this guide best fit your group personality and time frame. Do NOT feel like you have to use every question. All verses, unless otherwise noted, are from the New International Version (NIV).

8.15/16.09 // Renegade Joy - Joy in Temptation

BiG iDEA: *I can choose to stop complaining and arguing by thinking and speaking positively*

// Ice Breaker _____

Option 1: Brett gave us a challenge to go one week without complaining, criticizing or arguing. Share how you are doing so far.

Option 2: What is the last thing you complained about, or criticized?

// Questions for Discussion _____

1. Why do you think it is so easy to default into complaining?

2. Read **Philippians 2:14-14**

¹⁴Do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹⁵so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe

What is complaining in God's eyes? How do we know when we've crossed a line from just stating facts ["Server, this roast beef is cold."] into complaining and criticizing ["This is the most inexcusable service I've ever had!"]?

There are times when we have a legitimate complaint. How should we present this legitimate complaint?

What should the balance be between voicing our concerns and our complaining?

3. Read **James 5:8**

Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged.

Why is grumbling among Christians, the Church, especially serious?

How do you think complaining affects our witness?

4. Read Philippians 1 Corinthians 15:33

"Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

If we really want to stop complaining, how important is the company we keep? Why?

What are some things you can do if someone starts excessive complaining around you?

Tell about a Christian you know that has joy regardless of what is happening in their life. What affect have they had on you?

5. Read Romans 12:2

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, [don't adopt the mindset of the culture] but be transformed by the **renewing** of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

What are some things we can do to change our mindset?

6. Read Philippians 4: 8-9

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

What is the importance of thinking about the right things?

7. Read Ephesians 4:29

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Matthew 12:34-37

For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.

What are our words an indication of – what is the real source of our words?

What are some things we can do when we are tempted to be less than positive?

8. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

How could being thankful mitigate our tendency to complain?

// Application _____

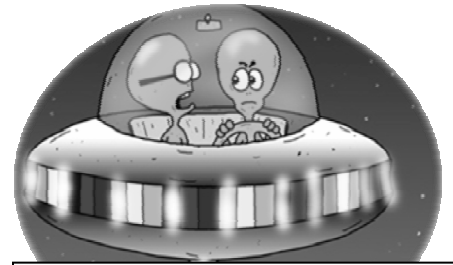
Read and commit to memory Philippians 2:14-15

¹⁴Do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹⁵so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe

Take up the Sermon Challenge: One week without complaining, criticizing or arguing.

// Prayer _____

**Pray for strength in going a week without complaining.
Pray that any arguing would be resolved.**



Hey - I wasn't really complaining.
That was just some constructive criticism.