



GRUMBLE, GRUMBLE

Replace grumbling with gratitude.

Our words are the indicator lights for our heart attitudes. That's why Paul sets the alarm button on grumbling in Philippians 2:14. Do the work God gives you to do without grumbling, he told us. Especially in our social media culture, grumbling gathers followers. Gripping lets people express themselves! They shouldn't bottle up their feelings! The Scripture is counter-cultural; if we want to shine as lights in a dark world, we quit complaining. **So how can your family do that?**

- Nip it in the bud. We routinely complain without even realizing it. Put a red flag or a flashlight in a jar on the kitchen table. Wave it or shine it whenever someone begins to grumble.
- Replace it. Require the complainer to find good things to say instead. He or she may read Scripture or list positives about the issue at hand to shut down the grumbling. Choose a verse of Scripture to memorize; when caught in the act, the grumbler must repeat it. Or perhaps the complainer is assigned the least favorite household chore as a penalty.
- Watch or read Pollyanna (Eleanor H. Porter's 1913 novel or the 1960 movie with Hayley Mills) together. Yes, it is a bit corny and old fashioned, but the finding-something-good principle is still on target.
- Cultivate gratitude. Remember God's supply of manna for the children of Israel escaping from Pharaoh's bondage? Free breakfast, lunch, and dinner for 40 years! But what did the Israelites do? Read their complaints about the manna in Numbers 11—and note God's angry response. When we grumble about the way He has provided for us or the work He has given us to do, what are we saying to God? Let's express our gratitude for His good gifts instead!