



FGTG #4:

WHEN BLESSINGS BECOME BURDENS

Numbers 14:1-45

Sermon Main Idea

When you grumble, your blessings become burdens and there are consequences. One consequence is that God can take away your blessings.

Sermon Outline

1. The People Complain (v. 1-10a)
2. The Lord's Reaction and Moses' Plea (v.10b-19)
3. The Judgment of the Lord (v.20-45)
 - a. Punishment #1: They will not enter the Land
 - b. Punishment #2: They will die in the wilderness
 - c. Punishment #3: Death to the 10 Unbelieving Spies

Discussion Questions

1. After the 12 spies returned from the Promised Land, the people assembled to hear what the spies had to report. Ten of them saw the "giants who guarded the grapes" while Joshua and Caleb reported that the land they explored was exceedingly good. Unfortunately, people sided with the 10 spies and the Promised Land became a 'burden' land. They wished they would have been back in Egypt or die in the wilderness. Why do you think the people reacted this way? They have seen the many miracles that God had performed in their lives, yet why do you think a negative report from 10 people was enough for them to forget about the power of God? What does it tell us about the state of their hearts?
2. When Joshua and Caleb tried to convince them not to be afraid of the people of the land because the Lord is with them (verses 7-9), what was the people's violent reaction (verse 10a)? How do you react to God's promises in His Word when you deal with something that makes you afraid or insecure? Does your emotion or situation win over His promises?
3. Prior to this, the people have grumbled and complained ten times already. The Lord was definitely not pleased. Enough is enough! And He asked, "How long will these people reject Me?" Let's look at our lives. Have we been constantly complaining in spite of His blessings? How do you think the Lord feels about it? Do you think God is frustrated with us when we keep on complaining? Have you ever asked God, "How long do I wait for you?" Can God ask us this question too? Can He ask us, "How long before you will take me seriously?"
4. Moses's response to God's frustration was heartwarming. What was his reaction on verses 13-19? He must have loved these stubborn people, but he was obviously concerned about the reputation of God. How about us? Do we think of His reputation before we do something that would taint His Name? Give examples on how we would grieve the heart of God just like the Israelites did.
5. God forgives, but we have to suffer the consequences of our sins. How did the 10 spies and the complaining Israelites suffer the consequences of their grumbling and rejection of God? How do you understand this phrase: "So often when we run from God, we feel it is to escape His punishment. But what we are actually doing is eluding His rescue." How could a punishment be a rescue?

6. The grumbling Israelites got what they wanted! They died in the wilderness. Indeed, the greatest judgment of God is to let people have their own way. What should it teach us? Numbers 14: 2,35 should remind us that we should be careful of what we complain about ... because out of our own mouth, God passes judgment.
7. Another consequence of our grumbling is losing His blessings. The Israelites acknowledged their sins and proceeded to go up the place the Lord promised without His hands of blessings. What was the result (verses 39-45)? What a wakeup call! Indeed, when God withheld His hands of blessings, nothing will go right. How should we treat God's blessings? Let's have a few minutes of silent moment and acknowledge the blessings of God that we have taken for granted. Ask Him for forgiveness and thank Him for His blessings.