

Grasshopper Complex

Text : **Numbers 12: 1-2, 23-33**

S#1.

INTRODUCTION :

A. Have you ever felt inferior ... REALLY inferior.

S#2.

1. **ill.** - After High School worked out with Akron University Team
 - a. In High School I was the strongest guy on the team.
 - b. Never faced an opponent with whom I could not compete.
 - c. On the college team I felt like a child.
2. **ill.** – Personal hero – Dr. J.J. Turner’s very presence humbled me.
 - a. Debating fellow students about meaning of scriptures.
 - b. All of us were silenced by his arrival in the van.

B. Having a weak self-image is a horrible way to live. (*No one likes feeling inferior.*)

1. Shakespeare wrote, “A coward dies a thousand deaths, but the valiant only one.”
2. People with little or no self-confidence seldom succeed.
 - a. The primary ingredient for success is to have the courage to try.
 - b. The second most important ingredient is to believe you can succeed.
3. The same is true in the spiritual realm.

a. **Matt. 25: 15ff** ... The one talent man was condemned for not trying.

S#3.

b. The first one listed as be condemned are the “**cowardly.**” (KJV- *fearful*)

S#4.

Rev. 21: 8 – But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

C. When one is fearful, he is NOT under the influence of God.

S#5.

1. God has given HIS people a spirit of power.

II Tim. 1: 7 – For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.
2. Becoming a Christian emboldens one to stand against those who would oppose Him.

Acts 4: 13 – Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

S#6.

BY THIS LESSON WE WILL SEE THAT THIS BOLDNESS IS THE FRUIT OF FAITH.

S#7.

I. We can observe God's attitude toward timidity from studying Israel.**S#8.****A. After 400 years in Egypt, they came out with a subjugated mentality.**

1. People think in terms of their life experience and train their children by example.
2. Spain ruled colonies like the Egyptians ruled theirs – Everything Spanish is superior.
 - a. 100 years after liberation the colonists are still subjugated in their hearts.
 - b. They have no confidence ... feeling dependent upon others to solve their problems
 - c. Feel unattractive – Only tall white people are attractive – must have pointy nose

B. God had lead them to the Promised Land, but they were too afraid to take it.

1. **Numbers 13: 1-2** ... God told them to go in and see what a great land it is.
2. All of the spies agreed that it was a good land,
Num. 13: 27 – **Thus they told him, and said, “We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.**
3. They brought one cluster of grapes so big it was carried on a pole.
 * *This should have motivated them to want to take the land.*

S#9.**C. Their desire for the good was overshadowed by their fear of the evil.**

1. They felt inadequate to the task before them and FEARED the inhabitants.
Num. 13: 28 – **Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there.**
2. They looked at the opposition solely through the eyes of their own inadequacy.

S#10.

- a. Their self-image was totally deflated by **fear**.

Num. 13: 33 – **There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.**

S#11.

- b. **Prov 23:7** – **“As he thinks within himself, so is he. ...”**

3. Their report demonstrated a complete lack of faith.
 - a. How tall is God ?
 - b. When is a wall too strong for God to knock down.
4. *God was totally left out of the equation* ... Not even part of the discussion.

D. Many in the church today function much like the Israelites.

1. We make our plans based solely on our own strengths and abilities.
2. **Worse** ... we often don't plan or strive, just set back and wait for God to do it.

II. Israel's experiences with God should have motivated great faith.**S#12.****A. They knew the history of God's dealings with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**

1. They were told how God gave him victory over five kings.
2. They knew how God destroyed Sodom and the 10 cities, but spared Lot.
3. They were taught how God had saved their nation by bringing Joseph to power.

B. They had personally seen how God had brought the Egyptian superpower down.

1. They had lived through the ten plagues.
2. They had passed through the sea and
3. They had seen that same water drown the mightiest army in the world.
4. The Canaanites were scattered tribes which were nothing compared to Egypt.

C. They witnessed God's mighty works while journey in the wilderness.

1. He had given them the victory over the Amalekites.
2. They drank water from a rock.
3. They ate manna and quail in the desert.
4. They all saw God on the mountain and heard His voice.

**** It's easy for us to condemn Israel , but are we any better ?**

III. We Christians are not much different from the Israelites.**S#13.****A. Where is our courage ? Where is our faith ?****B. We are give the same marching orders ... "Go forth and conquer."**

1. **Mark 16: 15** – **And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."**

S#14.

2. **Matt. 28: 19–20** **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**

S#15.**C. We have just as much basis for faith as had the Israelites.**

1. We have a Savior who was born miraculously of a virgin.
2. He worked an abundance of might works.
 - a. Jesus spoke and the storm obeyed His voice.

- b. He walked across the sea on the water.
- c. He healed the sick and even raised the dead.
- 3. He proved that he has the power to give eternal live.
 - a. He told us what He would do and He did it.

John 10: 17-18 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. ... **S#16.**

- b. He proved His power and authority by doing just as He said He would. **S#17.**

Rom. 1: 4 – Who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

*** He told us to go take His and promised to be with us; why aren't we going ?**

D. Like Israel in the wilderness, the church started off correctly.

- 1. Just as God got Israel started on their task, He got the church established as well.
 - a. Israel started as 12 tribes ... The church started with 12 Apsotles.
 - b. Israel was guided by a pillar of fire ... The church was guided by the H.S.
 - c. Israel was commanded to establish God's rule in Canaan.
 - d. The church is commanded to establish God's rule in the hearts of all men.
- 2. As Israel suffered in Egypt, the church has suffered persecution for 2000 years.
 - a. The Jews and the Romans both tried to destroy the church. (*External opposition*)
 - b. The Roman government re-organized the church. (*Internal opposition*)
 - c. The Muslims sought/seek to destroy the church. (*External opposition*)
 - *d. Modern secularism is doing more damage than any of these. (*both kinds of opp.*)
- 3. The church has survived everything Satan has hurled at us.
 - a. Survival is not victory. *Survivors lose by attrition.*
 - b. Conflict is only won by **offense**.

IV. Jesus / God is depending upon us. God has no plan "B."

S#18.

A. Many congregations in America are not growing.

S#19.

- 1. Sadly, there are more congregations losing members than gaining members.
- 2. No movement can long survive after it becomes stagnate.
- 3. Christians drift away because they have not grown enough to be committed.

B. A church that does not grow numerically is not a “faithful church.”

1. We don't grow for the sake of numbers, **but for souls.**
2. No one who does not obey God can be pleasing to Him. **S#20.**
 - a. **John 14: 15** – **If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (keep = practice)**
 - b. **Matt. 7: 21** – **Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.**

C. God will not punish failure, but will never accept excuses for not trying. S#21.

1. **Excuse :** Lord, you don't understand; this is a hard place.
 - a. ALL places are hard places. ***Jerusalem was a hard place, Golgotha was hard.***
 - b. Some churches in all places are growing. ***(Those that are actively reaching out.)***
2. **Excuse :** People just won't accept the truth these days.
 - a. Many obey it every day.
 - b. People are searching for something to believe in and to stand for.
 - c. Many of the fastest growing churches are teaching the strongest doctrine.
 - d. Jesus wants all but understands FEW will surrender to Him.
Matt. 7: 14 **For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.**
 - e. It is the Christian's responsibility to find the few.
Luke 19: 10 – **For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.**
3. **Excuse :** We have a lot of people move away or die.
 - a. That's no reason; it's normal everywhere.
 - b. However, spiritual births are just as normal as deaths.
 - c. The farmer's crop goes away every year but every year he plants so another comes.

*** Simple formula : *Planting of the new must always exceed the death of the old.***

D. We must honestly and frankly ask ourselves why we have not been growing. S#22

1. If every congregation was just like us what would be the fate of the church ?
2. If every member was just like me, how fast would the congregation be growing ?
3. Am I making a positive contribution to the growth of the kingdom ? **S#23.**
 - a. **Luke 11: 23** – **He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters.**
 - b. Being a passive follower is not an option. **ALL MUST GATHER.**

V. The church has become like Israel, looking through eyes of flesh rather than faith**S#24.**

A. The job is not easy and can sometimes be above our ability, but never beyond God's ability.

1. **Gen. 1-2** ... God spoke this world into existence. That is power.
2. **Heb. 1: 3** – He (*Jesus*) is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation **S#25.**
of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. (**Col 1: 17**)
3. The resistance from the world is great but we are guaranteed the ultimate victory.
I John 4:4 – You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because **#26**
greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

B. God has the ability to build His kingdom on the earth and to use us to do it. S#27.

1. **Eph. 3: 20** – Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all **S#28.**
that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,
2. How large can you imagine this congregation being ? *God can do more .. thru you.*

C. God is not the reason we are not growing. S#29.

1. **II Pet. 3: 9** – ... not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
2. **I Tim. 2: 4** – who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of ...
3. **John 3: 16** – For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, **S#30.**
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
4. **Mark 16: 15** – Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. **S#31.**

D. We are not growing because we are not sowing.

1. There is an eternal principle of sowing and reaping : **S#32.**
II Cor. 9: 6 – Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly,
and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
2. Like the one talent man, we too often make excuses instead of doing the work.
3. **Lacking faith**, we address the work in our own strength instead of that of the Lord.
Matt. 17: 20 – If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this **S#33.**
mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and
nothing will be impossible to you.

CONCLUSION :**S#34.**

A. I submit to you that every one of us needs in regard to repentance in this matter.

B. Jesus created us in Christ Jesus to walk in this good work

C. Jesus invites you to surrender your life in service to Him. S#35.

Lesson Text :**Numbers 13: 1-2, 23-33**

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses saying, **2** “Send out for yourself men so that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I am going to give to the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers’ tribes, every one a leader among them.”

23 Then they came to the valley of Eshcol and from there cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two *men*, with some of the pomegranates and the figs. **24** That place was called the valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the sons of Israel cut down from there.

25 When they returned from spying out the land, at the end of forty days, **26** they proceeded to come to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land. **27** Thus they told him, and said, “We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. **28** Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified *and* very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there. **29** Amalek is living in the land of the Negev and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan.”

30 Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it.” **31** But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.” **32** So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of *great* size. **33** There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”