

### So...where are YOU in speech communication?

Murmuring's sin is often unchecked. It is never repented. It is a tool of Satan to destroy the local Church by taking its vision off its mission. Murmuring is an abominable sin. It should never be tolerated. Its mouth should "be stopped"—stuff a sock in it! Such a practice is sinful because...

- ◆ It destroys congregational unity.
- ◆ It exalts Self over God.
- ◆ It provokes trouble instead of peace.

The Psalmist tells us what sort of communication is pleasing to God:

"Lord, who may reside in Your tent? Who may settle on Your holy hill? One who walks with integrity, practices righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart. He does not slander with his tongue, nor do evil to his neighbor...One who does these things will never be shaken" (Psalm 15:1-3, 5).

Psalms 15 tells us that the murmurer can NEVER be pleasing to God!

There are two personal questions that only YOU can answer...

- ◆ Is your disposition such that you can "dwell on God's holy hill"?
- ◆ Is it possible that you are blind to your "murmuring"?

An unforgettable fact and an unforgiveable speech communication is commanded: "You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Do not complain, brothers and sisters, against one another, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door" (James 5:8-9).

God's mercy will overlook murmuring and complaining for only a brief period (Psalm 78:37-38). Let us be aware of this and make sure we are committed to speak from the heart words that provoke love and good works!

"Do all things without complaining or arguments; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding firmly the word of life."  
(Philippians 2:14-16).



### Lesson Thirteen: Medicine for Murmurers! Dalraida Church of Christ

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There is a very real problem in society. This problem is the murmurs and complainers! Try to calculate the wasted manhours, the cost factors, the expended energy that are consumed by the evil communication of complaining.

There is always a little group that is upset with practically everything, involved in nothing, and busily sowing discord. If all is going in a positive way, these are upset because they have nothing about which to gripe. Consequently, these will invent negatives (Nehemiah 6:8).

- ◆ Ancient Israel displayed this devilish attitude (Numbers 14:27-37).
- ◆ Christ was confronted with this evil attitude (John 6:41-43).
- ◆ Inspiration issues a strict prohibition for the Church (Philippians 2:14-16).

Scriptures are full of instructions prohibiting murmuring and complaining. The constant commands against murmuring and the tragic narratives in biblical history, cautions us to be very careful to avoid guilt by this sin.

### Describing this Evil Communication

⇒ *First, the murmurer has allowed pride to control his life.*

Pride has gained the “upper-hand” and the murmurer complains when his way is not followed. Pride controls the person to look only to his interests. He disregards the concerns of others; he looks condescendingly at views opposite his. Pride refuses to acknowledge his lowly position, his lack of wisdom and practical knowledge of the matters he criticizes (Romans 9:20-21).

⇒ *Second, the Bible identifies the murmurer.*

The Greek term is translated “mutter, murmurs, grumbles, or says anything in a low tone to a select group. A.T. Robinson defines this action as “secret grumblings.” The murmurer engages in a secret campaign constantly complaining about an issue or person. This is identified as a “whisperer” in Romans 1:29 and 2 Corinthians 12:20. It communicates whispering that “quietly” spreads malicious communication or actions are whispered about in a negative manner. This use of the tongue is an abomination to God! If God sees this as an abomination and refuses to listen to it, why should God’s People do different? Titus 1:10-11 uses the word “silenced.” This communicates “fastening a muzzle; stopping up the mouth; to gag.”

⇒ *Third, murmuring is a sin.*

Psalm 78 contains these points explaining why murmuring is a sin.

- ◆ It focuses attention upon division instead of unity (Psalm 78:17).
- ◆ It forgets God and emphasizes Self (Psalm 78:40-41; 2 Timothy 3:2-5).
- ◆ It leads to unrest rather than peace (Psalm 78:21).

Thus, the Christian’s communication that is murmuring, chronic fault-finding, circulating negative thoughts and feelings, defeats three critical concerns that God has for man’s living: it prevents unity; exalts Self; and, banishes peace! It is understandable why God views it as an “abomination” (1 Corinthians 10:6-10).

### **Dangers Resulting from Murmuring Speech**

*There is the danger of discouraging others* so they turn away from God (Numbers 11:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:14).

*There is danger of becoming the one destroying peace and unity* in the congregation (Philippians 2). The murmurer’s tongue-wagging sows strife, fuels discord and commends ill-will by constantly complaining about things that do not suit them. (Proverbs 15:18; 16:28 6:19-20).

*There is the danger because harm is inflicted upon the one murmuring.* The chronic complainer is never happy. You cannot “make” him happy. You cannot appease his bitterness (Psalm 78:17, 21; Jude 16).

The heart that harbors murmuring will suffer far more than those to whom the vicious complaints are directed. Tragically, they CANNOT be happy because they are serving Selfish Pride instead of humbling self and serving God! Satan’s temptations have placed them in a rut. Sadly, many choose NOT to get out of that rut!

### **Proaction to avoid Ruin by this Evil Speech**

- ◆ Guard your tongue! (James 3:5,6,8).
- ◆ Develop humility, longsuffering and maturity in relationships—accept the truth that your way is not always the best way! (James 3:2, 17)
- ◆ Remember you are obligated to live as Christ lived! (James 3:9-13; Philippians 2:14-15).

### **Medicine for Murmuring**

What IF the sin of murmuring has infected the Christian? Can anything be done to remedy the impact of the evil communication? Psalm 78 offers Inspiration’s “cure” for those whose “besetting sin” is murmuring.

⇒ Be aware of your pettiness (Psalm 78:8,17, 41).

Often there are no grounds for grumbling. Many are complaining when they ought to be thankful. Many fail to look at the positives because they are focused on the negative.

⇒ Be thankful and acknowledge God’s provisions (Psalm 78:7, 11-17, 72).

Complaining reveals an ugly ungrateful and unthoughtful heart. How do you demonstrate your appreciation to others for what they do? Are you more concerned that others demonstrate their appreciation for what YOU do than you are to be verbally thankful for what they did? Murmurers need to get “outside” of their selfishness and look at all the blessings they have! Such enjoy “pity-parties” where they wallow thinking, “I’ve done soooo much for others and no one ever appreciates me!”

⇒ Be active (Psalm 78:70-71).

Complainers are usually uninvolved. They establish their gripes on the fact that “no one asks them” to be involved. Once the murmurer becomes involved, all grumbling and murmuring ceases! The busy person does not have time for complaining. If one is murmuring and not involved, then dismiss their grumbling! Many enjoy murmuring from a purely speculative position—“Well IF you would do this or that it will be better.” How do they know? The grumbler always enjoys unfairly criticizing the congregation by comparing it with another congregation. That is totally unfair because no two congregations are exactly alike!