

Sins of the Tongue – Murmuring

Introduction: Few things are truly universal.

- A. If the old excuse, “*Everybody does it,*” worked, there would really be few things justified by it.
1. While the majority may do a certain thing there are usually a few who do not do it. Few things are really universally practiced by everyone, everywhere.
 2. One of these few universal things is **murmuring**. There are very few if any who don’t complain or murmur sometime. This is true in every culture, time and place.
 3. Some folks certainly do it more than others. And some really seem to enjoy it. Some even seem to think it is a gift from God. They think it is their duty to complain and murmur about things — they call it helping others by correcting them.
 4. Murmur is defined as, ‘**complaint**: a complaint, especially one that is not made openly’ and ‘**complain discreetly**: to complain in a discreet or secretive way’ —Microsoft® Encarta® Reference Library 2003.
 5. Murmuring is bellyaching, complaining, grumbling and whispering. Murmuring can lead to many other problems. It can cause folks to be upset, unhappy and miserable. It can even lead to rebellion and conflict.
 6. Murmuring and complaining are almost the same. Complaining though, can be done openly and loudly. Murmuring is usually secretive. Complaining is expressing one’s unhappiness about things openly. Murmurers do it quietly.
- B. Thinking women and men have had many observations about murmuring and complaining over time. Consider just a few.
1. In some parts of Mexico hot springs and cold springs are found side by side--and because of the convenience of this natural phenomenon the women often bring their laundry and boil their clothes in the hot springs and then rinse them in the cold ones. A tourist, who was watching this procedure commented to his Mexican friend and guide: "I imagine that they think old Mother Nature is pretty generous to supply such ample, clean hot and cold water here side by side for their free use." The guide replied, "No señor, there is much grumbling because she supplies no soap.
 2. “*Grumblers seldom take their issue directly to those who can resolve it*” —John White.
 3. “*It is so much easier to assign blame than to fix problems*” —Kathleen Parker.
 4. You will find that, as a rule, those who complain about the way the ball bounces are usually the ones who dropped it.
 5. Most of us really think that murmuring is wrong. Yet we still do it. This is what makes it such a universal sin.
- C. We have been looking at “Sins of the Tongue.”
1. We considered **lying** first.
 2. Then we talked about **gossip**.
 3. Last week we looked at **filthy language**.
- D. Today we will consider ‘**Murmuring**’.

I. God’s word condemns murmuring and complaining.

- A. Jehovah does not want His people to be complainers.
1. *Phil 2:14-16 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you*

shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

2. Paul says to do all things without complaining and disputing. Many translations use *murmuring* here. He does not say 'some' things or even 'most' things, but 'all' things.
3. If we do the things we must do in life without murmuring and arguing we become blameless and harmless. God does not charge us with sin.
4. We are also harmless. Murmuring and arguing causes many problems. They can hurt feelings and ruin plans. They can also hinder the growth of the church and others things.
5. If we do all things without complaining and disputing we are children of God without fault. We shine as lights in the middle of a crooked and depraved world.
6. Murmuring is such a common sin that if we overcome it we are very different from the world and will be noticed. We display our faithfulness as children of God.
7. *Matt 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."*
8. If we overcome the desire to murmur and complain we are also holding fast the word of life. We give men and women like Paul an occasion to rejoice. They realize their work in the Gospel is not for nothing.
9. All of this is said of murmuring and arguing. They do not seem like such great sins. They do not make the headlines of the newspaper nor the 6:00 news. Yet they are very serious sins.

B. Instead of complaining about one another we should love each other.

1. *1 Pet 4:8-9 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." 9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.*
2. Peter says love will cover a multitude of sins. If we really love each other we will be forgiving and not complain about one another so much. We will be glad to help each other.
3. This principle is especially true in a family. Husbands and wives must love each other and overlook each others faults. They must not grumble against each other so much.
4. *James 5:9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!*
5. If we constantly grumble and murmur against one another we can be lost. Murmuring is a serious sin even if CNN does not do a special report on it. We cannot fool ourselves. The Lord see what we do.

C. We see the seriousness of murmuring and complaining and why we should not do it.

II. We have several examples of murmuring and complaining.

A. The Jews in the O.T. murmured at Moses.

1. **1 Corinthisan 10:1-13;** Here Paul shows that God was very displeased with His people in ancient times. They started out pure but quickly turned to sin.
2. Paul mentions their blessings and sins and punishments. They did several terrible sins like idolatry and sexual immorality.
3. Yet verse 10 mentions grumbling or complaining. Because of this they were destroyed by the destroyer. Lets see some of their murmuring.
4. *Num 11:1 Now when the people complained, it displeased Jehovah; for Jehovah heard it, and His anger was aroused. So the fire of Jehovah burned among them, and consumed some in the outskirts of the camp.*
5. The people complained about their hardships and Jehovah heard it. They had just left Sinai (Num 10) and are now complaining about the manna. We wonder how the Lord sent fire into the camp. Evidently the Israelites knew it was the work of God.
6. *Num 11:4-6 Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: "Who will give us meat to eat? 5 "We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!"*
7. It was the mixed multitude that came up with them from Egypt that started the murmuring. They did it in the background. The people heard them and became dissatisfied. Trouble followed.
8. *Psa 103:2 Bless Jehovah, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:*
9. They forgot the blessings of the Lord. It is when we forget all the good things that we have that we often complain.

10. *Num 16:41-42 On the next day all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD." 42 Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared.*
11. After the death of Korah and his followers the people murmur and grumble amongst themselves and decide the problem was Moses' fault.
12. They decide to revolt and move against Moses. God is displeased and sends a plague on them. Moses, being meek and loving, instructs Aaron to make atonement for them.
13. *Num 16:46 So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense on it, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun."*
14. We see again the terrible sin of grumbling and the consequences of it.

B. The Jews in the N.T. murmured against Christ.

1. *Luke 19:7-10 But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." 8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." 9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; 10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*
2. Several times in Jesus' ministry the Jews murmured about Him eating with sinners. They complained that if He were really a prophet He would not do this.
3. Jesus shows His love in that He was willing to forgive and forget. When Zacchaeus stated his repentance and change of life, Jesus very gladly accepted him.
4. Verse 10 is consider to very concisely state Jesus' purpose in coming to earth. he came to seek and save those who are lost.
5. *John 6:41-44 The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." 42 And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven?'" 43 Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves. 44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day."*
6. The Jews do not understand Jesus' teaching about who He is. They complain and murmur about Him. Jesus is able to deal quickly with their murmuring before they do too much damage to His followers.
7. Murmurers like to work in the background. They like to try to get the people on their side and hinder the work of the church or business or anything.

C. We see again murmuring is wrong and we should not do it.

III. There is a proper way to express our complaints.

A. Many use grumbling and murmuring to get their way in a group.

1. *Jude 1:16 These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.*
2. These false teachers complained and grumbled against the apostles and those who stood for the truth. They flattered people to take advantage.
3. This reminds us of Absalom in 2 Samuel 15 and how he took the kingdom away from his father David by complaining about his father at the gate.

B. We will have problems with each other.

1. We all have reasons to complain. There are many of these that we should simply overlook and keep quiet about.
2. Yet there are others that we do need to make known and deal with them. There is a proper way to do this.
3. The Bible gives us several examples of how to deal with problems and disagreements. It lets us know how to settle problems.
4. *Matt 18:15-17 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two*

more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' ¹⁷ And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector."

5. Here we have a brother who has been wronged. He is to try to make things right with his brother. He should not stay home and complain and grumble. He takes proper steps to deal with the problem.
6. *Matt 5:23-24 "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."*
7. Here is a different problem. This man has wronged his brother. He has heard his friend is upset with him. He is to take the lead and go to his friend and make things right.
8. Jehovah God puts the responsibility on both parties. Neither is to rumble and complain. They both should be willing to make the effort to go to the other.
9. *1 Cor 6:1-2, 5 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? ² Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?
⁵ I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?*
10. In 1 Corinthians 6 we have brethren going to law with one another. This makes the church look bad and does not glorify their Father in heaven. Paul says they need to do things differently.
11. He does not say to just ignore the problems. He does say they are to go to the brethren—and not a worldly court. There should be some wise man in the church who can help them solve their differences.
12. Paul will later say they might have to take a loss even if they are in the right. They should take a loss instead of going to a public court to keep the church from looking common and worldly.

C. We should do all things properly and in an orderly manner.

Conclusion: Murmuring is a universal sin.

- A. Everybody doing it does not justify it.
 1. Murmuring is quietly complaining and upsetting everyone we can. It is refusing to trust in God and let Him run the world.
 2. There is a proper way to settle complaints. We need to do things properly and accept the consequences.
- B. Doing the right things means we become a Christian.
 1. We **believe** in Jesus Christ as the Divine Son of God. We believe in His death, burial and resurrection for our sins.
 2. We **repent** of our sins and turn from them. Repent means **'to turn'**. Godly repentance involves sorrow for our sins. We are sorry we have sinned and turn from them and to God.
 3. We are then buried with Christ in **baptism**. We are immersed in water to share His death, burial and resurrection and be forgiven of our sins.
 4. As a baptized believer we are a Christian. We live for the Lord and serve Him and look forward to being with Him in heaven.
 5. *Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*
 6. *Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*
 7. *Rom 6:3-7 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin.*
 8. See also Matt 28:18-20, Luke 24:44-48, John 3:3-5, Acts 8:35-39, 7:30-31, 18:8, 22:16, Gal 3:26-27, 1 Pet 3:21, etc.

C. If we can help anyone in their service to God please let us.