

On Grumbling

Paul says in

- Phil. 2:14—
Do **all things** without grumbling or disputing;

He then goes on to describe 4 characteristics of what we will become when we stop grumbling:

- blameless,
- innocent,
- children of God, and
- above reproach.

He's not talking about our salvation. He's talking about how others will perceive us. He's talking about an outward illustration of our inward reality.

- Matthew 15:11—It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth, that defiles the person.
- James 3:6 —And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.
- James 1:26—If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue, he deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless.

Grumbling isn't just words out of our mouths—but attitudes out of our hearts. It doesn't simply reflect something we do, but broadcasts something we are.

We aren't allowed to "vent"? The Psalms are filled with "laments." Laments are venting to God, no to or about each other.

Laments are vertical. For grumbling between believers, Matt. Chapter 18 vvs. 15-19 illustrate the appropriate course. Grumbling should always include the accused and is not a group activity.

- Matthew 12:36 —
"And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak."

God keeps record of our words! Why? What we say with our mouths matters to Him. It reflects His nature. He **Spoke** the universe into existence. His power is reflected in **Words**. Even Jesus is referred to as **The Word**. When venting becomes our pastime, we have crossed a line.

Well, how much grumbling **can** I do?

- Ephesians 4:29 —"Do not let **any** unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

Perhaps God delivers this harsh rebuke about grumbling because **everyone does it**. **And**, Christians are to be different—visibly. Not everyone is a murderer. Not everyone is a thief, or cheats on their spouse. But **everyone** grumbles. Imagine how evident it would be that we are Christians—if we would just choose to trust the Lord with our circumstances without grumbling. **We would be different, visibly**. It's an easy way to look different in the world. According to Paul, we would be seen as "lights in the world."

Now, God's church will go forward in spite of grumbling. It has for millennia. Still, it causes pain, sensitivity, and often numbness and apathy—A desire not to serve. Grumbling simply is not good for the grumbler!

- Hebrews 13:17 ends with a warning to the Grumbling Christian—"...for this would be unprofitable **for you**."

So let us heed Jesus' words in John 6:43

- "Do not grumble among yourselves."