

BEWARE OF MURMURING

Int.

1. Aim: To warn of the sin of murmuring and its consequences individually and for the congregation.
2. I Cor. 10:11 "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come".
 - a. These things - events that were just discussed about the people of Israel
 - b. Have been recorded for our benefit.
 - c. To help us avoid making the same mistakes that they made
 - d. If God punished them for certain ways of life. Then he will also punish us!
 - e. We will notice one of these mistakes that they made in order to warn about making the same mistake!
3. The One we will notice is about murmuring:
 - a. I Cor. 10:10 "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."
 - b. Phil. 2:14 "Do all things without murmurings and disputings:"
4. We will:
 - a. Look at the definition of murmuring
 - b. See some examples of Israel Murmuring
 - c. See how God feels about murmuring
 - d. Notice the destructive effects of murmuring
 - e. And the remedy for murmuring

Discussion**I. DEFINITION OF THE WORD MURMURING**

A. Onomatopoeia -

1. The sound suggests the meaning, or the meaning suits the sound
2. Examples: Buzz, Hum, Grumble, --- MURMUR

B. Thayers - p. 120

1. "To murmur, mutter, grumble, say anything in a low tone - those who discontentedly complain"
2. "Secret displeasure, not openly avowed:
3. "One who discontentedly complains"

C. Vines EDNT - p. 93

1. "To mutter, murmur, grumble, say anything in a low tone."
2. "In the papyri it is used of the murmuring of a gang of workmen;
3. "...is always used of indignant complaining.
4. "A murmuring, muttering, is used in the sense of a secret debate among people, of displeasure or complaining (more privately than in public).

D. Kittell TDNT - Vol. I . p. 728-735

1. "Dissatisfied or to express dissatisfaction...expressions of displeasure "
2. "Grumbling dissatisfaction at disappointed expectations."

E. Webster - p. 557

1. "A half-suppressed or muttered complaint: grumbling."
2. A complaint half suppressed, or uttered in a low, muttering voice. --Chaucer.

F. TO MURMUR IS TO OFFER VERBAL EXPRESSION TO UNJUSTIFIED DISSATISFACTION.

II. EXAMPLES OF ISRAEL MURMURING

A. There are many examples of the people of Israel murmuring. Many complainers came out of the land of Egypt. It seemed that every time the going got tough that the murmurers would start.

1. They murmured when they got thirsty - Ex. 15:24 "And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?"
2. They murmured when they got hungry - Ex. 16:2 "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:"
3. They murmured again when they got thirsty - Ex. 17:2-3

B. Numbers 14

1. This was the time when the spies were sent to spy out the land of Canaan
2. Ten of the spies gave an unfavorable report
3. The people murmured

C. Numbers 16

1. This was the time when Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against the authority of Moses
2. They were murmuring against Moses.

D. We have many murmurers alive today

1. The building is too hot, or too cold
2. The preacher is too young, or too old, or too serious, or too fat, or too sloppy, or something. The sermon is too long, or too dry, or unneeded.
3. The elders do too much, or they do not do enough.
4. The church is always asking for money, or she is not spending enough for mission work, or for benevolence.

III. HOW DOES GOD FEEL ABOUT MURMURING?

- A. I Cor. 10:10 "...were destroyed of the destroyer."
 - 1. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed by the earth - Num. 16:1-35 [250 people]
 - 2. Fourteen Thousand and seven hundred (14,700) perished because of murmuring - besides Korah and his group - Num. 16:41-50
- B. God will not tolerate murmuring
 - 1. We have these examples
 - 2. Murmurers will not escape God's wrath

IV. THE DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS OF MURMURING

- A. Murmuring is a Stumbling Block
 - 1. It was a stumbling block to the entire nation of Israel - They were not allowed to enter the land of Promise but had to wander in the wilderness
 - 2. Just suppose that Paul had been a murmurer:
 - a. "I worked myself nearly to death while the other apostles sat around and did nothing."
 - b. How many people would he have converted? How many congregations would he have established? How much good would he have done with his life?
 - c. Instead of being an example to follow, he would have been a stumbling block that we must avoid.
 - 3. Murmuring is a millstone around the neck of usefulness; an ice pack on the fervor of the faithful.

B. Murmuring is Spiritually Fatal

1. It is a soul sickness that leads to discouragement, disillusionment and bitterness.
2. The complainer may be terminally ill.
3. Grumbling also infects any potential for good work
 - a. It causes indecisiveness, inactivity and fear.
 - b. Diligent workers can be paralyzed by catching this communicable disease.
4. The reason it is a threat spiritually is because it is against God - Ex. 16:7 "And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what [are] we, that ye murmur against us?"

C. MURMURING raises doubts

1. Sometimes murmuring will plant doubts
2. Good leaders and good works can be torpedoed by back-biters who use subtle suggestions to create doubts.
3. The Israelites said "If only we had died in Egypt" --- "Can anything be worse than this?" They were asking. These murmurings raised doubts in the minds of the people.

D. MURMURING is a mob mentality

1. Murmuring is devastating to congregations because it spreads in a group
2. "And all the congregation murmured against the princes." Josh. 9:18b
3. "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness." Ex. 16:2
4. Negatives are developed in dark places and spread like fire.
5. Group mentality is fickle, changing suddenly as it did with Israel - Ex. 15:24

E. MURMURING is divisive

1. "And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt"
Num. 14:4
2. Grumbling acts as a catalyst for a party spirit - factions - which is a sin
condemned in Gal. 5:20
3. Murmuring does not preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace -
Eph. 4:3

F. MURMURING drains energy

1. It takes as much energy to tear down as it does to build up
2. Think how many could be brought to Christ if all the diverted energy used in
murmuring could be directed into teaching others!
3. When we murmur and divide we take away a powerful action called "synergism" =
joint action of agents that when together increase each other's effectiveness."
4. When God's people stay together they generate more energy than each would have
individually.
5. Murmuring drains away energy from the church.

V. THE REMEDY FOR MURMURING

- A. Murmuring is never appropriate
 - 1. If something or someone justly deserves criticism and correction let it be done in the correct way
 - 2. If something unscriptural is being done in a church, let it be opposed without fail
 - a. Paul did not go around murmuring and backbiting against Peter to other brethren,
 - b. But “withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed” Gal. 2:11

- B. If there is something about some work or action of the church we don't like then there is a proper way to express that dissatisfaction
 - 1. Go to the person involved in the work and talk to them
 - 2. Don't go bellyaching and murmuring to everybody else and tell them what is wrong
 - 3. Go to the person involved and make some suggestions to improve the work.

- C. We can all learn to express disapproval without murmuring
 - 1. The way is to be positive and suggest a better way when we object and express disapproval.
 - 2. Christians must be mature and stop this vice of murmuring.

Conclusion

1. Instead of murmuring about what is not being done or the way something is being done, let us work to make it better.
2. Render our services heartily as to the Lord. - Col. 3:23
3. Phil. 2:14 "Do all things without murmurings and disputings:"
4. I Cor. 10:10 "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."
5. I Pet. 4:9 "Use hospitality one to another without grudging."

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Night - June 8, 2008
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