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Murmur Much?



Philippians 2:14-15: (KJV) ¹⁴*Do all things without murmurings and disputings:* ¹⁵*That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;*

Do you murmur? What does it mean to murmur anyway? Most of us don't use that word too often, but when you think about it, the word sounds like what it means... murrmmurrr... sort of an under your breath, nondescript sound that reflects a negative outlook on something. With this in mind, coupled with the fact that we live in a culture that revolves everything around ourselves, chances are that we not only murmur, we murmur a lot! Stay with us as we figure out where murmuring and complaining belong in our lives and look at practical ways to put them there!

Questions for consideration:

1. How does the Bible describe murmuring?
2. What are some good examples of murmuring?
3. How do we avoid murmuring?

1. How does the Bible describe murmuring?

Here's a great Bible trivia question: What do the following scriptures all have in common?

Ruth 1:16: (KJV) *And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou **lodgest**, I will **lodge**: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:*

Psalms 30:5: (KJV) *For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may **endure** for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

Psalms 91:1: (KJV) *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall **abide** under the shadow of the Almighty.*

Genesis 31:54: (KJV) *Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and **tarried all night** in the mount.*

Exodus 16:2: (KJV) *And the whole congregation of the children of Israel **murmured** against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:*

The word for "lodge," "endure," "abide," "tarried all night" and "murmured" is all the same word!

Murmur: Strong's #3885 luwn (loon); or liyn (leen); to stop (usually over night); by implication, to stay permanently; hence (in a bad sense) to be obstinate (especially in words, to complain):

So, our first Old Testament hint as to what murmuring is gives us great insight into the depth of impact that it can have on our life. It is something we can harbor inside of ourselves.

New Testament: **Murmur:** Strong's #1111 gogguzo (gong-good'-zo); to grumble: AV- 1) to murmur, mutter, grumble, say anything against in a low tone 1a) of the cooing of doves 1b) of those who confer secretly together 1c) of those who discontentedly complain

John 6:41: *The Jews then **murmured** <1111> at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.*

John 6:61: *When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples **murmured** <1111> at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?*

Murmuring is something you don't necessarily audibly hear, but it can be seen. Teenage kids provide a great example of murmuring! Is murmuring the same as complaining?

Complain: Strong's #7878 xys siyach see'- talk, meditate, speak, complain, commune, muse, to put forth, mediate, muse, commune, speak, complain, ponder, sing

Complaining is much more of an outward expression, while murmuring is a more inward expression, or privately with others.

Psalms 69:12: *They that sit in the gate **speak** <7878> against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.*



Psalms 77:3: I remembered God, and was troubled: I **complained** <7878>, and my spirit was overwhelmed.

Complain: Strong's #7879 xys siyach see'- akh meditation, prayer, talking, communication

Psalms 64:1: To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. Hear my voice, O God, in my **prayer** <7879>: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

Psalms 102:1: A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his **complaint** <7879> before the LORD. Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

When we are afflicted and overwhelmed, we pour out our complaint before God. What a great way to deal with difficulty! Complaining can have value in its expression, helping us to find a solution or rise above a situation. However, there is no positive thing that comes from murmuring.

2. What are some good examples of murmuring?



Israel's National Murmuring Over Food and Water

Here we drop in on a nation that was, just over a month ago, miraculously delivered from generations of slavery in Egypt. They saw the ten plagues, their release, and the parting of the Red Sea all as evidences of God's care for them.

Selected verses from Exodus 16: Exodus 16:1-2: There are a lot of people unhappy without addressing the issue.

Murmuring sparks mutiny! Exodus 16:3: Those who murmur have short memories for that which is good! Exodus 16:4-5: God's kindness and willingness to continue to protect His people handled their *needs* - not necessarily their *wants*.

Exodus 16:6-7: God hears those things spoken in private and those things that we mull over in our minds and He still provides His answers - maybe not the exact answers we may want, but He answers nevertheless! Murmuring leads to disaster because it has an undertone of building something bigger than it needs to be. Oftentimes we don't even know that we are doing it. Our minds can get stuck in a rut of constant complaining without any resolution. Exodus 16:10: More evidence of God's care for those who have doubted... but instead they focused on the fact that they were in the wilderness with no food. Exodus 16:11-12: God again reminds them of two things - I hear what you are thinking and I am caring for you! The continual recounting of the murmuring seems to indicate that it has become a mindset. Exodus 16:13-15: So God is again as good as His word. Again!!!

Observations about murmuring so far:

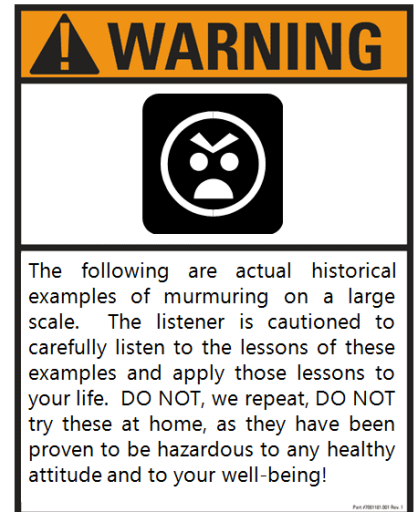
- It is quiet and consistent - kind of like a continual muttering under your breath;
- It can be powerful - the constant rehearsing of our perceptions yields a clear bias;
- It can be contagious - others who have the same circumstance are easily drawn into it. (Ever notice how easy it is to drag people into negative thinking than positive? It's our natural propensity.)



The Promised Land

After journeying through the wilderness for a short period of time, they now have the Promised Land before them: Numbers 13:1-2: So the spies go and return: Numbers 13:25-33: The Land showed itself to be all that God had described, BUT...Numbers 13:28-29: Numbers 13:30: Faith clears away the doubt - the Land was as God had described, He had provided for them to this point - why wouldn't God follow through with what He already said he would do? The murmuring produces a fierce bias which overrides the faith Caleb expressed: Numbers 13:31-33

More observations about murmuring: Once spread, it is an almost unstoppable force as it takes on a new identity called bias. Murmuring takes away our objectivity so that we aren't able to





clearly see where we are supposed to go. It can dramatically alter the outcome of events - the consequence of no faith was 40 years of wandering!

Jonah as an Individual:



Jonah 1:1-4: Jonah is given a command and decides to go the opposite way. Jonah 1:17: (This is kind of like being sent to your room to think about what you did!) Jonah 2:7-9: Jonah's murmurings become praises to God - after all, what is the alternative? God hears his prayer and gives him a chance to do what he is obligated to do: Jonah 3:4-5: It worked...but this didn't make Jonah happy. Jonah 4:1-4:

This is a sad, sad account of one whose inner voice brought him to a point of utter despair - even wanting to die - in spite of God's care. This story is repeated over and over again in our world today. Jonah 4:5-9

"If you have time to whine and complain about something then you have the time to do something about it."

- Anthony D'Angelo



The Pharisees: John 6:40-44:

More observations about murmuring:

- Murmuring can lead to a pollution of your conscience;
- A polluted conscience leads to a completely unrealistic view of reality.

3. How do we avoid murmuring?



MAGNIFY
GOD
AND

MINIMIZE THE MURMUR!



The story of Domenic and the binoculars: Rick's grandson has a pair of child's binoculars (pictured). He first put them to his eyes backwards, making everything he saw smaller. "Papa" Rick corrected him, showing him how to properly hold them to make everything he saw bigger. Domenic had a great time switching back and forth, back and forth. "Papa's BIG!" "Papa's widdle!" This is the way we see God. When we murmur, we've turned the binoculars around and are looking through them backwards and made Him small rather than big. We have to just turn our God-viewing eyes around so that we can make God big again. When God is big in your life, there is no room for murmuring anymore. Turn it around and change your perspective!



We can choose which way we look through the binoculars of our life! Gratitude makes God larger and more real to our thinking than the problem or obstacle! The question is: what are we magnifying and what are we minimizing? The Israelites magnified that which should have and could have been minimized! The result was the enemy looked like giants and they saw themselves as grasshoppers.

Psalms 69:29-33: If we can focus on being thankful, murmuring has no place. You can't be thankful and murmur at the same time. 1 Peter 4:7-10



Theme text: Philippians 2:13-15: This is a perspective-setting scripture so that we can look forward in our lives.

The following is a GREAT EXAMPLE of the avoidance of murmuring and disputing: Nehemiah 1:1-2: The state of Jerusalem and its people was weighing heavily upon the heart of Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 1:3: The news was about as bad as it could be. It was in shambles and the people were barely getting by. Nehemiah 1:4: Nehemiah's prayer was one of magnifying praise! He knew God could handle it even though he had every opportunity to murmur. Four months later: Nehemiah 2:1-4: Nehemiah's prayer and faith over this four months had come to a point of opportunity - not only was he continually aware of the problem, he was systematically preparing for the solving of the problem to rebuild Jerusalem. He was ready when the opportunity arose.

The Anatomy of Murmur Minimization:

Psalms 34:1: If we are always praising God with our words, it would be hard to murmur under our breath. Psalms 34:2: If our very life is crediting God with all that is good, it is even harder to mutter and complain. Psalms 34:3: When we magnify God, by default we minimize murmuring down to nothing!

So do we murmur much?

For Jonathan and Rick (and Domenic) and Christian Questions...

Think about it...!

