

Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam, WI
Philippians 2:14
July, 2021

There are many types of temptations that Satan uses to lead us to sin in order to drag us away from our Savior. There are the sins of idolatry, cursing, despising God's Word, disobeying those in authority, murder, living with someone and not being married, stealing, gossiping, and our evil thoughts.

Every sin is horrible and damning. I want to speak about a sin that most people don't consider to be a sin. Today we will hear what God says about the sin of **grumbling and complaining**.

Examples from Scripture:

- *Numbers 11:1-3, Israel complained about their hard life on the way to the Promised Land*
- *Acts 6:1, Greek believers complained that the Jewish widows were getting more food than the Greek widows*

Complaining! Grumbling! Arguing!

Someone wrote a song entitled, **The Grumbler**. It went like this:

*In country, town or city, some people can be found
Who spend their lives in grumbling at everything around;
O yes, they always grumble, not matter what we say,*

For these are chronic grumblers and they grumble night and day

Refrain

***Oh they grumble on Mon – Tue - Wed – grumble on Thurs, too
Grumble on Fri – Sat – Sun, Grumble the whole week through!***

*They grumble in the city, they grumble on the farm;
They grumble at their neighbors, they think it is no harm;
They grumble at their husbands, they grumble at their wives,
They grumble at their children, but the grumbler never thrives.*

Refrain

*They grumble when it's raining, they grumble when it's dry;
They grumble at low prices and grumble when they're high.*

They grumble all the year round, and they grumble till they die!

Refrain

Scripture says, Do everything without complaining or arguing. People complain about everything. And when we complain, we depress those around us. Read the history of a people who loved to grumble – the Children of Israel. The history of God's chosen people was full of grumbling and complaining against God. The book of Numbers, which contains the record of Israel's traveling through the wilderness, could be called the Book of Complainers!

The Children of Israel began their grumbling right after they left Egypt. They were at the sea and the army of Pharaoh was right behind them. They cried out, Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert. God saved Israel by allowing them to walk through the Red Sea on dry land while the army of Egypt drowned in the water.

After seeing such a miracle, you would think that the complaining would stop – but it didn't. Israel complained about the water, it wasn't sweet enough. God took care of that. Then Israel complained about the food. God took care of that. Next Israel complained about their clothes and shoes wearing out. God promised that during their stay in the desert their clothes and shoes would not wear out!

Never before were people so blessed by God, yet never did so many people complain! We are like the Children of Israel! We are so blessed by God and yet we spend so much time complaining. In the winter we complain about the cold. In the summer we complain about the heat. We complain when it doesn't rain, then we complain when God gives us rain. If we buy a car, we complain that the price was too high; however, if we sell a car, we complain the price we sold it for was too low! We complain about not having enough money, but if we have money, we complain about the taxes we pay. Husbands complain about their wives; wives complain about their husbands; parents complain about their children; children complain about their parents. Pastors complain, golfers complain, nurses complain, teachers complain, farmers complain. Everyone complains! Do you think that God is happy

when we complain?

Perhaps the reason for their grumbling and complaining was that many of the Israelites were not believers. Many of the Children of Israel left Egypt, not to follow the true God, but to escape slavery in Egypt. And many of those people were destroyed by God.

At one time during the march to the Promised Land, a man named Korah led a rebellion of complainers against Moses and God. God was really upset over this, and if Moses had not interceded for them, God would have destroyed Israel. Eventually Korah, and those who followed him, were swallowed by an earthquake.

Let's remember that God is disturbed by our complaining and grumbling. When we grumble and complain it shows that we are ungrateful. It shows that we are like little children who whine when we don't get our way. When we grumble and complain it shows that we forget that God will take care of us no matter the problems we face. Please note that we cannot be thankful and complaining at the same time.

A family sat down to eat supper. They prayed the common prayer and then the husband / father began to complain about the weather, it was too hot; his job, long hours and no air conditioning; the people he worked with, they weren't working as hard as he was; the food he was eating, left-overs again; and to top it off he said the umpire at his son's little-league game should have worn his glasses!

His younger daughter asked, "Dad, do you think that God heard what you said the prayer before we ate?" The father replied, "He heard every word." Then the daughter asked, "Do you think that God heard you complaining, too?"

How often are we not like that father? We talk about being thankful Christians, and then we complain about everyone and everything! Friends, it shouldn't be this way.

I think that grumbling and complaining show a basic lack of faith

and trust in a wonderful, loving God. We should remember St. Paul. He suffered shipwreck, beatings, and stoning. Yet, he said, I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

If we were to make a list of all the good days in our lives and then all the bad days, I think there would be many more good days than bad days. And, even the bad days become days of blessings for us! That's what God's Word says! Let's give thanks in any and all situations!

Since God loves us and sent His Son to be our Savior, will He not also love us and care for us in 2021? Of course, He will!

Christians talk a lot about the cross of Christ. And – we should. The cross of Christ is important to us and all the world. That cross reminds us of our Savior giving His life to pay for our sins. That cross reminds us of eternal life that is ours because of our Lord and Savior.

If we had been at the cross of Christ on the first Good Friday, would we have heard Jesus grumbling and complaining like this: "Father, do I have to do this? Why do I have to sacrifice Myself for these ungrateful people? They don't appreciate what I am doing for them! I don't want to suffer any more! I'm leaving!"

No, Jesus gave His life to pay for **all** sins, even those of grumbling and complaining. The Holy Spirit gives us the strength to thank and praise God through the Word and Sacrament.

May God help us to **do everything without complaining or grumbling.**

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