

Sunday, May 19, 2019—Body Building: Corrupt Communication, Part 7 (Murmuring)

## Introduction

- Romans 14:19—the second segment of this series is devoted to looking at things that make for peace among the brethren and edify the body of Christ.
- Ephesians 4:29-31—evil speaking does not make for peace among the saints. Evil speaking takes away peace and doesn't edify. Thus far, we have considered the following categories of corrupt communication and evil speaking.
- Ephesians 4:25—within the context of Ephesians 4 Paul deals with lying and truth telling. Lying is to be “put away” whereas speaking the truth is to be “put on.” The reason we should speak the truth is that “we are members one of another.”
- Ephesians 4:30—malicious speech comes from the central source of all sin—the promotion of self. Under the category we have looked at the catastrophic cousins of gossip and slander
- Today we are going to be looking at a third category of corrupt communication and evil speaking, namely Cross Words and the sins of Murmuring and Contentious Words
- When you are upset with someone or something how do you show your displeasure?
- We can show displeasure with complaining, screaming, subtle barbs, nagging, criticism, and angry words. We can verbally cut and destroy other in numerous ways.
  - Proverbs 12:18—are we running people through with our tongues?
  - Psalms 57:4
  - Psalms 140:3
- We use cross words for several different reasons. Here is a short list of the most common reasons for our verbal outbursts:
  - **Anger:** is like an inner explosion searching for an outlet. A common escape is the tongue.
  - **Irritation:** sharp words often result from irritation that is produced when people interrupt or interfere with our well-ordered lives.
  - **Disappointment:** unrealized expectation or misplaced dependencies are painful, and our disappointment often shows up in our speech.
  - **Impatience:** an impatient spirit tends to let loose verbal outbursts before giving the situation appropriate thought.

- **Stress**: people on emotional overload tend to have shorted verbal fuses than those who live in an organized, relaxed environment.
- **Insecurity**: people often resort to sharp, intimidating, or critical words in order to project a sense of strength and security.
- **Guilt**: when guilty people are confronted, they often respond sharply.
- Scripture indicates that these root issues surface in our speech in two general ways. One the verbal sin of murmuring. The other is called a contentious tongue.

### Murmuring

- Philippians 2:12-14
- Murmuring is a form of complaining that harbors a negative attitude toward a situation or the people involved. It runs the continuum from griping about the slow driver in front of you to murmuring against the Lord for all of the negative things in your life. The common factor in all murmuring is a critical spirit.
- The word appears in many places and in many forms in your King James Bible:
  - Murmur—appears 9 times in 8 verses
  - Murmured—appears 19 times in 19 verses
  - Murmuring—appears 2 times in 2 verses
- According to the *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* the word murmur carries the following meanings:
  - A complaint half suppressed, or uttered in a low, muttering voice.
  - To grumble; to complain; to utter complaints in a low, half articulated voice; to utter sullen discontent; with at, before the thing which is the cause of discontent; as, murmur not at sickness; or with at or against, before the active agent which produces the evil.
- According to the *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* a murmurer is one “who complains sullenly; a grumbler.”
- Murmuring is defined as “uttering complaints in a low voice or sullen manner; grumbling; complaining.”
- Nowhere in Scripture is murmuring more graphically depicted than in the case of the Israelites on their way to the Promised Land.
- Exodus 15:24—after having just watched God destroy the Egyptians in the Red Sea they immediately begin complaining.

- Exodus 16:1-3, 7-9
- Exodus 17:3-6
- Numbers 14:2-4—what a bunch of whiners.
  - Numbers 14:27
  - Numbers 14:29—God punishes them for their murmuring
  - Numbers 14:36
- Several aspects of Israel’s murmuring at Kadesh-barnea are instructive:
  - ***Murmuring ignores God’s potential***—the report of the ten spies reflected a godless perspective. God had opened the sea to save them, the heavens to feed them, and the rocks to provide water for them. He had defeated mighty armies throughout their wilderness trek. Certainly, He could deal with any problems the new land might present.
  - ***Murmuring is born in the context of evil reports***—sins of the tongue that spread negative reports (beguilement, gossip, slander, false witness) create an environment in which murmuring can thrive (13:32).
  - ***A Murmuring spirit is quick to jump to the wrong conclusion***—the grumbling Israelites blamed God for their situation and even started planning to return to Egypt (14:3).
  - ***Bad judgments are spawned in the atmosphere of murmuring***—the murmuring Israelites decided it would have been better to have died in Egypt (14:10).
  - ***Murmuring leads to self-pity***—murmurs often feel sorry for themselves and focus on how they have been mistreated, misused, and let down.
  - ***Murmuring thrives in an atmosphere of fear***—twice Joshua and Caleb exhorted the people not to be afraid (14:9).
  - ***Murmuring left unchecked usually breeds rebellion***—rather than listening to reason the Israelites were ready to elect new leaders who would oversee their rebellious plans.
  - ***The end result of a murmuring spirit is a general atmosphere of dissatisfaction***—criticism and complaining always lead to discontent.
- Numbers 20:1-13—Moses eventually gets so frustrated with the murmuring of the people that he ends up disobeying God.
- Examples of murmuring in the gospels

- Luke 5:30
  - Luke 15:2
  - Luke 19:7
  - John 6:41-43, 61
- Acts 6:1
  - Philippians 2:12-14—believers should never have a reason to murmur and complain according to Paul.