**The Grumbling of God’s People**

**Numbers 11-12 (ESV)**

November 18, 2018

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The story is told of a cowboy who was driving down a Montana road, carrying a trailer with his horse. He had a dog in his truck, and he had a terrible, terrible accident. Everything flipped over several times. A highway patrol officer came on the scene and jumped out to help. He was an animal lover, and so he saw the horse first. He went over to the animal and said, “Hey, how are you doing, friend?” He realized the horse had broken its leg, so he knew what he had to do. He drew his service revolver and put the animal out of his misery. He walked around the accident some more and he found the dog. His heart nearly broke. He said, “Hey buddy, you okay?” The dog was whimpering, but he realized the dog had a broken back. With a tear in his eye, he realized that he had to do the same. Finally, down in this deep ravine, he located the cowboy. He was looking down and he said, “Hey, are you okay down there?” The cowboy shouts up, “Yes! Yes! I’m doing fantastic!” (Laughter!) The cowboy realized this was not the time to complain of his injuries.

This morning we open our Bibles to Numbers 11. Here, we are confronted with a sin that very few of us are afraid to commit. It’s not one that brings fear and trembling to many souls. We think so very little of its weight. On the sin scale, it seems to be feather-light in comparison to sins like murder, robbery, adultery, assault. But a careful reading of the Bible convinces us differently. God’s Word often shows that God’s perspective about sin is very, very different from our own. So our text this morning begins this way in Numbers 11.

***1*** *And the people complained in the hearing of the LORD about their misfortunes,*

Of course, it’s impossible to complain without it being “in the hearing of the LORD.” The LORD is ever present. He hears every word that we utter. But Moses wants us to understand that God takes notice of our sin, the sin specifically of grumbling.

What exactly is grumbling? It’s an audible complaint made with a lowered voice. Grumbling is not usually very loud. It’s often quietly spoken. It’s an expression of dissatisfaction, discontent. Expectations have not been met, so we give voice to frustration. We’re not necessarily shouting about it, but we want to let people know we’re not happy.

So for instance, if you’re in the grocery store and you’re in a really great hurry. You choose the line that you know is going to be the quickest to get you through and done with your task. And then there happens to be the person in front of you. That person has 54 coupons and asks for 3 price checks, separately. You turn to the person behind you and you kind of roll your eyes and whisper, “Can you believe this?”

Do you ever do anything like that? When we grumble, we’re very seldom aware of it. It’s important for us to ask the people around us. Maybe just as homework today, if you’re married, ask your spouse. If you’re not, ask a friend, “Do I ever grumble?” and “What do I grumble about?” And then listen. Don’t defend. Don’t try to deny. Just simply listen and ask the Lord if it’s not true. We need to help each other in this because we so often don’t see the grumbling spirit that we possess.

The main idea that we’re going to discover this morning is that God always takes notice of our murmuring because our grumbling robs God of the worship that He deserves. Worship is a big thing to the Lord. We’ve been discussing that all through the life of Moses. We can’t worship God and grumble at the same time. They cancel each other out. A grumbling people is by definition, a non-worshiping people.

The first question this story in Numbers addresses is, “How do we get into grumbling in the first place?” I don’t know too many people who say, “I’m going to set the purpose of my day to grumble as much as I possibly can.” There are very few people who set about it with a purpose, and yet it happens. So how is it that we get on this path of grumbling? If you’re taking notes, first we’re going to consider

**The Way into Grumbling**

In Numbers chapters 1-10, we find the Israelites still gathered around the base of Mount Sinai. They’re still in this barren desert. It’s not a pleasant place. But they seem to have learned a faithful response to God’s revelation of Himself. They seem to be worshiping Him. They’ve left the golden calf worship. They’re focusing on God’s commands, God’s instructions. It seems to be a time of spiritual uplift. They are commended several times in chapters 1-10 for obeying God. God is giving them some very specific commands regarding a census, commands regarding how they are to worship around the Tabernacle, how they are to relate to God and arrange themselves. And God makes this comment in Numbers chapter 1.

**Numbers 1:54** Thus did the people of Israel; they did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses.

So this is a remarked change from where we last left off as they were worshiping around a golden calf. At the end of many instructions about worship and life in the wilderness, the people seem to be united. They seem to be ready to focus on the Lord. They seem to be ready to follow Him along this journey to the promised land. So at the end of Numbers 10, it says

**Numbers 10:33-35** So they set out from the mount of the LORD three days’ journey. And the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them three days’ journey, to seek out a resting place for them. And the cloud of the LORD was over them by day, whenever they set out from the camp. And whenever the ark set out, Moses said, “Arise, O LORD, and let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee before you.”

So they’ve been going for three days. The ark of the covenant is the localized presence of God. God was visibly present with His people whenever they set out from the camp. Remember, God had said, “I don’t want to go with them.” Moses interceded. He pleaded, “God, if You don’t go with us, then we don’t want to go anywhere.” So God answered Moses’ intercession. He’s with the people. Whenever they set out, Moses made a declaration of faith. They’re going into a land filled with powerful enemies. And every morning, as they start off, they start off with this acknowledgement. “Arise, O LORD! Defend us! We’re going to need you today. Protect us! Use your mighty arm like you did with the Egyptians.” And then when it came time to stop, the ark of the covenant rested and Moses would say

**Numbers 10:36** And when it rested, he said, “Return, O LORD, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel.”

Remember, this was a people that started with Abraham and Sarah in their old age. They didn’t have any kids. And that’s what Moses is taking them back to. “Remember God’s faithfulness. He promised a whole nation of people and look around us as we’re camping around this ark of the covenant. There are ten thousands and thousands of us now. God has answered that prayer. And remember that when God gave that promise to Abraham and Sarah, He also gave the promise of a land. That’s where we’re going.” And so, they ended every night with this hope in the promise of God to bring them into the promised land.

But then we open up Numbers 11 and we find the people complaining in the hearing of the Lord. Note how quickly our heart can turn from praise and thanksgiving to grumbling and complaining! It can turn just on a dime. The Israelites had their hearts focused, they had their hearts remembering the promises of God, and yet in a moment, they began murmuring against the LORD. How does this happen?

Well there are many ways this temptation to grumble enters our soul. And here in Numbers 11 and 12, God tells us four different stories of His people’s complaining and grumbling. Twice, the whole people of Israel complained. That’s Numbers 11:1-15. Once, we see Moses himself complaining. He says, “Kill me now! I don’t want to lead this people anymore. They’re so difficult.” And then in Numbers 12, we see Miriam and Aaron, Moses’ sister and brother, complaining. From each story we learn different ways that temptation tugs at our heart, lures us away from contentment, lures us away from thanksgiving, into its deadly snare. Let’s just review these stories of complaining, then we’re going to look at some paths that temptation cuts into our life to bring us into the sin of grumbling.

The first grumbling story is sort of a general complaint from the people. It’s found in Numbers 11:1-3. The people don’t like walking in the desert very much, and I don’t blame them. We think of the difficult circumstances that they were enduring, and there are a lot of things to complain about.

***1*** *And the people complained in the hearing of the LORD about their misfortunes,*

It doesn’t describe these misfortunes here in this first scene of a grumbling spirit. It’s just sort of general. It’s all over the place. It’s about everything. Nothing is going right. And yet,

*and when the LORD heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp.* ***2*** *Then the people cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the LORD, and the fire died down.*

This fire, if it continued, would burn everyone up. It was taking lives. It was terrifying! So Moses prayed.

The second story of grumbling is very specific. It relates specifically to the food now. That story of grumbling begins in verse 4. The problem that they really focused on now in this second act of grumbling is that the only thing they had to eat day after day after day was the supernatural food called manna, and they were tired of it. They wanted some variety in their diet. Again, don’t we also desire some variety? And yet here they are. They’re complaining in the hearing of the LORD.

***4*** *Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving.*

Now that “rabble” are Gentiles, people who were part of Israel, who left with Israel from Egypt. They decided, “This people has a very powerful God, so we want to be with them and see what happens.” We don’t know all their motivations, but they’re called the rabble because they never fully assimilated into the Israelite camp. They remained outside. They didn’t embrace the worship of the LORD, all the values that God was teaching His people. They were called the “rabble.” They were called the “riff raff.” And this act of complaining, this scene begins with them. They have a strong craving for different kinds of food. But then it says

*And the people of Israel also wept again*

So this complaint rose up from the rabble, from those who weren’t identifying themselves in a committed way to the LORD, but when they started complaining, the people of Israel heard it and they responded by joining in. It’s like a great song that you want to sing with somebody, only it’s a terrible song. It’s a song of murmuring. So that’s what is happening. And their memories were very poor.

*and said, “Oh that we had meat to eat!*

They began reminiscing about how great it was in the “good old days.” A complaining spirit always remembers the good old days with such bright lights.

***5*** *We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic.*

They forgot that they were slaves and everything cost them everything because their whole lives were just about serving the Egyptians.

***6*** *But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.”*

They say, “We’re just shriveling up, here. We have nothing but this manna to look at. We’re not even going to eat it anymore. We’re just going to look at it. And there’s nothing here to even look at.” So that’s the complaint.

The third grumbling story is rather ironic. Moses grumbles. And what is he grumbling about? He’s grumbling about people who are grumbling. (Laughter!) There’s the irony there. “Lord, all these people are doing is complaining. Kill me now! I didn’t give birth to these people. Why did you put me in charge of them? They don’t want me here. I don’t want to be here. I’d rather die!” That’s where Moses is.

The final story of grumbling is a story of rebellion. Does it surprise you that some people in the camp believed that they could lead the group better than the person God chose to lead the group? Is that a big surprise? The leadership would be like, “What are they doing? I could do a lot better if I were in their role.” There is Miriam and there is Aaron. They are people who God had given significant responsibility to. They were sort of second in charge, and yet they wanted to be first.

So here are these four stories of rebellion that describe grumbling. What do you suppose God wants us to learn from Numbers 11 and 12? He wants us to learn not to grumble. It’s a simple lesson.

The Apostle Paul writes about Numbers 11 to the church in Corinth. He warns them to avoid sins that brought death to the Israelites. Grumbling is not the only sin that brought death to the Israelites, but it’s one of them. Remember the fire burned. It consumed the camp. And here’s what Paul writes about this event that we’re reading in Numbers 11. Paul read Numbers 11, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he says this. He’s talking to a church. He’s talking to us.

**1 Corinthians 10:9-11** We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

He says your grumbling puts Christ to the test, so we must not do it. A test of what? A test of whether He’s going to be patient with us. Don’t do that. Christ is amazingly patient, but don’t put Him to the test. We must not do that! God is slow to anger, but He’s righteous. Paul says, “God’s Word is eternal and whoever happens to be reading this who is connected to God through Christ, it’s for us. God actually had this in view when He had Moses write this story down. He knew that this day was going to happen, and He wanted all of us who are worshipers of God to read this story and to take note that this people grumbled and they were destroyed because of it, so that we would learn not to engage in this anti-worship activity, so that we would learn not to grumble.

These four incidents teach us five paths that the sin of grumbling takes to invade and poison our soul. I think this is helpful because if we can find the paths by which grumbling invades our soul, we can put up some roadblocks, we can put up some impediments to them. So here are five paths which these four incidents of grumbling help us to see.

Path #1: The Blahs: We are tempted to grumble when our outcomes do not match our expectations.

We have certain expectations on people. We have certain expectations on our home. We have certain expectations on our jobs. We have certain expectations in our church. And it’s often the case, isn’t it, where our expectations are not met by reality. Whenever that happens, there is a path of temptation to draw us into grumbling. The people here are really, really tired with their food choices. They didn’t have any food choices. The manna tasted fine at the beginning, but now they hated the bread that nourished them. It’s not just the bread though, in the first story. In that first story, it’s sort of this generic, “everything is going wrong.” There’s nothing about life that is satisfying. That’s where they were. When we think of their life, it’s hard to actually blame them.

They were in desert heat. That didn’t seem satisfying to them. That didn’t meet their expectations when they left Egypt. They had to wear the same set of clothes, the same sandals, every day, sweat-drenched. They went into tents. They didn’t have soft beds to lay in. They didn’t have much privacy. I mean, everything was open. It was just tent life, nomadic life. They were in constant threat of enemies coming and just wiping them all out. They were in constant need. They were thirsty and they needed ever a supply of water that didn’t seem to be anywhere to be found. They needed ever a supply of food. Now God fed them, but again, as we noticed, it was the same food. And in short, this general discontent led them to think, “I’m just sick and tired of being sick and tired.”

Have you ever hit a portion of your life where it just seemed like there wasn’t any one thing that was so dramatically terrible, but it just seemed like everything wasn’t good? That there wasn’t hardly anything in life that was meeting the expectation, meeting the hopes? That is a huge temptation to grumble.

Path #2: The Yawns: We are tempted to grumble when we are bored with some specific part of our lives.

Again, they were really bored with this manna. They were saying, “We need something else to eat.” And in our day, it might be food that we’re bored with, but we have so many food choices. That’s rarely the thing that we are tempted to be discouraged about. However, my mom tells me that in the Assisted Living home, that is a conversation piece often at the dining room because there, you don’t have as many food choices as you have when you’re independent and can go to the grocery store and any restaurant you want. But it’s a constant source of grumbling because there is a limited menu. It’s true if you’re in school, in college, and you take your meals from a cafeteria.

Is that actually sinful? The answer is yes, it is. It betrays faith. It betrays worship. That’s the issue for the Christian. We say, “That’s a really serious sin. I don’t want to enter into it.” But whatever part of our lives that we look at and we realize we’ve experienced this for a long, long time and it doesn’t seem that there’s going to be change…We’re a people that crave some new variety. It might be our neighbors. It might be our teachers, our school, our church, our friends, our job. It might be our car, our marriage, our house, our own bodies, our clothes. Whatever it is, there’s some part that we say, “I need this to change or I’m not going to be content.” So we think the solution to our discontent is something new.

There is great irony in this temptation, by the way. The irony is that the thing that we’re discontent with today is often the thing that we prayed so hard for yesterday. Did you catch that? They prayed and cried out to the Lord, “Lord, we need some food!” And God said, “Okay. I’ll give you supernatural bread from heaven. Every morning, it will be there. It’ll be an abundant provision.” They said, “Yes, Lord. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!” And then that same answer to prayer became the very thing that brought them to grumble.

What did you pray about yesterday that you’re tempted to grumble about today? I mentioned a few things. There are some people that pray, pray, pray, “Give me a spouse!” And they get that spouse and it’s the greatest thing in all the world. And then a year later, two years later, that’s the very thing that causes them to grumble. “I wish she would be different. I wish he would change.” You pray for a job. “Lord, I need a job. Please, just any job. I’ll take anything. I’ll do it!” And God gives you an amazing job. And you say, “Oh, thank you, thank you.” Then a year later, “Oh man! I have to get up and go to work again today. It’s really lousy. There’s the people and there’s the boss…” It’s ironic isn’t it that the very thing that we prayed so hard and God graciously answered, is the thing that brings temptation to grumble.

Path #3: The Mob: We are tempted to grumble when others around us are grumbling.

The rabble that was among them began the grumbling chorus and then the people of Israel joined in. Grumbling is contagious! It spreads like a bad cold through a whole group of people. Spiritually sick people in the community often spread their spiritual disease to others until everyone is infected.It’s important for us to realize that simply listening to the grumblings of others places us at risk. Listening to the grumbling of others is like using a Kleenex that someone else has just used. It’s kind of gross. That’s not even in my notes. That was just spontaneous! (Laughter!) It is really gross. I don’t even know if I’m going to say that at second service. You guys can take it. (Laughter!) You would never do that. You’d say, “I don’t want to be infected by that cold. That’s gross!” But why do you let someone sneeze and you just kind of breathe in the air? “Tell me more. Talk to me more about what you’re really complaining about.”

Path #4: The Boiling Point: We are tempted to grumble when people unfairly attack us.

Moses is fed up with being the dart board for every complaint the people make. He is sacrificing to shepherd them, to care for them, and all he gets is hassle. He says, “I am just simply done here.” We’re tempted to grumble when people unfairly attack us.

Path #5: The Green Monster: We are tempted to grumble when we wish we had what other people have.

Miriam and Aaron saw the authority that God gave to Moses. They also had a lot of prejudice. I didn’t mention this one, but prejudice is also a big path of grumbling. They grumbled that Moses had married a Cushite, a woman from Ethiopia. She didn’t have the same color skin as they had, and they didn’t like it. It doesn’t even tell us why, other than just that they didn’t like it. So here they are. They’re just discontent because Moses has this authority to speak for the Lord and they don’t, and they want it. So do you see any of these paths that are making inroads into your life? I want us to consider

**The Wickedness of Grumbling**

We best understand the wickedness of grumbling by observing God’s response to it. Isn’t it sharp, here? He sends a fire! The recent fires in California and some of the videos that come out of parents, are just heartbreaking. They’re heart-pounding. These parents are driving through the fire with their children in the car, to safety, not knowing if they’re going to be burned up. It’s horrifying! Sometimes we read these stories and we don’t catch the horror. But then other times, there are things that happen that help us to catch a little bit of what is happening. That’s the kind of stuff that is happening. The fire of the LORD is breaking out in the camp and people are fleeing, and some of them aren’t getting away. And it seems like it’s just going to sweep through everybody. That’s the LORD’s righteous response to the grumbling of the people.

And then notice God’s response to Miriam. Here’s the irony again. She complained about Moses marrying a Cushite, a black woman, and God said, “Okay. I’m going to turn your skin really white with leprosy.” And that’s horrifying because that is decaying flesh on her body now. She’s going to die with that. Moses intercedes. We’re thankful for the intercessor. There are three reasons that we want to just briefly look at for why God hates grumbling.

1. Our grumbling proclaims that our God is not good.

All grumbling is ultimately against God. That’s the issue here, isn’t it? In Exodus 16:8, it’s the first time of grumbling. And here’s the statement. This is Moses speaking on behalf of him and Aaron. They came to grumble to Moses and to Aaron. But he said

**Exodus 16:8** Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.

All grumbling is ultimately against God because God is providential over every little detail that happens in our private world. He is the primary cause. Everything else is secondary. He’s the first of all. He’s never the author of sin, to be sure. He’s never the author of evil, but He is sovereign over it. Grumbling may seem like a small, tiny sin to us, but it ultimately denies the praise that is due to God that He is worthy of. It damages God’s reputation to have God’s people grumble. That’s the issue.

2. Our grumbling demands that God submit to our wishes.

Grumbling is ultimately a rejection of God’s wisdom and rule. We certainly see that with Miriam and Aaron, but I think we see it in every scene of grumbling, here. “We know better than You, God, and if we were You, here’s what we would do.” That’s the ultimate expression of grumbling. It’s a denial of God’s sovereign wisdom.

3. Our grumbling disbelieves God’s precious promises.

God gives promises to strengthen us as we wait on Him to bring His blessing in His perfect time. Our grumbling takes those promises and discards them in the trash heap. It says, “They’re worthless to me. There’s no life in them.” This is the Psalmist’s point when he talks about this incident in Numbers 11. Look what at what Psalm 106 says.

**Psalm 106:24-27** Then they despised the pleasant land, having no faith in his promise. They murmured in their tents, and did not obey the voice of the LORD. Therefore he raised his hand and swore to them that he would make them fall in the wilderness, and would make their offspring fall among the nations, scattering them among the lands.

So when they were grumbling, they despised the land where they were going, this promise. So what the Psalmist is saying as he’s thinking about this event, he says, “The real problem is they had no faith in the promise. If they had faith in the promise, they would have waited on the blessing of the Lord, as opposed to a desire and a drive to get this blessing right now and to complain about where God has them along this journey. If they had just kept their focus on the promise, their belief in the promise of God, they would have endured this hardship.”

When I grumble I often think about these Israelites in the desert because I realize that I grumble over things that are far, far less distressing than what they endured. It’s really humbling to think about this story. They have it much, much rougher than I do. They didn’t have grocery stores. They didn’t have running water. They didn’t have bathrooms with showers. They didn’t have air conditioning. They didn’t have Merrill hiking shoes. They didn’t have Keurig coffee machines. They didn’t have an iPad. Think of that! What would life be like without an iPad? Grumbling might seem innocent, but our grumbling is taken personally by God.

**The Weight of Grumbling**

What a terrible weight grumbling ties around the necks of God’s people. It’s like a giant millstone that drowns us in a sea of despair and pride. The joy of the Lord is choked by the grumbling of God’s people. Moses experienced this.He was so weighed down. We don’t realize that our grumbling actually has real spiritual negative impact upon the people around us. We don’t even realize it because that’s not necessarily our intent. I don’t think their intent was, we’re going to make this guy who sacrificed himself, who is the most experienced guy, the guy who talks to God every day, the guy whose face shines with the glory of God, the guy who came down from the mountain having received the Word of God, the guy who wrote out for us all the commands of God, the guy we need, the guy who spent 40 years in this wilderness shepherding sheep, the guy we need, the only guy who has the skill both humanly but also by virtue of his relationship with God, to help us. I don’t think they ever thought, “What we really want to do is by our grumbling, weigh him down so much that he’d just rather die than lead us.” But that’s what is happening.

There are many times in churches that lay leaders as well as staff leaders remove themselves because of the weight and burden of a grumbling people. That’s why we’re called to be an encouraging people. It’s a weight that weighs the whole community down from being able to worship the Lord. Here’s what Paul says in Philippians 2 to the church at Philippi.

**Philippians 2:14-16** Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

He says do everything you do without grumbling and complaining. Why? Because if you grumble and complain, it doesn’t really matter what else you’re doing as a church, you won’t be a bright light in this dark world. If you share the gospel with a grumbling spirit, the world looks at that and will say, “I can get a grumbling spirit anywhere in this world.” There’s no hope in that. There’s no reality to that.

**The Way Out of Grumbling**

What’s the answer? What’s the solution? What is the way out? I want to encourage you because as Paul talks about this story in 1 Corinthians 10, this is what he says. This is the rest of this passage that I began earlier.

**1 Corinthians 10:11-12** Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

First, he says don’t get pride and say, “We’re way past ever succumbing to a grumbling spirit.” But then he says

**1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Grumbling always makes us think that we are in a position that no one else in all of human history ever has been in, so we are justified to grumble and complain. But no temptation ever has overtaken any of us that is not common to man. But God is faithful and He won’t let us be tempted toward grumbling beyond what we are able to bear. We can never say, “I just can’t help it.” But God will provide the way of escape that we may be able to endure the temptation, endure the testing, endure the trial, endure the manna day after day after day.

I want to close with four escape routes. I’ll just say these rather quickly because of our time. The first escape route is the most important.

Escape #1: Rejoice in the Mediator that God has given us!

Moses prophesied in Deuteronomy 18

**Deuteronomy 18:15** “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—”

Well, we know that prophet is Jesus, and we have Him. So this is not future; this is past. And when we look at Jesus and His cross, how can we grumble about anything? God demonstrates his love toward us in this. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He died in our place. And if God did that for us, if God did not spare even His own Son in order to bless us, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? So let us set our hearts upon this Mediator, never doing what the people did and begin to grumble and complain against the Mediator, but rather rejoice in Him. Moses was imperfect, but Jesus is absolute in His perfection. Rejoice in Him. Let’s do that this Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

Escape #2: Keep these examples in front of us so that we would hate the sin of grumbling.

God says, “I recorded this story so that you would learn to hate this sin!” We don’t naturally hate that sin. In fact, we feel very, actually almost insightful. Grumbling makes us feel insightful. “I’m really insightful because I can describe all the things that are wrong.” (Laughter!) But God says, “No, hate that sin! Hate that ability to park there.” It doesn’t mean we don’t have discernment. It doesn’t mean we don’t bring legitimate concerns to God and others, but we don’t grumble. That’s the issue. Hate it! It’s anti-worship.

Escape #3: Confess to God your sin of grumbling.

Ask the LORD to help you see it and not make excuses for it. Ask God to convict you of its grave nature. Keep Jesus’ cross in view. His blood is sufficient to cover the sin of a grumpy spirit. Jesus has liberated us! We don’t have to have a grumpy spirit.

Escape #4: Kill the sin of discontent with the grace of thanksgiving.

Gratitude is stronger than grumbling. Let’s put it to use. It’s one of our finest weapons. Thanksgiving requires effort and work on our part, but it is effort and work that leans on God for the will and the power to give thanks. So let’s not pray just simply, “Lord, take away a grumbling spirit.” Rather, let’s press in with purpose, with energy, drawing to our mind and to our hearts all the blessings of the Lord and saying, “Thank you Lord! Thank you Lord! Thank you Lord!”