

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Exodus: Set Free, Live Free

TITLE: Singing and Grumbling

SCRIPTURE: Exodus 15:1-27

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We are in a series on the Book of Exodus from the Old Testament. Why study this book? Exodus is the Old Testament story of the salvation of God's people that points forward to the great salvation that comes to us by faith in Jesus. Exodus helps us better understand what it means for God to *set us free* from our broken, messy lives so we can *live free* in loving, personal relationship with God.

As I studied Exodus 15 this week, I was convicted about my own bent toward grumbling. I started to notice in my social interactions how much of my/our daily conversations include grumbling. My answer was almost 100%. How about you? ...Grumbling creates an atmosphere of discontent in our lives; nothing is ever quite right, there's something wrong with just about everything, and we gripe and complain because we think we deserve better, even though, we have it better than most. ...Paul Tripp says, "Grumbling may seem like a little thing—a little sin—but I would like to propose to you that grumbling is a pollutant in the waters of your heart. It will kill life." ... The other thing that I was convicted about in Exodus 15 was the stark contrast between the grumbling that permeates our daily lives and the singing that takes place as we gather on Sunday morning. We gather here on Sunday morning in an atmosphere of worship—we sing awesome songs of praise and thanksgiving that invite us to focus on who God is and what God's done for us—we rejoice and reflect on God's *grace* and *power* and *presence* in our lives—we sing songs that remind of what we believe in, rest in, hope in, and our minds are stirred, our emotions are engaged, our hearts are moved, our hands raised. *But it doesn't seem to stick, does it?* ...Too often, what we sing on Sunday fades away in the everyday challenges and troubles of daily life, and before we know it, we're living in the background drown of of a discontented, grumbling heart. ...*How is it that out of the same mouth comes singing and grumbling? ...What does Exodus 15 teach us about why we sing and why we grumble? ...How can we be more a worshipping people who occasionally grumble rather than a grumbling people who occasionally worship?* ...In Exodus 15 we see a worshipping people quickly become a grumbling people. We see the stark contrast between how people are singing praise to God one day and how those very same people are grumbling against Moses (against God) three days later.

(1) Why do we sing? ... We sing as a way of remembering and celebrating how God has saved us by defeating our enemies.

But somehow, singing songs of salvation doesn't always stick in the everydayness of life and we end up grumbling our way through our days.

A Few Notes on Grumbling

- When the word “grumbling” is used in Exodus and Numbers, it is always connected to the word “against.” So the act of grumbling is always directed toward or against someone.
- Grumbling usually arises in reaction to difficult circumstances we do not understand or that we cannot control. It’s a sinful reaction to hardship.
- Grumbling focuses on the negative aspects of your circumstances with little or no thought of God.
- Usually, grumbling doesn’t ask God for help *and usually*, grumbling doesn’t want to hear truth b/c grumbling doesn’t want to be comforted—grumbling just wants what it wants.
- Grumbling is the external expression of internal rebellion.
- Grumbling is a sign of ungratefulness, self-centeredness, immaturity, and/or insecurity.
- Ultimately, grumbling is an issue between people and God. Even if water is the issue or Moses is the leader, ultimately, grumbling is against God.

(2) Why do we grumble?

- We grumble because we don’t see God defeating our “daily” enemies the way we think he should.
- We grumble because we want an obstacle-free life.

But God puts obstacles in our lives for some very important reasons.

- One, obstacles are God’s primary way to grow us to be more like Jesus.
- Second, obstacles are God’s way of showing us his glory—God’s way of showing us his greatness and grace doing things that only he can do.

(3) How do we become a worshipping people who occasionally grumble rather than a grumbling people who occasionally worship?

We don’t get free of grumbling by focusing on grumbling. We learn to put away grumbling by focusing on the very things we sing about on Sunday.

For Discussion:

1. How would you explain the “big idea” of Exodus 15 to a friend?
2. Why is there such a stark contrast between what we sing on Sunday and how quickly we end up grumbling about things during the week? What keeps us from seeing the disconnect?
3. What are the two reasons Charlie highlighted as to how we grumble? Where do you see those things popping up in your life? What are other reasons we tend to grumble?
4. How does what you have learned and discussed from Exodus 15 call your heart to lay aside grumbling in favor of making much of God in daily worship?