Shut Up, Don't Complain

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Welcome to Brothers of the Word because, brother, you need the Word! Today, we’re going to be studying from Numbers 11:1-3. The Bible reads thus, “And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the LORD, the fire was quenched. And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.”

The title of today’s message is ‘Part 2: Shut Up, Don’t Complain’. In Numbers 11, God literally burned them up for complaining. Now, understand the Bible says that God is the same yesterday, today and forevermore. There, the people were grumbling, mumbling, complaining and griping and it kindled –

Do all of you know what the word ‘kindled’ means? ‘Kindle’ is when you start a fire and you take sticks and a part of the dry wood that you use to fire – but it says, in other words, God just got mad. He just got mad from the people complaining and he sent down fire and burned up all of the folk in the upper part of the camp.

Now, that’s Numbers 11:1-3. You would think that after people felt God burn up the folk from complaining, after he saw – just catch on fire, I wouldn’t need to see but one person complaining. It just was called spontaneous combustion, just burst up in the flame and burn down in ashes. I wouldn’t need to see but one person to let me know I better shut up.

Now, that was verses 1 through 3 that I read. I want you to see what the Bible says in Numbers 11:4-6. “And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, ‘who shall give us flesh to eat?’ We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick. There is nothing at all besides this manna before our eyes.” – in the very next verse after the burn-up.

Do you wonder how many times – turn to the person and just say, “How many times?” Have you ever seen some folk and you just wondered how many times do they have to go through this. How many times do they have to experience this pain? How long are they going to stay in this? You see somebody come here drunk and they go through all this pain. You see somebody on drugs just see him lose everything, and they see him get sober. And then, a few months later, they go right back.

Let me ask you something. How many times does a person have to go through this? And I was wondering, “Exactly, how many people did they need to see God burn up before they learn?” He said he burned up the uppermost part of the camp. I don’t know how many that was but I imagine it was quite a few folk and all, but how many people did they need to see.
I don’t know what time elapsed between the third and the fourth verse, but it was the very next verse and the people went to grumbling about what they had to eat. Now, it’s one thing when your stomach grumbles. See, people, this is why we have to learn to keep the grumbling of our flesh out of our mouth. There are times when your flesh will long for something, and there are times when there are times when your flesh will long for something that you have no business having.

Your stomach longs for something that you miss. Your flesh longs for something that you had in the past, but you got to learn how to cut the cord between the flesh and what comes out of your mouth and spirit. Here, the children of Israel, in the very next verse, went to grumbling, and in Numbers, that same chapter, down in the 33rd verse goes how God says he called Moses and he appointed the council of 70. It says, after the people had just been grumbling about, they just wanted something else to eat.

They wanted some meat. “God, but I wanted any meat!” I mean, at some times, you just want some meat, I understand that. I understand the cravings of the flesh. Meat has gotten a whole lot of folk in a whole lot of trouble, and I’m not talking about the meat that’s on your dinner plate. **Meat** has gotten folk in a whole lot of trouble.

Numbers 11:33 says, but while the meat was still between their teeth, before it could be consumed, the anger of the Lord burned against the people and he struck them with a severe plague. They hadn’t even swallowed it yet. I thought about it and I looked at it and the Bible says the Lord struck them with a severe plague – that’s disease.

I don’t know any plague that kills that fast, not while you’re still chewing and before you can even swallow. I don’t know any plague that kills that fast, so I believe here, and basically, a plague was a disease. So, the Bible says the cause of their murmuring and grumbling, even when God gave them what they wanted, he struck them with a disease – with a plague.

I don’t believe they died right away, but I believed that it was just like with Adam the minute they partook of the fruit. Death entered their body. The minute they partook of the thing they were complaining about, disease entered their body. Do you know it is interesting that the Number 1 disease killer in the U.S. in the industrialized world is heart disease? Virtually 1 out of 2 people from some form of coronary disease? The main culprit of coronary disease is plaque. It’s almost the same as plague except ‘plague’ is spelled with a ‘g’ and ‘plaque’ is spelled with a ‘q’. It’s the ‘g’ turned backwards.
So, when we often partake of the stuff we’re not supposed to have, God says he struck them before they could even swallow it with a plague – with a disease – but it didn’t kill them right away.

Sometimes, people, when you’re doing stuff you have no business doing it, it doesn’t kill you right away. It takes a minute. Here, I wanted to go through these verses just to reiterate and I begin in Part 1 of this message called ‘Shut Up’, showing how God does not like murmuring and complaining. But yet, we do so much of it and it’s part of just human nature, and we got to learn how to overcome this nature. We do so much complaining.

An article, years ago, that was printed in the US news and world report says this, and this is deep. It said, “In your relationship, if you speak one in ten of your statements with a negative tone toward someone, your relationships have greater than a 90% change of ending.” Just the negative tone. If you speak – I’m not even talking about half the time; the report says if you speak with a negative tone, if you’re complaining just one out of ten of your statements, it shoots the probability that your relationship will end over 90%.

So, if you take or correlate the reverse of that and if you don’t have at least one of your statements negative, then it will improve the probability that your relationship will last. So, for those of you who are married, I just want you to just lovingly look at your spouse and I want you to tell them, “Shut up that complaining so we stay together.” Just tell ‘em. Just look at ‘em with love in your eyes, but tell them in no uncertain term, “Shut up that complaining so we can stay together!” because if they complain just one out of ten statements – just one.

Some couples, half of everything they say is a complaint. If they complain just one out of ten out of their statements, it takes your probability that you’re going to bust up – that you’re going to divorce. It takes your probability to over 90% so just tell your spouse, “Shut up and stop that complaining so we can stay together!”

The average person complains approximately 15-30 times a day. When you multiply that by the population of the United States, there are approximately 4 ½ billion complaints every day. You know how you go past a restaurant with the golden arches and they have so many billions served? In the US, every day, there are 4 ½ billion complaints served. Now, who are those complaints being served to?

The world’s champion complainer was a man named Ralph Charell. Charell received over $100,000 as a result of his complaining. His smartest refund was $695 and his largest was $25,000. He spent time every day making phone calls and writing letters of complaint. He even wrote two books on how to make money, complaining.
Do you know some people are pros at complaining? They’re just experts at complaining and this man took it to another level. He focused every day on finding stuff that he could complain on.

One time, the President of the United States met an immigrant from Russia. He asked the immigrant, “I guess you left Russia because you wanted more freedom,” the President said. He said, “No, no, no. I have plenty of freedom,” replied the Russian, “I just couldn’t complain.” “Then, there must be that there were no opportunities in Russia,” the President said. He said, “No, I have opportunities,” the Russian said, “I couldn’t complain!”

He said, “Was it that you could not find a nice place to live?” He said, “No, not at all. I have a beautiful apartment. I couldn’t complain!” And the President asked, “Well, if everything is fine in Russia, you have the freedom, you have plenty opportunities and you have a nice place to live, why did you come to America?” He said, “Ah! Here, I can complain!”

In America, we do more complaining than a little bit and I have found, often, the more we have, the more we complain about. It’s just real. When the Brothers all went to Africa a few months ago and we went to three countries and it’s one thing that I noticed. There, they don’t have nearly what we have in America. 80% of the houses don’t even have electricity.

When I was driving with the guide, I asked him, “I don’t see the power lines going to the house?” He said, “No, they don’t have electricity.” I said, “But I see television aerials. How are they powering the televisions?” He said, “Well, they all have car batteries in the house.” They take the car battery up once a week to get it charged and then they bring it back to run the television and they only have black-and-white televisions.

But yet, as I look on the people’s faces, they’re all happier than the people in America. Sometimes, the more we have, the more we have to be complaining about. See, there’s a cycle that creates complaining. First comes abundance – when you got something. We have what we need and we’re content and thankful, but second comes expectation for we enjoy abundance first, but we expect that it’ll continue.

See, if you have power in your house, then you expect to have power in your house, but the person who wouldn’t even have any electricity in the house, they don’t even expect electricity and they’re just as happy when the dark – They’re just as happy as they can be. If we got power, and our power goes out for one hour, we’re just in total turmoil. You understand the difference? I mean, literally, if the power goes out for one hour, we got major problems because we’re in the dark for just an hour.
Sometimes, it can even go out in the night, and you still got a problem, but the folk who don't even have power are just as happy as they can be. The third step in the cycle is disappointment – when the abundance disappears and we're disappointed. Fourth in the cycle is complaining, and that's the place where so many of us right now.

I was in at the grocery store yesterday and I saw this. For those of you who are listening and you're not watching the video and television, you won’t be able to see this, but this is what this is. It’s a cover of a magazine, and on the magazine is a huge hamburger and the hamburger has 10 meat patties on the burger, and underneath says, “Are we happy yet?” I mean, it’s got 10 meat patties on this burger, and the question is, “Are we happy yet? How big of a burger do you need?”

Did you know in the old days, it just started with just a little-bitty burger and you didn’t get a one piece of meat on a burger. Sometimes, if you had a crystal, even that piece of meat was posted stamp-size and you were happy to get it. Then, they went to the double burger. Then, they want to the triple burger and you wonder where does the thing end and then you remember the slogan ‘Where’s the Beef?’ because you were used to double and triple burgers and we get spoiled with all this stuff.

I was having a conversation in the meeting the other day and we were talking about stuff and somehow, it got on razors. And they said, “Now, I only shave with a five-blade razor”. You know, they started adding more and more blades on the razor. So, now the current state-of-the-art is a five-blade razor. They said, “If I shave with a razor with just three blades, if it only has three blades, it’s just not right. I’ve got to have five blades for my razor.”

We have cell phones now and the cell phones have cameras on them. It’s rated in megapixels. We were in a conversation. Now, the current state-of-the-art for megapixels is way beyond any picture clarity that you ever need but they keep going up and they just don't feel right if you don't have a camera with the latest number of megapixels. When will it end?

The thing that no one realizes is you’re not any happier just because you got a big megapixel camera. If you took pictures of the faces of the people in the world in this city with your big megapixel camera, all you’re going to still see is folk unhappy. It’s like that magazine that asked the question, “Are you happy yet?”

You see, people, when you complain, it's contagious. That’s a Brother Point. Complaining is more containing than any germ. When you complain, it’s contagious. It’s like if you’re in the night and you hear some dogs go to barking. If you hear one dog bark, it’s not long before another dog starts barking. Then, another dog will start barking, and before you know it, you got the whole neighborhood just howling.
If you hear one frog croak, it’s not long before another frog will start to croak. There’s something about barking and complaining that is contagious and it will contaminate the whole group.

Now, I take my company each year on annual trip and this year we went to Savanna. When we were in Savanna, I actually terminated one of my employees because of the pattern of complaining. One of the other employees told me, “Mr. Bronner, they’re just complaining and that complaining is contaminating the other folk.” I actually had decided to terminate the person a few months earlier but I had mercy, but only a trip I said, “I got to get him out of our company because they will contaminate everybody in the company with a bad spirit of complaining and always griping.”

It just makes a difference, but, people, let me tell you, when you can learn some things – now, we went out on a trip. The next day that we got there, we went fishing. We chartered the deep sea boat and there were 16 of us total. When we got on the boat, it was cold and the captain of the ship said, “We’re going to have to stay inland in the cold because the sea is too rough to go out. The waves are too high.” I was joking with the man when I told him, “Look, this crew is tough. We can handle anything you’ve got.” I was just kidding with the man.

He stayed in the cold for about 30 minutes and couldn’t find any fish and all of a sudden, I felt the boat just go to full-speed and headed straight out in the middle of the ocean. It was rough and I mean that boat was just chopping, bouncing up and down. There were 16 people on the boat. Out of 16 people, 10 of the people threw up. Out of the other 6 who were left, most of those six, they felt either a headache or dizziness or something was wrong with them.

My mother was with us on the trip. Now, I was pretty tough. I’ve been on all kinds of boats and I’ve never thrown up. I was eating on the boat. I had just got through with a big old pile of blueberries. I had some cashews. I was just eating. Here, when the boat was rocking back and forth, I was leaning back, doing abs exercises. I said, “I have never thrown up. I don’t care how rough this boat gets. I can handle it.”

But after about 3 hours, I felt my little stomach grumbling a little bit and I said, “Uh oh, that doesn’t feel too good.” I had just gotten through preaching a series about Jonah. Sometimes, when you’re out in the middle of that boat, you’ll understand some things. It got rough and after about another 15 minutes, I was heaving over the side, calling – I was heaving over the side and I saw all of my blueberries and all of my cashews. They were just flowing out into the ocean, but here I was, a pastor, hanging over the side of the boat and the boat’s just going up and down.
This is the thing. There’s not too much worse feeling than in the middle of throwing up. You know, there’s not too much that feels any worse than that, but I was just as happy and there was a smile in my face between – and you know why. It was because of what I heard.

Let me tell you what I heard. My mother is almost 80 years old. It was freezing. It was rocking. She didn’t have a single symptom at all. So, while I was hanging over the rail like this, what I heard was this. “Jesus, Precious Savior, he’s worthy to be praised, Jesus, [barfing sounds], Mighty Savior”. See people, in the middle of all that throw-up, turmoil, and rough scene, I heard my mother singing.

She was praising Jesus in the middle of that storm and she had no symptom at all. She was older than anybody on the boat. By all physical laws – a matter of fact, we had some people where they come and hold onto my mother because they were half her age, but just sick, and she was sitting there nearly 80 years old singing, “Jesus, Praise Him, Precious Savior. He’s worthy to be praised.”

That thing ministered to me. People, no matter what your situation is, no matter how rocky the sea is, no matter how heaving your boat is, no matter what your body is going through, if you can praise him – First of all, the praise will get you through it, but if you learn the lesson if my mother, the praise will often keep you out of it. It kept her from throwing up. It kept her from going over the side. Shut up. Stop complaining. Start praising. Yes, your life is rough. Yes, there are some tough things. Yes, there’s a storm in the midst of stuff.

Now, people, I just saw what happened and I heard and saw the value of who you are around because if I had listened to anyone complaining, it would have made me sicker. But because I heard someone praise him, I could throw up with a smile. It makes the difference who you are around and the spirit that they care.

Let me tell you what happened. There’s all the fish. People were fishing and all the fish went in the line and I was on the back of the boat. I actually put my pole in the holder and I walked up to the front and in a couple of minutes, my pole just angled down into the water. Reverend Frank saw it because he was standing next to my pole and he grabbed it and he began to reel it in.

We were worried about, because we wanted to cook the fish that we had caught to eat, but we had only caught about two small fish. You all ever heard about two small fish? We only had about two small fish and when he reeled my fish in that was on my line, it was a spotted-tail bass. The captain of the boat said he had never seen one that big. It was thirty-eight inches long and between twenty and thirty pounds. It fed everybody.
It came on my line when I wasn’t even tending the line. It was the message to me that God can send provision to you. He can send you something to eat and you’re not even tugging on the line. God sent it but after he spoke some heavy revelation about that fish. I had just finished the series of Jonah. This is what he said. He said, “When you are in disobedience, you end up in the belly of the big fish. But when you are in obedience, the big fish ends up in your belly.”

We ate that fish and that fish was some of the best fish we had ever had in our lives. People, praise him. In the midst of whatever is going on in your world, when you begin to speak the words of praise, it changes some things. It’ll calm you. It’ll keep you out of the storm. It will protect you. That praise will wash over you and God will put a fish on your line that’s record-breaking.

The captain said, “People, pros fish for years and they can never catch a fish like this.” Your own efforts can never match what God can do out of faith. For those of you listening to this message, or watching this by television, shut up. Start praising. Stop complaining. Watch God put some fish on your line.

Thank you for joining us today at Brothers of the Word because you need the Word.

What I want to do today is I’m not going to call for salvation. I’m not going to call for membership. What I am going to do, I’m going to call for my mother and I want her to just sing that song because some of you all – now, you never heard her sing, and my mother’s saying, “What in the world is this boy doing?” I understand that, but she doesn’t want to come up and sing. But let me tell you something she’ll not be complaining about. She has praise in her heart and – Mother, come up in the pulpit.

Now, you can say something but I want you to sing first. There’s just something about – Brother, I want you to just play that song softly as she sings. Now, this, people, this is a voice that I’ve heard all my life. I would hear my mother singing as she went through the house. What did your children hear when you singing when they go through the house? I would hear my singing to the Lord and there’s something about is – and mothers and fathers, what do you children hear? Are they hearing you complain? Are they hearing you fuzz? God himself killed folk. He burned them up and he sent disease on them. That’s why I wanted you to read it. He burned them up and he sent disease on them and that’s why he had me title this series ‘Shut Up, Stop Complaining’. It just made God mad.

So, he’s given these folk all this stuff – their clothes, their food, their electricity, they got a roof over their head, they’re walking around with health and strength and they still complain just because they don’t like the meat. God says, “I’ll kill them!” And he did. “I’ll burn them up. I’ll put disease on them.”
I hope that he doesn’t do that today, but to be honest about it, I think we do part of that to ourselves. Doctors say that 90% of our diseases are stress-related. The experts also say that the Number 1 contributor to stress is complaining. God didn’t kill them. You’re just killing yourself with your mouths. That’s why he just said “Shut up and stop complaining.” Start praising.

I don’t care what you have been through. Stop complaining about what you’ve been through, because that’s over with. That’s what Paul says – forgetting the things that are behind me. He had some stuff behind him. Forget the stuff behind you and press forward.

_Praise Him, Jesus_  
_Praise the Savior_  
_He is worthy to be praised_

_Praise Him, Praise Him, Praise Him_  
_Jesus, Praise the Savior_  
_He is worthy to be praised_

_Jesus, Hallelujah, Hallelujah_  
_Jesus, Praise the Savior_  
_He is worthy to be praised_

_Hallelujah, Hallelujah_  
_Jesus, Blessed Savior_  
_He is worthy to be praised_

Paul says from the rising of the sun, for the going of the same, praise him. And whether the sun is down, praise him. I’m going to get momma close with that.

Nathaniel’s Mom:

_Hallelujah. Just to say God is real, and out of your mouth become a testimony of your inward self. Watch what comes out of your mouth because you can overcome anything. If I was just up here, just by my feelings, I would be at home in my bed. But you have to keep on going anyhow. When you’re moving, your body will become to get in line with you’re doing._

So, instead of me being at home in my bed, I said, “Let me get up and get to the Father’s house because it’s at the Father’s house where the potter is making things.” God is so good and he didn’t want to give me this mic but I will have to tell this since he gave me the mic.
I was on my way to the carol practice on Wednesday. Just before I was driving into the parking lot, I had my radio on and the song was ‘Let the Church Say Amen’. And I’m just going on with ‘Let the Church Say Amen’, but all of a sudden, the Holy Ghost switched my radio to my CD. On the CD, here comes Pastor Dale Bronner saying, “You need to go onto the Potter’s house where they’re making things. He’s making things new and everyone got something in you that God wants to make new.” He said, “Your gifts are within you, but you got to go down to the Potter’s hand to get it.”

So, those of you, this is the Potter’s house, and you are here because God gifts inside of you. At this rough time in life, God expects for you to use the gifts that he has in you. That’s where you make things. Think it not strange that I thought that the Holy Ghost switching was for the Pastor, and I told Pastor about this and I told him to come and get the CD out of my car and listen to it.

Later on, the voice came to me and said, “Did you call Dale and tell Dale?” I said, “No, I didn’t.” I got up, called Dale. He did not answer on the first call around and I just placed the phone back on the hook. Within 2 seconds, my phone rang and it was Dale. He said, “I was going through the airport. I saw your call come through.” Soon as they got to the gate, “Now, I’m returning your call.” I said, “I called to tell you about the experience I had. I was listening to ‘Let the Church Say Amen’ and God switched it to you, preacher. ‘Go down to the Potter’s house.’”

He said, “Mother, I am on my way to California and I got to do 4 services in California.” I said, “Do you remember the sermon, ‘Go Down to the Potter’s House’?” He said, “Yes, I have it on my computer.” I said, “That’s your message.

Be very sensitive to the Spirit. God is moving and he’s doing new things. He’s making everything new. But even through these times, you’re going to seek what you’re made out of. Some of you are just sitting down on the gifts that God had given you. God wants to stir up some gifts in you and this is the time to stir it up. People need it. There’s enough out there for everybody that it has to be stirred up and get into the move and it is something about what we’re doing in this place. God is doing in this place. He’s making some vessels in this place.

This place is going to a magnitude that we even know not of but it’s going to be the faithful. It’s going to be those that he’s making with at the Potter’s house. So, we get to stay in position. We got to keep going, praying. You got to get up and pray more, longer. You got to read that Bible every day. That’s what it’s all about. We got everything we need, but you got to use it.
So, Father, we just thank you right now. Thank you for the Father's house today. You made things new today. Thank you for ears to hear and eyes to see and a mind and brain to understand what you have done in this place today. Let us take our tongues and begin to magnify you – to praise you, Lord; to know that you are the Abba and you’re the finisher of our faith. We thank you for those who have outcome the burden in their hearts today, and had said that they need you more than anything else in the world, God.

In the name of Jesus, God, we pray that your impartation of your spirit would just begin to flow right now into the hearts of your people, God, who are hungry – those who are aching in their hearts right now, those who need that miracle right now, God. In the name of Jesus, we thank you for it, God. We thank you for situation changes. We thank you for the money, God, that’s already in the mouth of the fish and is in the belly of a whale.

We thank you. We call it forth, God, that “thou say the word and out as though they were”. God, we thank you today. Thank you for blessing your people. Thank you for the forgiveness of sins. Thank you for washing us whiter than snow. Thank you, God, for their word, God, of no complaining, but to learn to praise you. Praise is what’s going to get us through.

We just want to thank you today. Thank you, as we go in peace, carrying our Blessed Savior with us wherever we go and let him come out of our mouths into the ears of people who are hurting. We pray for the ones, God, that are hurting, along the streets, houses, and wherever they may be. We pray for them. We pray that our weight is already made. Father, we just thank you today as we walk in obedience.

Thank you for this message, oh God, but to turn that complaining into praises. We give you thanks in Jesus’ name, Amen.

Amen.

_Jesus, Praise the Savior_

[hymn]