



Philippians 2.14-18. "Let's Rejoice!"

14 Do all things without complaining and disputing,

A little old lady walked into a department store one day and was surprised when a band began to play and an executive pinned an orchid on her dress and handed her a crisp \$100 bill. She was the store's millionth customer.

Television cameras were focused on her and reporters began interviewing her.

"Tell me," one asked, "just what did you come here for today?"

The lady hesitated for a minute and then sheepishly answered, "I was on my way to the Complaint Department."

- **Young's Literal translation** brings out the fact that the Greek text emphasizes "**all things**" (first in the Greek sentence) -
"**All things do** without murmurings and reasonings,"
 - The word "**All**" is placed first in the Greek NT, emphasizing that it doesn't say "**Some.**"
 - Sometimes not complaining
 - Sometimes not grumbling or disputing
 - That's EASY – anyone can accomplish that!
 - Lucy's choir was told to wait 10 miles before complaining about the way they were treated at a church when they sang there.

- γογγυσμῶν] **'murmurings.'** The word is constantly used in the LXX of Israel in the wilderness; seems to have been present to the Apostle's mind here; for in the next verse he quotes from the song of Moses. ¹

Exodus 16:12–14

12 "I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel.

Speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread.

And you shall know that I am the LORD your God.' "

13 So it was that quails came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp.

14 And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground.

- **Murmurings and questionings:**

- **William Barclay:** "It describes the low, threatening, discontented muttering of a mob who distrust their leaders and are on the verge of an uprising. The word Paul uses for questionings is "dialogismos" which describes useless, and sometimes ill-natured, disputing and doubting." ²

Jude 16–25

16 These people are grumblers, discontented, proceeding according to their desires, and their mouths speaking pompous words, showing partiality to gain an advantage.

17 But you, dear friends,

remember the words proclaimed beforehand

by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,

18 for they said to you, **"In the end time there will be scoffers following according to their own ungodly desires."**

- **"He who restrains":**

- **13.150 κατέχω**_α: to prevent someone from doing something by restraining or hindering—'to prevent, to hinder, to restrain, to keep from.' ἀνθρώπων τῶν τῆν

¹ Joseph Barber Lightfoot, ed., *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians*, Classic Commentaries on the Greek New Testament (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd, 1913), 117.

² William Barclay, ed., *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*, electronic ed., The Daily Study Bible Series (Philadelphia: The Westminster John Knox Press, 1975), 43.

ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων 'the people whose evil ways keep the truth from being known' Ro 1:18.³

○ **Those that “restrain” the truth:**

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all impiety and unrighteousness of people, who **suppress** (restrain) the truth in unrighteousness,

○ **He who restrains the lie:**

2 Thessalonians 2:6–8

6 **And you know that which restrains him (the antichrist) now,** so that he will be revealed in his own time.

7 For the mystery of lawlessness is at work already; only the one who now restrains will do so until He is out of the way,

8 and then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of His mouth, and wipe out by the appearance of His coming,

Jude 19-25

19 **These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly, not having the Spirit.**

20 But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith, **by praying in the Holy Spirit,**

21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

22 And have mercy on those who doubt,

23 and save others by snatching them from the fire, and have mercy on others with fear, hating even the tunic stained by the flesh.

24 **Now to the one who is able to protect you from stumbling** and make you to stand before his glory blameless with exultation,

25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time and now and for all eternity. Amen.

1 Corinthians 10:10 nor grumble, just as some of them grumbled, and were **destroyed by the destroyer.**

³ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 164.

Psalm 106:24–25

24b . . . they did not believe His Word,
25 but grumbled in their tents.

They did not obey the voice of Yahweh.

R. Kent Hughes: “Paul cuts to the chase with a second command that tells the Philippians in no uncertain terms what is crucial to their obedience in working out their own salvation: “*Do all things without grumbling or questioning*” (v. 14).

Don't be complainers. Paul's mention of murmuring and questioning conjures up the pathetic grouching and whining of ancient Israel in the wilderness (cf. Exodus 16:12). And his words are intentionally vivid.

“Grumbling” (*goggusmon*) is an onomatopoeic word that sounds like what it means (you can hear the muffled complaints in the repetition of this word), and “questioning” (*dialogismon*) evokes to our English-speaking ears the petty dialoguing that calls everything into question. This is not a pretty picture.”⁴

Mark Twain: “Don't complain and talk about all your problems--80 percent of people don't care; the other 20 percent will think you deserve them.”

“Whine or Shine!” – David Holwick's sermon.

15 that you may become
blameless and harmless,
children of God without fault

in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,
among whom you shine as lights in the world,

16 holding fast the word of life,
so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ
that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

- Dare to be a Daniel:
Daniel 6:4–5

⁴ R. Kent Hughes, *Philippians: The Fellowship of the Gospel*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007), 99–100.

4 So the governors and satraps **sought to find some charge against Daniel** concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him.

5 Then these men said, "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God."

We all have faults – irritations to others – blind spots – prickly pears

- Open to corrections?
- Perfecting our witness?
 - Ask your family
 - Ask others at work
 - Ask your best friend – they should be the first to help you grow in Christ

The related adverb **amémptōs** (differs by mark over the "o") is the very word archeologists have found on Christian tombs from ancient Thessalonica.

When people wanted to identify a deceased friend or loved one as a Christian, they inscribed "amémptōs" or "blameless" on his or her grave, such behavioral blamelessness is the Lord's desire for His church.

17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering **on the sacrifice and service of your faith,**

I am glad and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

The picture of "poured out" is from OT sacrificial system.

As commanded in the book of Numbers, the people of Israel, as well as Gentiles who lived among them, were first to give a burnt offering of one of the prescribed animals, then a grain offering, and finally a drink offering (Nu 15:1-10). Pouring out as a drink offering refers to the topping off of an ancient animal sacrifice.

The offerors poured wine either in front of or on top of the burning animal and the wine would be vaporized. **That steam symbolized the rising of the offering to the deity for whom the sacrifice was made** (cf. Ex 29:38, 39, 40, 41; 2Ki 16:13 ; Jer 7:18 ; Ho 9:4). 5

Ministry is not easy

- Caring, serving, confronting people who often only want their ungodly way is not easy.
 - Ministers must not be grumblers
 - Ministers must not be “high-maintenance”

Warren Wiersbe – “**Sacrifice and service are the twin children of humility.** It is important to note that this sacrifice and service must often go unnoticed and unrewarded. “They have their reward!” **If we blow a trumpet everytime we help somebody, we will only nourish our pride and starve our humility.** A cup of cold water for Jesus’ sake is all that He asks. Do not look for big opportunities “worthy” of your abilities. Those will come in due time. The great saints of the Bible started as servants, not rulers, and they were faithful over a few things before God made them kings. Moses tended sheep; Joseph was a steward; David was a shepherd; Jesus was a carpenter. **Live with the eye of God upon you and forget the praise of others.** Serve faithfully in the hidden place, and in due time God will lift you up. Every opportunity for service is an opportunity to exercise sovereignty in Christ. **We reign in life by living to serve, to the glory of God.** (Heirs of the King).

- “**Poured out**” is from the Greek word **spendomai**, used of a drink offering given as a sacrifice to God. The possibility of release from prison was not uppermost in Paul’s mind as it had been before (cf. 1:24–26). He now viewed his death as imminent. Later, near the actual time of his death, he used this same language (2 Tim. 4:6).⁶

- **Spurgeon:** “If he might be poured forth as a drink offering on their behalf, or offered up as a whole burnt offering in the service of the Savior, he would be glad. He could not bear to have lived”

⁶ Robert P. Lightner, “Philippians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 656.

in vain, but to spend his life for the glory of his Lord would be ever a joy to him.”

- In OT sacrificial system this was **the final offering** that followed burnt and grain offerings prescribed for the people of Israel (Nu 15:1-16).

- Paul is making his final offering to the Lord for their sake.
- Paul made his life a “living sacrifice” to his congregations
 - It was his “reasonable” act of service!

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, **which is your reasonable service.**

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- Now he makes his final sacrifice for them.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering,

and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.

8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.