

The many activities of this season affect our attitudes. Today, we pause for a gentle reminder of the fact that we are representatives of Jesus, even in the frenzy and pressures of life's demands and relationship challenges. We will explore *Philippians 2:14, 15. Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.*

### 1. Consider Your Attitude

*Do everything without complaining or arguing*

v. 14

Perhaps, Paul is alluding to the conduct of Israel in the wilderness (*Numbers 16:5,10*). Whispering and griping arise out of self-centeredness. The Israelites murmured against Moses and God because they were hungry and thirsty (*Exodus 16, 17*). Korah led the arguing against God's direction (*Numbers 16*).

Complaining diminishes God's light in God-followers.

*You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.*

*Ephesians 5:8*

### Four Types of Complainers

- 1) **Whiner:** Life's Not Fair
- 2) **Martyr:** No One Appreciates Me
- 3) **Grumbler:** Nothing will ever change
- 4) **Fault Finder:** Is that the best you can do?

### 2. Clarify What You Communicate

*So that you may become pure and blameless children of God in a crooked and depraved generation*

v. 15

#### How Do People See Christ in You?

Paul challenges Christians to live up to our calling in Jesus Christ. We are to be *blameless* (without fault in our reputations) and *pure* (innocent, without blame before God in our character) as we live as *children of God* (sharing God's nature) in a *crooked and depraved* (perverse) world. In contrast to the grumbling rebels Moses faced, we are to act like children of God.

Complaining distorts God's light in the people of God.

When attitudes turn sour, we should ask ourselves, "Am I a part of the problem or a part of the solution? How can I reflect God's light into this situation?"

*You are the light of the world.*

*Matthew 5:14*

### 3. Choose to Live the Attitude of Christ

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*

v. 5

Sometimes we need to pause and pray what has been labeled as the Serenity Prayer. "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."

Once we have sought God's inner peace for ourselves, we do well to make every effort to *shine like stars in the universe* (v. 15).

Stars dispel darkness. Christians are charged with the responsibility to dispel spiritual darkness. We stand like the shining star of Bethlehem in a complainers' world with every intent to shine God's light into the smoggy selfishness of the season's stormy moments.

Christ-honoring attitudes spread light.

*Let your light shine before men... (Matthew 5:15)*

*As you hold out the word of life. (Philippians 2:16)*

You carry the gospel light into the close places where you live and move and have your being. You can make the Christ-difference.

*Watch the way you talk...say only what helps, each word a gift. (Ephesians 4:19, The Message).* Every living thing passes along its nature. Wherever you find yourself, you share your nature. Choose to let the Spirit of Jesus transform you and those around you.

So, the way you handle your attitudes this sacred season comes down to a choice. Will you make the choice to let Jesus, the baby of Bethlehem, be a baby forever, or will you live the shining testimony that the baby has grown up in you?

The contemporary way to say that could be...does the Grinch that stole Christmas live in your mirror, or is the Spirit of Christ shining brightly through your life?

The translations used in this study is the New International Version, 1984 unless otherwise noted.

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