**Shine, Don’t Whine (Philippians 2:14) Prose Manuscript**

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| 1. Arouse interestInterest by HumourInterest by personal relevance | There was a story about the cowboy who was driving down a dirt road, with his faithful dog behind the back of the pickup truck, his horse in the trailer behind. He failed to negotiate a curve and crashed his truck. Some time later, a highway patrol officer came on the scene. As he is an animal lover, he saw the horse first. Realizing the serious nature of its injuries, he took out his service revolver and put the horse out of his misery. He walked around the accident area and found the dog, also hurt critically. He couldn't bear to hear the dog whine in pain, so he ended the dog's suffering as well. Finally, he located the cowboy --who suffered multiple fractures--off the road. “Hey, are you okay?” the cop asked. The cowboy took one look at the smoking revolver in the cop's hand and quickly replied, “I have never felt better!”Most people have a bad habit or two. Some habits are simply irritating, for example always being late and dressing poorly for the church. But what do you think is the worst habit that God hates? Just like the cowboy, while we may not shot someone literally, but we do shoot them down with our mouth.  |
| 2. Raise NeedOwn problems to identify with listeners | Obviously, all of us here are called into the Ministry. The fact that we are in Seminary tells us that we are willing to devote ourselves to do God’s Work. For many of us, we are very careful, to tell the truth, and not to gossip or slander, not to swear or use God’s name in vain, but we pay little attention to the words of complaining and criticizing that so easy flows from our mouths. When a Christian brother came up to me and told me to do more for God, I frowned, and I said that I had done enough already. I am currently serving as the church soundman once a month; I am in charge of the Lord’s supper, I lead my cell every other week, I serve on the worship team on weeks I do not have any responsibilities, I visit the sick, I am in-charge of the title, I am busy already …and the list goes on. “Get someone else brother!” I said. Do you have the same problem? We are all called to shine for God, not whine! |
| 3. SubjectRestatement | So how do we do God’s Work that honors Him? What are the ways that we can shine for God? |
| 4. Background | This is not a new issue. Way back in Philippi, the Apostle Paul has encouraged the Philippians to live out their faith in joy and unity. Paul probably saw the need for believers to live in harmony that comes only through mutual humility modeled after Christ; by focusing their lives on Christ, they too might live in true joy.  |
| 5. PreviewR, Passage | Today’s passage is taken from Philippians 2:14 which will focus on two ways that we should do God’s work. Philippians 2:14 is explicit in telling us what we should do to shine for God. The two ways to do God’s Work that the Apostle Paul discusses in Philippians 2:14 are first, … |
| MPI, 2:14aR | “Don’t Complain” – We should not Whine! The first way that we can honor God is by not complaining when we do His work. |
| SP “A” Explanation | What does complaining mean? Paul uses the Greek word *goggusmos* for complaining here. It is an expression of displeasure. Thayer’s Greek Lexicon defined complaining as an expression of dissatisfaction or an expression of one’s discontent. I see it as murmuring, grumbling and even expressing our opinions. Even having a ‘quiet’ displeasure is considered complaining. |
| SP “B” | So what does it do to us when we “complain?” When we complain, we are in fact sinning against the Almighty God. When we complain, what we are saying is that we don’t trust God’s sovereignty and that He is able. James 5:9 warns us to “(ESV) not grumble against one another, …so that we (you) may not be judged...” Complaining is really an outward sign of rebellion against the sovereign God. It demonstrates that we have forgotten God’s past deliverance, care, and blessing in our lives. In Greek, it has a special connection; it is the word used of the rebellious murmurings of the children of Israel in their desert journey.  |
| ILL | Paul’s challenge to refrain from complaining brings to mind the experience of the Israelites when they were in the wilderness after being delivered from Egypt. God miraculously delivered them from bondage and slavery, yet what was their almost immediate response to the challenges they faced when they were in the wilderness? In Exodus 15:24, when they had difficulty finding water, they grumbled against Moses. When God provided them water, they grumbled about food. This became a terrible pattern for the children of Israel. When it was time to enter into the Promise Land, they grumbled against Moses and God due to the difficulties they would face in taking the land. We read in Numbers 14: 2-3 that all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, ‘Why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword?’” This is the classic example of the complaining which Paul is talking about. We see the seriousness of this sin in the fact that the entire adult generation of Israel was not permitted to enter the Promise Land and died in the wilderness. The Philippians in the first century might have understood the dangers of complaining, but do we? If we need the formula to destroy our relationship with God and with others, or to destroy our life in general, then this is it: give yourself over to complaining.  |
| SP “C” | We should “do all” without complaining. God delights a cheerful spirit. When we change our attitude, we will experience comfort and joy even in uncomfortable circumstances. |
| ILL. | Charles Spurgeon, a well-known Baptist preacher, once gave this illustration “A heavy wagon was being dragged along a country lane by a team of oxen. The wheels of the wagon groaned and creaked terribly. The oxen turned around said to the wheels, “Hey there, why do you make so much noise? We bear all the labor, and we—not you—ought to cry out!” Those who complain first in our churches are those who have the least to do. The gift of complaining is usually bestowed upon those who have no other talents, or those who keep what they have wrapped up in a napkin.” |
| T | We have looked at the first way that we can honor God, and this is by not complaining when we do His work. The second way is … |
| MPII, 2:14bR | “Don’t Dispute” – We should not argue! The second way that we can honor God is by not disputing when we do God’s work. |
| SP “A” Explanation | What does disputing actually mean? “Disputing” means literally reasoning through i.e. to think with thoroughness and completeness, to think carefully, to reason thoroughly, and calculated consideration. This will include arguing, doubting, sowing discord and also implies a questioning mind and suggests an arrogant attitude. I repeat “it implies a questioning mind and suggests an arrogant attitude.” |
| SP “B” | What does it do to us when we “dispute?” When we dispute, there is some level of skeptical criticism. When we dispute, there is an over-reliance on our natural minds that is independent of God. It demonstrates that we question God’s love for us or His ability to care for us in the midst of difficult times. In reality, it means that we either do not believe God loves and cares for us or God’s ability to deal with the difficult circumstances that come into our lives. |
| ILL | The children of Israel doubted God that He would deliver them from Pharaoh and his army. In Exodus 14:11-12, when hard pressed between the Red Sea and the oncoming Egyptian army, the people of Israel questioned Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? ... For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” Who would have known that the Red Sea would part? When we reason with our intellectual minds, we missed out on what God will do in our lives miraculously! |
| SP “C” | We should “do all” without disputing. When we don’t dispute, we will begin to see the situations and events from God’s perspective.  |
| ILL. | Matthew 26 provides a classical illustration. There was a very sinful woman who was forgiven by Jesus, and this woman took a very expensive jar of perfume and broke the jar open and poured this valuable perfume or oil over Jesus in the act of worship, and the contents of this jar were valued at, literally, about a year’s worth of wages. Judas looked on and said, honestly, what I would have also said, “Woman, you're stupid. Why didn’t you sell that and give the money to the poor? You are wasting it.” Jesus looked at the same event, but with a different perspective, and said, “You’re missing the point entirely. What this woman has done is one of the most beautiful things that I have ever seen. What she has done will be remembered for generations to come.” You see, same event but different perspective. |
| ILL | If anyone had reason to complain or dispute, it was Paul. He was writing this letter to the Philippians while imprisoned in Rome. Throughout his ministry, Paul faced great trials and persecution. He had friends and co-workers who deserted him. He had fellow believers malign him and question his character. He encountered great physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges. However, he demonstrated in his own life and challenged others to “do all without complaining and disputing.” Certainly, Paul was a great testimony for Christ, even to those soldiers to whom he was chained while in custody. His testimony encourages us to be a good witness for Christ, to appear as lights in a dark world. |
| Big T | So what were Paul’s key points to us? This whole passage basically says… |
| MI, R  | Do God’s Work without complaining and disputing. The best way to shine for God is not to whine. |
| APP | So how can we contain our complaining and disputing? Perhaps the acronym ACTS can help you to contain our complaining and disputing. A – Admit there is a problem, C- Change your talk, T – Trust God that He has the best for you, and S – Speak Positively.  |
| APP | So how can we do this? Will Bowen, a Pastor from Kansas City, has designed an innovative tool in the fight against negativity, arguing, and complaining. This comes in the form of a simple purple bracelet, which he challenged his congregation to go 21 days without complaining. Each time when they complain, they had to switch the bracelet to their other wrist and start again from day one. Tim Ferriss of the HUFFINGTON POST reports that “It was simple but effective metacognitive awareness training. The effects were immediate and life-changing.” According to a research study, it only takes as little as 21 days to change an old habit to a new one. By switching the bracelet from one wrist to the other after each complaint, until the bracelet eventually stays put for 21 days, is an easy and simple exercise that yields huge rewards. Today, I am offering this bracelet to you to encourage you all to take the 21-day challenge to reset your mind's default setting from the negative to the positive. As you speak fewer and fewer negative words, you'll generate fewer and fewer negative thoughts. |
| End | Each of us can honor God by not complaining and disputing. |
| Prayer | Lord, thank you that we are all here today to experience You. Help us not to complain and not to dispute so that Lord we will be able to provide good testimonies as your witnesses. Because this is what we desire to be, to make disciples of all nations, to baptize and to teach all You have commanded us. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen! |

**Shine, Don’t Whine**

**Philippians 2:14 (Cyclical Inductive)**

***Purpose: The listeners will do God’s Work by not complaining and disputing***

**Introduction**

1. Arouse interest: Most people have a bad habit or two. Some habits are just irritating – including always being late and dressing poorly for the church. But what do you think is the worst habit that God hates?
2. Need: I am hesitant in doing God’s work [my own problems to identify with listeners]. Do you have the same problem? We are all called to shine for God.
3. Subject: How do we do God’s Work?
4. Background: Paul’s affection for believers in Philippi is clear throughout his letter as he encouraged them to live out their faith in joy and unity. Paul taught them that a community of believers living in harmony comes only through mutual humility modeled after Christ; by focusing their lives on Christ, they, too, might live in true joy.
5. Preview: Today’s passage in Philippians 2, I will focus on two ways that we should do God’s work.

Restatement: Paul tells us to shine for God, and not complain!

(The first way to do God’s work is …)

1. **We should not complain (14a).**

**[Christians need to stop whining]**

1. “Complain” means an expression of dissatisfaction, an expression of one's discontent.
2. Complaining *includes* mumbling, grumbling and even expressing our opinions
3. Even having a ‘quiet’ displeasure is considered complaining
4. The seriousness of the sin of complaining.
5. When we complain, we are saying that we don’t trust God’s sovereignty and that He is able. [James 5:9]
6. Outward sign of rebellion [ILL: Israelites feared to go into Canaan, Num.14:20]
7. We should “do all” without complaining – pleasures of contentment [ILL: Spurgeon’s said those who complained are usually those with nothing to do.]

(Not only do we need to do God’s work without complaining but also…)

1. **We should not dispute (14b).**

**[Christians should not argue.]**

1. “Disputing” means literally reasoning through i.e. to think with thoroughness and completeness, think out carefully, reason thoroughly, calculated consideration.
2. Disputing *includes* arguing, doubting, sowing discord.
3. Disputing implies a questioning mind and suggests an arrogant attitude.
4. The seriousness of the sin of disputing.
5. When we dispute, there is some level of skeptical criticism.
6. Reliance on our natural minds independent of God. [ILL. Israelites better to die in Egypt (Exod 14:11-12)]
7. We should “do all” without disputing. [ILL. Disciples are missing the point. (Matt. 26:7-11)]

**Conclusion**

1. So how should we do God’s Work? Do God’s work without complaining and disputing [Main Idea]! The best way to shine for God is not to whine [MI restated]
2. Which of us has not complained and disputed? What will you do about it [application]?
3. How have you been doing in your Christian ministry [specific to SBC students]
4. Bill Bowen’s Break the habit of Complaining and Disputing [ILL: A Complaint Free World]

**Philippines 2: 14**

**“Do all [things] without grumbling and disputing” (Phil. 2:14 LEB).**

**Shine, Not Whine**

**Questions:**

* To whom did Paul write this verse to?
* What did Paul mean by “all things”?
* What did Paul mean “without grumblings”?
* What did Paul mean “disputing”?
* When did Paul write this epistle?
* Was there a problem that Paul has to write this?

**Answers:**

* Paul wrote this epistle mainly to believers in Philippi.
* Not evil things that are shunned; but all good things, all that are agreeable to the righteous law and good will of God; all those good things which accompany salvation, as hearing the word, and attendance on ordinances: all church affairs relating to public worship, private conference, everything at church meetings, and which concern the discipline and laws of Christ's house; and all things that are civilly, morally, spiritually, and evangelically good; even all things that God would have done, or would desire should be done to us by fellow creatures and fellow Christians: let all these be done.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Not to complaint but with a cheerful obedience to God’s commands.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Not to doubt but to trust in Christ.
* Inconclusive as to when Paul wrote this epistle but during the period from the mid-50s to the early 60s AD.[[3]](#footnote-3)

• The Philippian church appears to be a spiritually thriving Christian community; the believers were faced with several challenges from outsiders, and the need for unity, and concerns about false teachers.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**Exegetical Outline**

Exegetical Idea: The way the Philippians should show God’s work was by not complaining and disputing.

1. The way the Philippians could show God’s work was never complaining (14a)
2. Christians at Philippi were expected to be contented (14a)
3. Christians at Philippi were expected to obey (14a)
4. The way the Philippians could show God’s work was never disputing (14b)
5. Christians at Philippi were expected not to doubt (14b)
6. Christians at Philippi were expected not to sow discord (14b)

**Background of Context**

The letter to the Philippians was written to express Paul’s thankfulness and care for the believers in Philippi. Christians at Philippi offered Paul more material support for his ministry (Phil. 4: 15-18) than any other churches at that time. His joy at the mere thought of the Philippian church cannot be denied. In comparison to the other epistles that he wrote, Paul’s affection for believers in Philippi is clear throughout his letter as he encouraged them to live out their faith in joy and unity.

To lead the Philippians to the truth, Paul took them directly to Jesus, teaching them that a community of believers living in harmony with one another comes only through mutual humility modeled after the Savior. Paul wrote that he poured out his life as an offering for the sake of Christ, leading Paul to find great joy and contentment in Christ’s service. His letter to the Philippians showed them that by centering their lives on Christ, they, too, might live in true joy.

**Comparing NASB and NIV versions**

“Do all things without grumbling or disputing” (Phil. 2:14 NASV).

“Do everything without grumbling or arguing” (Phil. 2: 14 NIV).

“Do all [things] without grumbling and disputing” (Phil 2: 14 LEB).

 Πάντα ποιεῖτε χωρὶς

all, every, to do, make without, apart from

 γογγυσμῶν καὶ διαλογισμῶν (Phil. 2:14 BGT)

grumbling, murmuring, complaint and a reasoning, questioning, thought

It would seem that all bible versions appear to be similar in translating from the original Greek language. Based on the original Greek language, the word “things” is not included in the sentence. The NIV translated the word “all” as “everything,” which basically have the same meaning here. The Greek word γογγυσμῶν gives a picture of mumbling so that words uttered cannot be distinguished. It is usually not a loud dissent but almost silent mutterings.[[5]](#footnote-5) The world here is used about grumbling about people, not about God. It is usually to be an unwanted dissatisfaction that reveals one’s discontent.[[6]](#footnote-6) Both the NASV and NIV has the same translation as “grumbling.” However, it would seem that the Greek word διαλογισμῶν would be better translated as “disputing” rather than “arguing,” as it could be a reasoning or a thought which may not necessarily be arguing. So this portion seems to be more accurate in the NASV translation.

Based on the versions found, it would seem that the Lexham English Bible is precise in bringing out the original text. The article “*things*” is in italics in the main bible denotes that it is not in the original text.

**References**

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3. D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd edition. (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 2005), 507. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid., 508. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. William Barclay, *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
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