

The Exceptional Life - 1

Philippians 2:14-30

Phil 2:12-18 *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. 14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 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.* NKJV

To have the right attitude we must get rid of our **wrong** attitude.

Before we can have the mind of Christ we must **rid** ourselves of selfish ambition and conceit.

Before we can be blameless and harmless children of God and allow our lights to shine, we must **stop** complaining and disputing.

Two interpretations of verse fourteen. Both are congruent in the context of the book of Philippians and with the overall picture painted in the New Testament. The first view sees verse 14 is referencing complaining and disputing with one another. The second view suggests the complaining and disputing are against God's will.

The first interpretation deals with our complaining against and disputing with one another.

Phil 2:1-4 *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

Complaining and disputing with one another are **not** congruent with being like-minded, of one accord or having one mind.

Complaining and disputing are neither consistent with considering others better than ourselves nor looking out for the interests of others.

Complaining - ...to murmur, mutter, grumble, say anything in a low tone. (Thayer's PC Study Bible)

Complaining - a murmur, murmuring, muttering; applied to a. secret debate: **John 7:12**. b. secret displeasure, not openly avowed: **Acts 6:1** ... without querulous discontent, without murmurings, i. e. with a cheerful and willing mind, Phil 2:14; 1 Peter 4:9 (Thayer's - PC Study Bible)

John 7:10-13 *But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. 11 Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?" 12 And there was much complaining (**murmuring KJV**) among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people." 13 However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.* NKJV

The Jews were having a **secret** debate about Jesus. They were not having an open debate because they were afraid of the Jews.

Acts 6:1-4 *Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint (**murmuring KJV**) against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; 4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." NKJV*

The solution to murmuring is an open discussion pointed in the direction of a Godly resolution. Sometimes there are real issues than need a Biblical answer. The apostles did not tell the Hellenists to quit complaining and stop causing trouble.

1 Peter 4:7-11 *But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." 9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. 10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. NKJV*

Peter says that love and grumbling cannot coexist. We are to love one another, be hospitable to one another and minister to one another.

The second interpretation deals with us complaining and murmuring against God.

1 Cor 10:6 *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain (**murmur KJV**), as some of them also complained (**Murmured KJV**), and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. NKJV*

Some of the Israelites were _____ because of their murmuring.

Num 13:26-14:5 *Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan." 30 Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it." 31 But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." 32 And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. 33 There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."*

14:1 *So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2 And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4 So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt." Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. NKJV*

The children of Israel complained against God's plan or His _____.

Num 14:11-12 *Then the Lord said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? 12 I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." NKJV*

God considered their complaining as a _____ of Him.

Num 14:26-38 *And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 27 "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. 28 Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: 29 The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. ...*

God was upset that the _____ congregation complained against Him.

God said that those who murmured would be _____ and die.

Refer to Philippians 2:14. The murmuring could be referencing the _____ of God from verse 13.

Disputing – “in Greek writings from Plato down, the thinking of a man deliberating with himself; hence,

1. a thought, inward reasoning: Luke 2:35; 5:22; 6:8; 9:46; Rom 14:1 (yet some bring this under 2); the reasoning of those who think themselves to be wise, Rom 1:21; 1 Cor 3:20; an opinion: judges with evil thoughts, i. e. who follow perverse opinions, reprehensible principles, James 2:4 (cf. Winer's Grammar, 187 (176)); purpose, design: Matt 15:19; Mark 7:21.

2. a deliberating, questioning, about what is true: Luke 24:38; when in reference to what ought to be done, **hesitation, doubting**... Phil 2:14 is the moral, the intellectual rebellion against God, 1 Tim 2:8. (Thayer's - PC Study Bible)

Other places in the N.T. where this word is used. These are all from the KJV.

Matthew 15:19 *For out of the heart proceed evil **thoughts**, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.*

Luke 2:35 *(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the **thoughts** of many hearts may be revealed...*

Luke 5:22 *But when Jesus perceived their **thoughts**, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?*

Luke 6:8 *But he knew their **thoughts**, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.*

Luke 9:46-48 *Then there arose **a reasoning** among them, which of them should be greatest. 47 And Jesus, perceiving the **thought** of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, 48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.*

Luke 24:38 *And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do **thoughts** arise in your hearts?*

Romans 1:21 *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their **imagination**s, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

Romans 14:1 *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to **doubtful** disputations.*

1 Corinthians 3:20 *And again, The Lord knoweth the **thoughts** of the wise, that they are vain.*

Philippians 2:14 *Do all things without murmurings and **disputings**.*

1 Timothy 2:8 *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and **doubting**.*

James 2:4 *Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil **thoughts**?*

Phil 2:12-15 *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. 14 Do all things without complaining and disputing... NKJV*

We should not murmur against the _____ of God.

We should not _____ in doing God's will once we know what it is.

1 Kings 18:20-21 *So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. 21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word.*

The Israelites were not doing the will of God. They were _____ between two opinions.

Jonah 1:1-3 Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." 3 But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. NKJV

Jonah 4:1-3 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. 2 So he prayed to the Lord, and said, "Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. 3 Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!" NKJV

Jonah murmured against the will of God, and he _____ doing it.

Practical Application

- Always ask, "Will this glorify God?"
- What is God's will for **your** career?
- What is God's will for **your** marriage?
- What is God's will for **your** children?
- What is God's will for **your** finances?
- What is God's will for **your** retirement?

Other Practical Thoughts

1. It is the will of God for married people to stay married and treat each other the way God has communicated in his word. I suggest all married couples read Ephesians 5 and remind yourself what God's will is. Then don't hesitate to do it.
2. The will of God is for all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Don't hesitate to help people find Christ.
3. Contemplate what God's will is for your career. Don't hesitate to do the best you can in that career.
4. God's will is for us to forgive people who have wronged us. Don't murmur against God's will. Immediately decide you are going to forgive as God has forgiven you.
5. God's will is for boys to be boys and girls to be girls. Don't hesitate to stand up for God.
6. God's will is for us to treat others the way we want to be treated. Don't hesitate to do that this week.