

No Complaining or Arguing

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[0:00] Philippians chapter 2 beginning in the twelfth verse. Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed,! Not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence,! Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose. 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, as you hold out the word of life, in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

I want us to begin today by memorizing our main text. Verse 14. It's just six words.

And it says, Do everything without complaining or arguing. Would you say that with me? Do everything without complaining or arguing.

[1:19] Again, do everything without complaining or arguing. If you are ten years old or younger, say it with me. Do everything without complaining or arguing.

All right. Young parents, you would do well to have your children memorize Philippians 2.14.

I suppose most two-year-olds should be able to memorize that verse. And I guarantee you, you will have ample opportunity to make use of that verse as you bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Have you noticed there's a whole lot of complaining going on? People whine about the weather.

They grumble about the food. They murmur about their job.

Nothing's ever quite good enough. Always something to complain about. We even have complaint departments. Whole departments of industry given over to hearing complaints.

[2:28] Wouldn't you like to have that job? Some of you feel like you do have it. Your name is Mom. Manager of murmurers.

We see it in the endless litigation, don't we? Flooding our courts. Complaining about that piece of candy that was given to me at the store that broke my tooth. And therefore, I'm suing.

Or the coffee that was too hot at McDonald's. And so we're suing. Complaining. We're a generation of whiners, complainers, and belly achers.

And yet, we're a most prosperous generation, aren't we? You might think that the more a person has, the less they would complain. Wrong.

Wrong. Wrong. The amount of complaining has nothing to do with how much you have. The more you have, the more you have to complain about. I had an uncle who was a school teacher.

[3:37] And during the summer, he managed caddies at a prestigious country club in the Chicago area. And he says it was the wealthy clientele that he found to be some of the most picky, complaining people that he's ever met.

Perhaps you found the same. No, it's not the amount that we have. John MacArthur preached a sermon on our text that I read in my own preparations this week.

And he tells of having heard a sociologist on the radio, talking about why the youth culture of the day is so discontented and complained so much.

He had a rather interesting theory, this man did. He blamed it on small families. So the little tyke, he pointed out that families today, the average family in the United States is 1.7.

There's a lot of families with just one child. So the little tyke gets up in the morning and mommy asks, What do you want for breakfast this morning, dear?

[4:52] And she tells her mommy. And mommy fixes it. And she takes one bite of it. I don't like it. Oh, what could I get you instead, dearie? And so she fixes breakfast until little dearie's satisfied.

What would you like to wear today, dearie? The white ones or the blue ones? No, this is just little Tammy, two-year-old, that are getting all these questions, you see, put to her, reinforcing the wrong idea that she is at the center of the universe.

In a larger family, I grew up in one, kids get up and come to the table and they eat what mama's fix for breakfast.

Some of you have also grown up in larger families. And if one kid whines and says, I don't like it, then one of the kids beside him will soon have it on his plate and say, Good.

In other words, you eat what's put on the table or you don't eat. Mom simply doesn't have time to run a short order cafeteria three times a day.

[6:13] There's not time for that in a large family. So you eat what's put on the table. And you wore what was brought home for you. Or what you had set out for you to wear.

You weren't giving all these choices, you see, as if the world rotates around you. Now, I know it almost sounds cruel in our world today to bring kids up in that fashion.

We're so used to kids first. You see it on license plates, don't you? Kids first. But kids growing up in larger families, this man reasoned, soon learn that the world doesn't revolve around them.

And the sooner our kids learn that, the better off they'll be. And the better off everyone around them will be. Because the pampered kid is the whining kid.

The spoiled brat is the complainer that no one can seem to please. So parents, and especially mothers, be very careful that you are not raising complainers.

[7:22] By catering to their whims, you could be creating a monster that will come back and bite you. So my question is, are you reinforcing their complaining attitude, or are you confronting it?

Are you feeding it, or are you killing it? To not confront them for complaining now is to set them up for disappointment later. Because, you know, no other place on the universe revolves around that child.

And when they get to school, they'll find out that they don't get to take recess when they want to take recess. And they'll find out at the workplace.

They don't get to take break when they want to take break. They're going to have to learn to bend their will. And the sooner, the better. Do you discipline your children for complaining?

I'm struck with the fact that God does His. God disciplines His children for complaining. Read Exodus.

[8:30] Read the book of Numbers. And you find out that your kids are not the first ones to have complained about the food. There's a whole nation of Israel that once complained about the food.

We're tired of this manna, they said, 3,500 years ago. And some of God's strongest disciplines were for murmuring.

1 Corinthians 10, 10. Do not grumble as some of them did and were killed by the destroying angel. God has killed people for their grumbling.

If you read the Bible, you can't miss it. So this is an important text for children. But I hasten to add it's not just a text for children, is it?

It's for the whole church. Indeed, verse 5 says it's for all the children of God. Verse 15. All the children of God. Young and old alike. Complaining's not just a kid problem.

[9:34] Adults have problems with complaining. And just for the record, let me say, Even adults who grew up in large families have problems with complaining. So complaining is not a disease inflicted to any one age, but it's rather a disease of our fallen human natures.

And it grows out of our high view of self that thinks that we deserve to get what we want. And if we don't, we complain, you see. But it's the high view of self. And that's the very attitude that Paul is seeking to slay in this whole context of his letter to the Philippians.

He's pursuing the theme of unity in the body. And so he's saying, if you would have unity, there must be no complaining or arguing. Do everything without complaining or arguing.

Say it with me again. Do everything without complaining or arguing. It's interesting that both of these are mentioned in the same breath.

Arguing, complaining. And he deals with them both with one word. It's like killing two birds with one stone.

[10:49] And the reason you can do that is because the birds are so close together. And these two fellows are often found very close together. Complaining and arguing. Where you find complaining, you'll soon see this other guy coming around.

Arguing. They hang out together. They have a lot in common. Notice, both are expressions of discontent. When do you complain? Well, you complain when you don't get what you want. When do you argue? Well, you argue when you don't get what you want. Or you argue to try to get what you want. But both are expressions of discontent.

James chapter 4 asks the question, What causes fights and quarrels among you? And then he answers it. You want something, but you don't get it.

You can't have what you want, so you quarrel and fight. Kids, did you know that quarreling and arguing is just fighting with words instead of with fists or bullets?

[11:59] That's what an argument is. It's a fight with words. And both complaining and arguing come from unsatisfied desire.

I want it and I didn't get. Or I want, and therefore I'm going to fight to get it. Notice, both are also destructive of unity.

Whether in a family, whether on a team, in the workplace, or a church. And especially the church, that's Paul's emphasis in this passage.

Both complaining and arguing are destructive of unity. So here are two more unity killers. Paul's already put his finger on two, hasn't he? Earlier in chapter 2, verse 3, we saw that pride and selfishness, or selfishness and pride, selfish ambition and vacancy, those are two unity killers.

Now those are attitudes, aren't they? Selfishness and pride are attitudes that destroy unity. Now he puts his finger on two more unity killers. And these are not attitudes.

[13:11] They're actions. Complaining and arguing. And they're just the actions of selfishness and pride.

They really go together. Paul has addressed the heart, the root problem. Now he's going to show you what it looks like. You want to see what pride and selfishness look like in the life? Listen.

And when you hear people whining and complaining and arguing, you are hearing pride and selfishness sounding forth. So we notice that these two have a lot in common.

They're both destructive of unity. It was complaining that nearly killed the unity in the early church at Jerusalem. Jerusalem church in Acts 6.

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing. It was revival days. It was great harvest days. Number of disciples was increasing. The Grecian Jews among them complained.

[14:16] It's our same word. Complained against the Hebraic Jews. Because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. And it's almost like playing the race card.

You Hebraic Jews are only taking care of your own kind. And you're neglecting the Grecian Jews. Boy, that had the potential of a firestorm.

Along the different lines of where these Jews were. Hebraic or Grecian. There's plenty of gunpowder here.

And it could have escalated into an argument. That was surely the design of the devil. Poking these Grecian believers to say, you see how they look after their own, but neglect your widows.

Satan hates the church. Every entrance into the church is an exit from his kingdom. And these were days when the disciples were multiplying rapidly.

[15:21] And he sets out to destroy the church. To tear down what Jesus was building up. And he does it by a complaining segment of the church. The Grecian Jews. That tells me that when a church is growing, it better be on guard against a complaining spirit.

Satan yawns when a church is just back here, ministering to its own and not growing and not reaching out to others. But when a church is starting to invade his territory, he gets extra busy. And one of his strategies is to stir up complaint. That's what we see in the book of Acts. Because complaining and argument destroy unity.

But the Holy Spirit gave wisdom and humility to the apostles to diffuse the situation. They say, you're right. Things have grown so fast.

We haven't been able to get around to all the widows. So this job needs seven men appointed. These are prototype deacons. And they can look after that so that we can look after our prime responsibility of the ministry of the Word and prayer.

[16 : 34] And the proposal pleased the whole group, Dr. Luke says in his account. And so the result, instead of division, and instead of splitting the church along Grecian, Hebraic lines, and slowing down the gospel chariot, instead we read in verse 7, so the Word of God spread.

The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. Unity is to be pursued for evangelistic motivations.

More on that later. But I need to insert something here. And it's that there are such things as legitimate complaints. If I buy something and bring it home from the store and find out that it doesn't work, I'm going to take it back to the complaint department.

And I'm going to ask them for one that does work. That's what they told me they were selling me. I don't believe that's being forbidden here at all.

It's not a sin. I need to be sure that it is a reasonable complaint, a valid complaint, and then I need to make it in the right place, at the right time, and with the right tone of voice, and with a gracious spirit.

[17 : 50] If you're going to complain about the food at the restaurant being cold, you don't make a scene and embarrass the waitress in public.

You may have a legitimate complaint, but you may make it in a sinful manner, and it becomes a sinful complaint. There's a right way and a wrong way to make a complaint.

And parents, you would do well, we would do well to teach our children the difference. There's a right way for a child to approach a mom and a dad with a complaint, and there's a wrong way.

They must know the difference. Well, the same is true in a church. There are no perfect pastors. You've found that.

That means that there are flaws in this ministry. And we are better off when you bring a valid complaint in a right way, at a right time, with a gracious spirit.

[18 : 57] I would personally be scared of a pastor who's unwilling to listen to the concerns and criticisms of their members.

The destruction of unity is not always the fault of complaining church members. Sometimes it's the fault of proud pastors who are not humble enough to receive complaint and to learn from them and to become better ministers through them.

And that's the beauty of the response of the apostles in Acts chapter 6. These apostles didn't say when they complained, how dare you complain? Don't you know who we are?

We're apostles! Jesus himself set us aside as leaders of this church. How could you? None of that. But with humility, they acknowledge they haven't been able to meet up to the needs as the church is growing.

And they say, we need seven men to give themselves to this so we can give ourselves to this. And the thing pleased the whole congregation. Do you realize how that situation was diffused by a humble apostolate in Jerusalem?

[20 : 18] You give them a dose of my pride and that church would have been split. Humility is not only needed in the place of the members, it's also needed in the place of ministers.

So I want you to know that the complaint department is open. And it's 546-2559. And you'll get Pastor Aaron.

And if you don't get anywhere with him, you can call 4064 and you'll get me. But folks, if we heard about those kind of prophets this morning in Jeremiah 23, didn't we?

They do not stand in the counsel of the Lord. They just run with their own word. Folks, if we're running on our own, we expect to be met out in the foyer with a word of concern, of criticism, constructive.

And we will be better off. The church will be better off. But what is being forbidden here then is not legitimate criticism. And I just want to have that as an aside. There is a place. But don't whitewash all your complaining by that aside, please.

[21 : 34] What is being forbidden here is sinful griping and grumbling, murmuring, carping, complaining, and sinful arguing.

And it's not hard at all to understand how that kind of a behavior is destructive of unity in a church. A church full of whiners spells trouble.

A church of people who must have their way or else spells destruction. It's a complaining spirit is like acid. It eats to the bones.

It eats out the life of a congregation. Does not the wise man say about the murmuring, complaining wife that she is so unbearable there's not room in the house to live with her? It's better to live up on the roof than with her. You see how murmuring and complaining is destructive. And where this is not repented of, it's not long before Ichabod will be written over that church.

[22 : 39] The glory has departed. Oh, we're still here and between our grumbling and complaining and fighting with each other, we still go through the motions, we still sing the same songs, we still preach from the same Bible, but the glory is gone.

The spirit of Christ who has worked unity in the body has been grieved and he's gone. And we're left to try to fill the void with all kinds of substitutes.

And the churches are full of them today. So, no complaining or arguing. So Paul issues the command, do everything without complaining or arguing.

Notice two things, how all-inclusive it is. The first two words of the verse, do everything. Now, this is a duty that has long arms and it reaches around everything that we do 24-7.

That's long arms. It neglects nothing. Nothing is outside of this command. Now, he's just been talking to us about working out our own salvation, hasn't he?

[23 : 50] In all areas of our life, we're to be working out our salvation, putting it into practice, behaving in a way that is worthy of the gospel. And he says, now you make sure you do it without complaining or arguing.

That means obey every command without complaining or arguing. That means obey your parents without complaining or arguing.

That's working out your salvation without complaining or arguing. That means offering hospitality without grumbling. That means eating to the glory of God without complaining what's on your plate. It means to go through every kind of weather in northern Indiana without complaining or arguing. It means to go through sufferings and trials that you are presently going through and will go through without complaining or arguing.

It means to go to school without complaining. To go to work without complaining. It means to go to your athletic competitions without complaining or arguing. It means to get up in the morning without complaining.

[24 : 54] To go to bed at night without complaining. And to relate to all kinds of people without complaining. Or I'm just reaching. But you see how long these arms are.

Do everything. Everything. And I say this one commandment alone will keep you very busy all day long. Second, notice it's a command.

You said you already said that. I know, I'm saying it again because I think we sometimes miss it. It's an imperative. Do. Do this.

Do everything without complaining. It's every bit as much a command as do not steal. is a command. And that means that to not do what it says to do is to disobey.

And it is therefore sin against God. Do you think of complaining as sin? Do you think of arguing as sin?

[25 : 56] God does. We do so much of this in our society that we become desensitized to it.

When's the last time that you have confessed to God you're complaining? The world doesn't think of complaining as a sin.

Certainly nothing serious. But if you ever doubt the seriousness of complaining see how God punishes it in the Bible. The desert was strewn with corpses that had been killed by God because of complaining.

I don't know how God could have got His point across to us more clearly than that. Nathan Cora, Dathan and Abiram complained about their leaders Moses and Aaron.

And God has the earth open up and swallow them and sizzles others with fire from heaven. The people are complaining about their food and God sends snakes to bite them and kill them.

[27 : 17] They complained about their hardships along the way and the Lord heard them and sent His fire to consume some of them. In the New Testament is not going easy on this sin either.

James says do not grumble against each other brothers or you will be judged. The judge is standing at the door. Remember a day of judgment awaits you and he will judge you for grumbling against your brother.

You see it shows us that God clearly thinks of grumbling and complaining a whole lot differently than we do. What's the deal? What's his perspective? That we can treat it as such a light little thing and God treats it as such a serious thing.

Well I believe it's this that because at the end of the day all complaining is complaining against God. Say, I'm just complaining to my mom.

That's right. And you're complaining to the God who gave you your mom. Now sometimes that connection between our complaint and God is more clear than others.

[28:39] We're complaining about the weather. Well who do you think we're complaining to? It's not Rick Mecklenburg that we're complaining about.

He doesn't send the weather. He just tells us what he thinks is going to come. It's not the snowflakes themselves that we're complaining against. They're just obeying their maker who says to them fall on the earth Job 37.

No when we complain about the weather we're laying in a complaint at the foot of God. Weather is his work and we're complaining about his works. So you see there's this connection that's why God takes complaining seriously.

It's complaining against him. When the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron because of their lack of food God says it wasn't Moses and Aaron that you're grumbling about but it's me.

Exodus 16. He takes this sin of grumbling personally. You say to somebody don't take it personal. Friends God takes it very personal.

[29:48] Because at the end of the day all complaining stops at his desk. the Bible teaches us that God is the one who is sovereign over all things. That he controls and orders all things according to his wisdom and his righteousness and his power and his faithfulness and not one thing happens on the earth apart from his decree.

It is just as he is. You say but why is this and why is that? It's because his wisdom is above us that we don't understand why this and why that. But believe me the Bible presents a God who is sovereign over everything that happens.

Everything that happens to you. Everything that happens to me. Nothing but what God in infinite wisdom, goodness and power has ordained for my life. So when I complain about my trials I'm complaining about the God who has ordered that trial for my good and his glory.

When I complain about my wife or my husband or my parents I am complaining to the one who gave them to me. I believe Adam did that didn't he?

It was the woman that you gave me. My complaint is a species of unbelief. When I complain when I am complaining I don't believe that God knows best I'm questioning his wisdom.

[31:20] When I'm complaining I don't believe that he wants my best. I'm questioning his goodness. When I complain and refuse to sweetly submit to his will I'm refusing his authority to rule in my life in all my ways.

And my complaining shows that I'm disappointed with God. I'm not happy with you God. That's what my complaint says and I would probably have the words freeze on my tongue if I would remember that.

I am saying in my complaints I'm not happy with you God. I would be happier with a God of my own making who would rule in my life this way not you and the way you're ruling.

Do you see why complaining is serious business to the Lord God of heaven. And we Calvinists who believe in the sovereignty of God over all things we ought to be the last people on the planet to complain.

This verse will test your Calvinism. Are you just an intellectual Calvinist? Or are you an experiential Calvinist? Does the truth just stop in your brain?

[32:47] Or does it get worked out in your mouth in your heart in your life? Do everything without complaining or arguing.

Paul gives three reasons we have to hurry through them. But he gives three reasons for not complaining or arguing he's giving this complaint out of a concern for our unity but as I said earlier he does it also out of the concern for evangelism.

And you say what in the world? What in the world does not complaining or arguing have to do with evangelism? A whole lot according to Paul.

Verses 15 and 16. Why should we do everything without complaining and 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 as you hold out the word of life.

Do you see the overtones and ramifications for evangelism? Shining as stars in the universe.

Holding out the word of life.

[34:03] Here's the first reason to not complain or argue. So that the church's witness might shine brightly in this dark world. The church's witness is no more effective than the holiness of its members.

God wants his children different from the world that they live in. And different not just by some distinctive garb that walking by they can say oh there's one of the children of God.

No, he wants us distinctively different in the very holiness of our lives. He wants his children to be blameless and pure and without fault in a crooked and depraved generation.

Now the contrast can't be sharper can it? Children of God blameless and pure and without fault in the midst of a crooked and depraved generation.

Blameless. Outwardly you see. outwardly free from blame and fault. We're not giving to our neighbor a handle on which to accuse us.

[35:11] Now they'll go ahead and accuse us anyway but it's to be to their shame to accuse us. It's to show by our lives that there's nothing true to their accusation.

Blameless before the world. And inwardly pure, no foreign elements mixed in, not contaminated with the world. And do you follow the logic?

If you are complaining and arguing, you are not blameless and pure before this crooked and depraved generation. You're not. It rather gives the world an opportunity to lay a charge against you that will stick.

You're not blameless before the world. You're not pure before the God who sees all. No, to be blameless and pure, we must do everything without complaining or arguing. This is an important part of our purity.

And notice where we are to be blameless and pure. In a crooked and depraved generation. In the midst, right in the midst of a crooked and depraved generation.

[36:19] A generation that's morally warped. Is that our generation or what? That's us. Crooked, not straight, according to the law of God, the crooked, warped, perverted.

And sometimes we get so complaining about the world as if we expect a worldling to act any different. He is crooked. He is warped. He is perverted because he has gone astray from God.

And God means for us to shine as light right in the midst of a crooked, depraved, warped generation. So, rather than expecting the world to somehow march to the commands of Jesus, we ought to seize the opportunity.

This is an opportunity to shine. Have you noticed the stars shine the brightest when the sky is the darkest? And have you seen the sky last night?

Just lifted your head up and saw the stars? It was brilliant. And the darker the night, the brighter the stars.

[37:27] Now, you children of God, I want you to be blameless and pure without complaining or arguing so that you will be shining as stars in the dark universe, right in the midst of the crooked and perverse generation that you're in.

Seize that opportunity. It's the sick that need a physician. It's the darkness that needs the light. And translated, it means the more that the kids at school complain and argue, the more your lack of the same should stand out as refreshingly different.

And it means the more that the guys at the break room sit around and gripe and whine and complain about everything under the sun, the more your grateful spirit and lack of complaining and arguing ought to shine as a star in a dark night.

You are the light of the world, and it's into a whining society that God wants his children to do everything without complaining or arguing. Do you see what evangelism has to do, or what not complaining or arguing has to do with evangelism?

A church that's griping and complaining has lost their credibility with the world. But a church that lives without griping and complaining and arguing commends the doctrine of God our Savior to this whining world.

[38:55] Paul wants us to think of that. The world should say, what is this God like who keeps his people so content? What is this God like who keeps them so joyful, so thankful?

And when such a person speaks, people will listen, and when such a church holds forth the word of life, the world can't help but notice. That's the first reason we ought not to complain or argue.

Paul gives the Philippians a second reason, so that he might not labor in vain, verse 16b, in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

And again, he's appealing to their love for him, and he's reminding them that he has a lot at stake here. If the impure world ends up squeezing you into its mold and you become just like one of them, complaining and arguing, then I will have run in vain, and my labor among you will have been for naught.

The picture is of a runner, and he's run the whole 26-mile marathon only to cross the line and find out that he's been disqualified. He's run in vain. Don't let that happen to me, Paul says, from prison to his dear people at Philippi.

[40:16] Don't let me arrive at the finish line only to find out that you're not there. You've fallen in with the world. You've been swallowed up in the same attitudes, and you've conformed to the world, and I must come and hang my head in shame that my labor among you was in vain.

Oh, rather, so follow after holiness that I might boast in the day of Christ. For what is my joy and my crown? Is it not you in that day?

Chapter 4 and verse 1, he'll tell them. And then there's a third reason he says to do everything without complaining or arguing, and that's he sets forth his own example. Paul holds out the distinct possibility not only of having labored for them, but being called upon to die a violent and bloody death, what he refers to as being poured out as a drink offering.

Because sometimes along with the sacrificial animal on the altar of the Jewish worshiper, there would be a drink offering poured out along with it. And so Paul says, if I'm to become a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, look how he says it in verses 17 and 18, but even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all, so you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

I'm glad to be a drink offering. I'm glad to pour out my life in a violent death in the service of this God and King and on behalf of you and of your faith along with you.

[41:50] And so we get the picture. Paul's in prison and he's facing potential martyrdom for Christ and he's not complaining. He's rejoicing.

And he wants the church at Philippi to rejoining in rejoicing. Now does that do something to the complaining spirit in Philippi? Oh, would it ever?

Would it not dry up some words on our lips to have seen Paul suffering and still rejoicing? Because Christ will be magnified whether by life or by death. And so he's rejoicing.

He's not griping. And he reminds them of that. Do not our complaints shrivel up on the vine when we see others facing far greater trials, not complaining, but trusting.

We come to apply the text one last time. I think we complain a whole lot more than we realize.

[43:03] I found myself complaining this week in a way that I didn't last week. You know why? Because I was working in this passage this week and it raised my antenna about complaining.

But I think the Christian church lives with their antenna down on this sin. It's become one of the acceptable behaviors of a Christian. You see, it's not the worldliness of this, this, this, and this.

Oh, but Paul is saying it is the world. It's the crooked and depraved generation that complains and argues. I think this is a sin that others detect in us a whole lot easier than we detect in ourselves. We don't tend to hear the whine in our own voice. Others do. I knew a family on vacation that got very tired of their young sons complaining and whining.

And so a rather odd challenge was given by the mother. I'll give you a hundred dollars if you can go one day without complaining.

[44:17] Well, the kid thought he was wealthy. A hundred dollars. He'd never seen that kind of money ever in his life. That'll be a cinch. It wasn't more than an hour or two later.

And something came out of his mouth in a whining way. And he was called down for it.

And then he complained about being disqualified from the prize. And on it goes. It was so natural to him that he could hardly open his mouth without complaining.

And I'm sure that it's that way with me. Many times that I don't hear it. This passage needs to raise my antenna.

This is serious business, folks, with God. And so I have a challenge for you this week. There's no money involved. But will you agree as families this week to help each other identify your

complaining?

[45:27] And you're not the word patrol, kids. Dad, you're complaining. None of that. You won't need to say anything other than Philippians 2.14.

Just say Philippians 2.14. You hear complaining? You hear grumbling? You hear murmuring? Those are the words. Philippians 2.14.

And I think at the end of the week, we're all going to hang our heads and say, wow, I didn't realize how often complaints come across my lips.

So the assignment is clear. Do everything without complaining or say it with me. Do everything without complaining or arguing.

Do you know you can no more do that than you can create a son? But we learn from verse 13, right before verse 14, that the one who did create the son can work in you to will and to do what pleases him.

[46:33] He can work in you to shut up your complaining and arguing. God is the one who's at work in his people. So what do I do at the end of the day when I realize I've just complained?

What do I do in the middle of my day? This is sin, folks. What we're seeing is that we sin a whole lot more than we realize. What do you do with your sin? Well, you either reject it, ignore it, excuse it, rationalize it, or you bring it to Jesus.

And you confess it, Lord, I am the complainer. I am the arguer. Oh, please forgive me. Do you know it took the blood of Jesus to wash away the sin of complaining?

Remember back in the desert? The people were complaining about the food. God sends the snakes. They bite and kill them. Others are dying under the snake bites.

And they said, oh, we've sinned against God in our complaining. Pray for us, Moses. Moses prays and God says, put a serpent, bronze serpent, up on a pole, so that whoever looks may live.

[47:44] And those who were bitten looked and they lived. And one night in Israel, Jesus was talking to a Pharisee, Nicodemus. And he says, just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes on Him will have everlasting life.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes on Him will not perish. Perish?

For complaining? Yes. Will not perish, but have everlasting life. What a gospel. What a Savior.

So come to Him with your complaints and confess it, receive His forgiveness, and then beg for His power to work in you, to will and to do what is pleasing to Him.

Now let's take our hymnal and make as our response to God our singing of number 94. Because at the bottom of much of our complaining is this unbelief.

[48:52] This unbelief that God somehow has it wrong. But in this song, number 94, we confess, no, whatever my God ordains is right.

Let's stand and sing it in response to the Savior's words to us this morning. 94. Father, we're ashamed of the things that we complain about.

We're ashamed that we would break this commandment for such piddly things in our lives. We would rather sin against you than to hold our tongues, to hold our minds in check.

Lord, I am especially ashamed when I look out on my brothers and sisters here. Many who are suffering far greater and more severe trials than I have.

And I'm ashamed that I complain about my lot in life. Father, we're all ashamed when we look at your son and we see him who was spit upon and mistreated, crucified, and all without a complaint.

[50:00] Oh, what a perfect Savior we have who never once complained or argued. Lord Jesus, out of that fullness of grace in you, pour into our poor hearts forgiveness and power to go and to do likewise.

Lord, for sinners here who have never seen their sin, show them at least their sin of complaint.

Show them that they are condemned without a Savior, that they must look on him who's been lifted up, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Thank you for the Lord Jesus. We pray in his name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.