
CHILDREN OF GOD

One of the most amazing things about the Word of God is its ability to humble me. It reveals over and over my failures and, in complete contrast, God's righteousness. It reminds me how many times I've tried and failed, took a step and fallen, planned and been derailed. All the while, God's love is tugging me back, pointing me toward the narrow path of His righteousness instead of the wide, well-traveled road of this world.

Today's verses humbled me. They brought me down from my tower of self-righteousness to the even plain of God's righteousness. He does not play favorites. He does not ask more from some. He gives to us all equally because of His grace and love through His son Jesus Christ. He gives us the same commands and provides the perfect, all-powerful Helper to accomplish what He requires of us. He is so much greater than I often give Him credit for. It's my prayer that you see and understand His love and grace today and always!

Let's look at our verses in Philippians 2:14-15.

“Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.”

In the last week we looked at several different commands including adopting the mind of Christ, obedience to the Word, and working out our salvation by applying the mind of Christ which is adopted for the glory of God. Paul continues with another command to the Philippian believers in verse fourteen. He instructs them to “do all things without grumbling or disputing.”

In the Greek the word 'do' can be translated from seven different words. In our text today the word is 'poieite' meaning, "to adopt a way of expressing, by act, thoughts and feelings."

Remember in the previous commands we are told to adopt the mind of Christ. So in our context Paul is writing that we should adopt a way of expressing the thoughts and feelings of Christ that we have in our mind.

Paul also says that we should do this "in all things." So in all ways, totally and completely, Paul is instructing us to act in a way that expresses the thoughts and feelings of Christ. What a task! But remember, obeying God's commands happens only when we are in fellowship! When we submit our authority to God, He directs us through the power of the Holy Spirit in acting in a manner that expresses the thoughts and feelings of Christ. It is not on our own!

How often do our actions express Christ? How often do they express us? Write your answer here.

Paul is finished with this command, right? Because that's a lot to work on! No, he isn't finished. He ends the command by saying that we should express the mind of Christ totally and in all things "without grumbling or disputing." In defining the word 'grumbling' the attitude of the believer is in view. It means a reluctant agreement using a negative tone. The word 'disputing' means questioning deliberations. When we are asked to do something or know we should do something, what is our attitude like? Do we complain? Drag our feet? Ask why? Attempt to find someone else to do the job? Paul tells us we should act apart from these things.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31, Ephesians 6:6-7, Colossians 3:17, 3:23 and James 4:17.

Choose one verse and explain the attitude that God expects us to have.

In completion, the command Paul is giving in verse fourteen is this: Adopt a way of expressing the thoughts and feelings of Christ that we have in our mind, totally, and in all ways, apart from an attitude of grumbling, questioning or deliberating. How are we able to do this? Again, only through the power of the Holy Spirit! Spiritual concepts and instructions can only be carried out when we operate in the Spirit. It is so comforting to know that it is not our responsibility to perform righteousness on our own! See Isaiah 64:6.

Paul then goes on in verse fifteen to explain the purpose for implementing this command. His reasoning is this, “so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights of the world.” The New American Standard version says that we “will prove” ourselves. The Greek is slightly different saying that we will have the potential to become something we were not previously. What will we become? The next few words explain this. We have the potential to become blameless and innocent. So the result of our obedience to the command of verse fourteen is a life without blame and without impurity as children of God.

This will be done “in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.” Read Matthew 7:14. The road to life is straight. This world is crooked. Paul also describes this generation as perverse. There is nothing straight, nothing leading to life, nothing godly about the world we live in. It is our responsibility to live blamelessly, in innocence and have a record without blemish in the midst of this crooked and perverse world. In order to do this, we must follow the command in Romans 12:2.

Read Romans 12:1-2. What are we instructed NOT to do? What are we instructed to do?

Right, we must not be conformed to this world, but be transformed. This transformation process is taking place right now. Before salvation and when we are out of fellowship we are being conformed to this world, this crooked and perverse world. But in fellowship, studying the Word of God, we are being transformed by the renovation of our mind. We take out the old, worldly thought process and put in the new, godly wisdom from the Mind of Christ. 1 Peter 2:11 and 1 John 2:15 instruct us to stay away from the world as well.

According to Philippians 2:14-15, what do we need to do to be blameless and innocent?

Finally, in our obedience to His command and the resulting blamelessness and innocence, we will “appear as lights in the world.” Light can be seen and felt by those around it. Jesus called Himself the Light of the world in John 8:12. He also said we, as believers, are the light of the world. This is possible because of our position in Christ and the fact that we have the Holy Spirit living in us. See Ephesians 1:1-14 and Titus 2:14.

For a little extra study read Psalm 119:105, Matthew 5:14-16, John 9:5, Ephesians 5:7-14 and 1 John 1:5-7 about Jesus as the Light of the World.

Have you heard the expression, “actions speak louder than words?” Our behavior evidences our faith and the reasons for our actions. When we express the thoughts and feelings of Christ from our minds in all that we do, we will be seen as blameless and innocent and become the light to a lost world. Our behavior is evidence of our salvation. Our stability comes from obedience to Bible doctrine. Let’s be honest when we look at ourselves. Are we trusting God? Are we living blamelessly? Are we acting as a light to the world? The more honest we are, the more we can allow God to change us for the better!

REVIEW

~ We are commanded to adopt a way of expressing the thoughts and feelings of Christ that we have in our mind in all ways apart from an attitude of grumbling, questioning or deliberating. 1 Corinthians 10:31, Ephesians 6:7, Colossians 3:17, 3:23, James 4:17

~ Our obedience to this command results in blamelessness, innocence and a record without blemish.

~ We must transform our thought process from the world to the Word. Romans 12:1-2, 1 Peter 2:11, 1 John 2:15.

~ Our obedience also results in our being lights to the world. Psalm 119:105, Matthew 5:14-16, John 9:5, Ephesians 5:7-14, 1 John 1:5-7