

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In
The Lord!

Shine!

Lesson Twenty-Four

Philippians

Rejoice In The Lord!

Lesson Goal: To assist students in seeing some of the behaviors God expects of us.

Scriptures: Philippians 2:14-16

For Memory: “Become blameless and pure, children of God without fault...shine like the stars in the Universe” Philippians 2:15, 16

Shine!

Paul continues his discussion of how we should imitate Jesus. He gets really specific and says that we ought not to be complainers.* Don't you just hate it when someone is always complaining about something. It is too hot. Or, it is too cold. The food is not spicy enough, or the food is too spicy. Other people just don't appreciate you. Or maybe, people smother you and just won't leave you alone.

The word Paul used here can be, and probably should be, translated “grumbling.” That is the kind of complaining that is demonstrated by rolling the eyes, shrugging the shoulders, saying something loud enough to be heard but not loud enough to be understood...mumbling. We should remember what Isaiah said about Jesus. In the fifty-third chapter and the seventh verse, he said “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth.” So, being like Jesus, we will not grumble.

Paul also says that those who are imitating Jesus will not argue. This word might also be translated “questioning.” It refers to internal argument. God says, do this. We begin questioning in our mind, “does that mean do it now, does it mean do it only that way, does that mean I'm supposed to do it or can I get someone else to do it.”

We can certainly understand these instructions to mean that we shouldn't complain or argue with or about God. They can also mean that Christians will not spend time complaining and arguing with one another or other people. It is a useless activity.

Remember, we are talking about Christians behaving like Jesus, and Paul goes on to say that when we behave that way we “become blameless and pure, children of God without fault.” WOW! What an amazing thought! Does Paul mean to tell the Philippians that they will never sin again? Well, no. As it is used in Scripture when referring to God's people, the idea of blameless and purity speaks more of faith than moral conduct. When we are working diligently to be like Christ, when we are, in faith, doing all we can to live like God wants us to live, when we have faith that God is leading us, then we are counted blameless and pure in the sight of God.

Yes, we will continue to sin. But when we do sin, we look to God, in faith, asking His forgiveness and telling Him our desire to do better as we live like Jesus. And, our sins are covered by Jesus. We are blameless...without fault.

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Paul contrasts our behavior, in Christ, with the world which does not believe and whose sins are not forgiven. He calls them crooked and depraved. The world has its own goals. These are inspired by Satan himself. Some of them are: success, fame, pleasure, and money. None of those are bad until they become the major goal of life. When they do, people become “crooked.” People who are crooked go a crooked path to get their way. And, they become depraved or immoral. That is, when they are without God’s purpose in their life, when their major goal is getting things for themselves, they are not guided as much by what is right...more by what will get them what they want.

Then Paul says that these folks who behave like Jesus “shine.” This means being different. They were different from the non-believers. They stood out because of their behavior, and because they were like Jesus. In a world full of darkness (crooked and depraved behavior) they were shining like stars. Jesus told His disciples that they were to be lights in the world. (Mathew 5:14) When people look around for someone who can give light in their life, Christians ought to be available to do that. In John 8:12, Jesus said that He is the light of the world. Christians share that light.

*Underlined statements in this Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.



Teaching Tips:

1. It is interesting to compare the idea in the word “complaining” or grumbling (verse 14) to the same idea used to describe the “murmurings” of the Israelites in the wilderness when they were hungry, hot, thirsty, and tired. See Exodus 16:2, 7-9, 12.
2. Read the entire verse in Isaiah 53:7 for additional clarity on Jesus’ lack of complaint. See Isaiah 60:1, 2; Matthew 5:14-16 on “shine.”
3. Songs that emphasize the name of Jesus, God’s grace, imitating our Savior and Lord, and Christian witness will be helpful to this lesson.
4. Pray with your students. Thank God also for allowing us to have a part in doing His work and accomplishing His purpose here on earth through our lives and through our Christian witness.
5. An interesting exercise might be getting your students to very quietly repeat the Greek word for murmuring, pronounced something like *gone-giz-mahs*. When it is repeated over and over, it sounds like grumbling or murmuring.

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Student Worksheet

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For Memory: “Become blameless and pure, children of God without fault...shine like the stars in the Universe” Philippians 2:15, 16

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=Christians ought not to be _____.

=Christians who are imitating Jesus will not _____.

=These instructions mean that we shouldn't _____ or _____ with or about God. They can also mean that _____ will not spend time complaining and arguing with one another or _____.

=When we are working diligently to be like _____, when we are, in _____, doing all we can to live like _____ wants us to live, when we have _____ that God is leading us, then we are counted _____ and _____ in the sight of God.

=Paul contrasts our behavior, in Christ, with the world which does not _____ and whose sins are not _____. He calls them _____ and depraved.

=When people are without God's _____ in their life, when their major goal is getting things for themselves, they are not _____ as much by what is right...more by what will get them what they _____.

=Paul says that these folks who behave like Jesus “_____.”

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be determined to live for him all the rest of your life.