

# JOHN GILLESPIE

*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. (Philippians 2:14)*

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Brothers and Sisters,

“Do everything without complaining” says the Apostle Paul to the believers in Philippi. Apparently there were believers in that church who had a bad spirit and would rather moan than be grateful. What a tragedy to the witness of Jesus is a complaining Christian, and a complaining church!

Now it is always easy to take on board a complaining spirit. There are some who will simply not obey the Bible when it counsels us to be thankful people.

To be a complainer is sinful, especially in light of the wonders and greatness of God’s mercy and grace. Yet some of us are undisciplined in our attitudes and have given ourselves over to a complaining spirit. For some, nothing is ever good enough!

How can Heaven-bound people, redeemed from sin and hell by Jesus’ blood, become moaners and groaners? How dare a believer be anything less than generous in attitude and overflowing in thankfulness!

Well, I could easily complain in this letter about complaining and complainers! But I would rather extol the opposite spirit of thankfulness. I think that this will be more beneficial to us all, and may serve to sever the root of complaining which is growing among us.

Below are six positive things that thankfulness does. If you prefer to “go negative”, just flip them on their heads and you will see six destructive things that complaining does.

- 1) Thankfulness honours God by magnifying His goodness to us. A thankful spirit says “God you are good and are good to me” (think about what a complaining spirit implies about God....)

*"You are my God and I will give you thanks.  
You are my God and I will exalt you." (Psalm 118:28)*

2) Thankfulness lifts the eyes of one's heart above the mundane and unto the Heavens, and beyond the temporary to the Eternal. (Where does a complaining spirit fixate?)

*"O Lord, Our Lord! How majestic is Your Name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory above the heavens!" (Psalm 8:1)*

3) Thankfulness revives one's spirit, drives away despair, and changes one's life even if circumstances don't change. (Consider what a complaining heart does to one's spirit)

*"A cheerful heart has a continual feast." (Proverbs 15:15)*

4) Thankfulness encourages the believers around you and lifts up the heads of the weary. Thankfulness is contagious and healing to all around. (What poison might a complainer spread to those around him?)

*"A joyful heart is good medicine" (Proverbs 17:22)*

5) Thankfulness honours God's providential care and says "Lord, You are wise in all your ways, and you are enough for me". (What does complaining say about God?)

*"...give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God for you  
In Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:18)*

6) Thankfulness enhances and beautifies the witness of the People of God in the world. (Ponder how complaining "uglifies" our witness to the world)

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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. (Philippians 2:14)"*

We could go on and on! But perhaps the above is enough to encourage us all to repent of childish complaining, and discipline ourselves to be thankful people.

Yours THANKFULLY,

John Gillespie