

LET CHRIST'S HUMILITY BE FORMED IN US

*"Do everything without grumbling or arguing,
so that you may become blameless and pure, children of
God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.
Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you
hold firmly to the word of life."
Philippians 2:14-16a*

REFLECTION

Does grumbling or arguing have such a big impact on our spiritual life? Of all the behaviour that he could have singled out with negative connotations, Paul highlighted grumbling and arguing. Why not call out stealing, cheating, or lying, etc.? Was it because such behaviours were so prevalent in the Philippian society and within the church, that they caused the community to look really bad (e.g. every sentence spoken was laced with expletives and led to fights between people) such that Paul had to advise the believers to behave otherwise?

But this instruction to *"Do everything without grumbling or arguing"* perhaps came as a practical application following Paul's call to the believers to emulate Christ's humility (vv.1-11) and his encouragement to keep themselves pure in the faith with the appropriate behaviour that befits a Christian in a depraved society (vv.12-13). Understanding Christ's humility and one's calling to a new life in Christ should lead one to live differently in society, like "stars in the sky". Yet, it is easier said than done. The image of a lone fish swimming in the opposite direction against a school of fish swimming towards danger comes to mind.

How similar or different are we from the Philippian believers? Are we "swimming" with the crowd, blending in with "social darkness" and its forms of social norms? Take the time to consider the prevailing trends and behaviours that exist in our society today. Can you identify or name them? Reflect on how they impact your faith, your family or church. Are they in alignment with Christ's humility and what God would want of us as His people? How will He want us to live such that we be like stars in a dark sky? Turn your thoughts and reflections to prayer to God.

PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, You have called us out of darkness into Your light. Remind us once again our role as Your witnesses – like stars in the sky – pointing others to You. Forgive us when we have not shone for You but blended in with the darkness. Rekindle the light of Christ in us once again that we may live to tell the world of who Jesus is and His imminent return. Amen.

SUPPLICATION

- Are there personal behaviours, e.g. propensity to grumble or argue, that you know are not aligned with Christ's

humility and Christ-like living? Don't hide or dismiss them, but bring them before the Lord and talk to Him about them, knowing that He doesn't condemn us but wants to redeem us. Pray for the Holy Spirit to do a deep work in your life such that you may live in such a way that you may shine for Jesus like stars in the sky.

- Do you know of believers who are struggling with their own behaviour that may not be shining for the Lord? Don't judge or criticize them, but commit them to the Lord. Earnestly pray for God to do a deep work in them and in you. It may not be easy, but pray for God's opportunity and strength to minister to them with His love and grace so that God's light may shine through both of you.
- Pray for the church (both local and global) to be the light for Christ to people who are sitting in darkness. May the light of Christ shine brightly through the various expressions of the church's presence and action. Pray for the church of Christ to be alive and distinctly set apart even during season so that people may see Christ as the saviour and redeemer of the world.
- Pray for the world that is described as *"warped and crooked generation"*. The Holy Spirit is still doing the work of conviction of sin and turning hearts back to God. Pray for open hearts and minds that more people may come out of darkness and enter into a living relationship with God especially during this Christmas season. May the message of Christ be proclaimed boldly and clearly and many hearts be receptive to the truth that Christ Jesus is the promised gift – the Saviour of the world.

*Humility, that low, sweet root,
from which all heavenly virtues shoot.
Thomas Moore*

***If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly
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