

**December 5, 2023**

**The Lord wants you to live in His liberty and freedom.**

***Phil. 2:14-16 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. (NIV)***

Why would Paul say that we are to do everything without complaining or arguing? I believe that these are two things that show outwardly what is in the heart. They are selfish indicators. Basically, they are pointing to the fact that self is on the throne at the moment. Well, how do we combat this? In the same way that we would physically step down from the throne of our lives, we must make a willful decision to do so. Now this is not a one-time decision, because we all know how we are prone to relapse back into self-itis. We do not possess in and of ourselves the antibiotic that will fight off this disease. Paul says we are to do ‘everything’ without complaining or arguing. And herein is the jewel of this passage--we are to ‘live’ as children of God in a terrible, horrible world that hates God. This is a choice of the will made on a continual basis. It means when every situation comes, we choose to allow Christ to make the decision for us. We will completely submit ourselves to Him and to His will.

Paul says when we do this, we will ‘stand out’ or ‘shine’ like stars in the universe as we hold out the word of life. The very best thing we can do is to surrender ourselves to the control of the Holy One so that He can draw others unto Himself. People don’t want to see more of us, they want to see more of Him. When that happens, I believe that the LORD smiles and spiritually hugs us. And, by the way, He’s the best hugger in the universe!

**Dear LORD, I just want to be where you are, walking daily in Your presence. Help me to be consistent in my walk with You. I place my hand in Yours and I will follow You today. In Jesus Name, Amen**