

## Reflection Questions: Philippians 2.14-18

For the message, "Shining Like Stars" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on January 29, 2023

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*These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to [MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages](http://MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages).*

### INTRODUCTION

**Pray.** Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

**Read the Scripture text:** Philippians 2:14-18 (Let's also read 2:12-13 for context.)

**12** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, **13** for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

**14** Do all things without grumbling or disputing, **15** that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, **16** holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

**17** Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. **18** Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

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Let's get started...



- What point is this cartoon trying to get across?
- How self-aware do you think you are (a dangerous question, no doubt)?
- Do you tend to think that grumbling and complaining is a big deal, or no? If so, why? If not, why not?

## **QUESTIONS**

### **1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.**

- (1) As the Apostle Paul encourages his readers to “work out your salvation” because “it is God who works in you,” the first point of application he brings up is the issue of grumbling and disputing. What reasons from these verses jump out at you as to why Paul sees this as such a crucial issue?
- (2) How does the thought of doing “all things” without grumbling hit you? And how does the fact that this comes from a seasoned follower of Jesus who has spent 4 years in prison at the point of his writing these words inform your thoughts?
- (3) In our study, the pastor brought up the background of this passage that Paul undoubtedly had in mind, namely the grumbling and disputing of the Israelites against Moses after God had liberated them from slavery. Read the following from the book of Exodus 16,

And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger....”

...the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”

- What do you notice about who the Israelites thought they were grumbling against and who Moses said they were really grumbling against? What does this teach you?
- (4) How does what Paul instructs his readers clarify what God wants to do in your life? How would you answer the question, “What kind of me is God calling me to be?”
  - (5) How does this passage show you your need for the cleansing, renewing, transforming grace of God?

### **2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.**

- (1) How do we need each other to help us live out what this Scripture calls us to be? In other words, how could the community of Jesus help us to see ourselves more clearly?
- (2) In our study of this passage last Sunday, the pastor suggested we might ask someone who knows us well the following question, “I’m trying to see myself more accurately, and I need your help: can you help me notice when I am complaining?”
  - How do you feel about doing something like this?
  - What is keeping you from doing so?

### **3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.**

- How does following Jesus in doing all things without grumbling showcase a different way of being human for our city? How does it help us to “shine as lights in the world”?