

## Blameless in the Cosmos (vv. 14-16)

**VERSE 14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing** (πάντα ποιείτε χωρὶς γογγυσμῶν καὶ διαλογισμῶν [*adj.acc.nt.p. pas all things + pres.act.imper.2p. poieo do + prep choris without, apart from + noun gen.m.p. gognnomos complaining + conj kai + noun gen.m.p. dialogiomos disputation, agrumenation*]);

**VERSE 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent** (ἵνα γένησθε ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι, [*conj hina so that + aor.dep.subj.2p. ginomai “will prove” + adj.nom.m.p. amemptos blameless + conj + adj.nom.m.p. akeraios innocent; cf. Matt. 10:16; Rom. 16:19*]), **children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world** [τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα μέσον γενεᾶς σκολιᾶς καὶ διεστραμμένης, ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ [*noun nom.nt.p. teknon child + noun gen.m.s. theos + adj.nom.nt.p. amomos faultless; “above reproach” + prep mesos midst + noun gen.f.s. genea generation + adj.ge.f.s. skolios crooked; cf. Lk. 3:5; Acts 2:40; 1Pet. 2:18 + conj + perf.pass.part.gen.f.s. diastrepso distort; mislead + prep en “among” + pro.loc.m.p. hos whom + pres.pass.ind.2p. phaino appear + conj hos + noun nom.m.p. phoster light + prep en + noun loc.m.s. kosmos world*]),

**VERSE 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory [boast] because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain** (λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες, εἰς καύχημα ἐμοὶ εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα [*pre.act.part.nom.m.p. epecho give close attention to, keep close watch on; “holding fast” + noun acc.m.s. logos word + noun gen.f.s. zoe life + prep eis to + noun acc.nt.s kauchema boasting; “to glory” + pro.dat.m.s. ego I + prep eis in + noun acc.f.s. hemera day + noun gen.m.s. Christ + conj hoti “so that” + neg ouk not + prep eis + adj.acc.nt.s. kenos vain + aor.act.ind.1s. trecho run + conj oude nor + prep eis in + adj.acc.nt.s. kenos vain + aor.act.ind.1s. kopiao work, labor*]).

#### **ANALYSIS: VERSES 14-16**

1. The directive in v. 14 is another way to call believers to unity, which was first seen in 1:27 and expanded upon in 2:1-4.
2. “All things” refers to divine good production both towards those within the church and towards those outside the church.
3. For the Philippians, the background is the conflict caused by opponents who bring suffering to believers within the local church (cf. 1:27).
4. “Grumbling and disputing” among members of the church constitute a poor witness to those observing them.
5. The noun “grumbling” (*gognuomos*; 4x; Jn. 7:12; Acts 8:1; 1Pet. 4:9; Phil. 2:14) refers to ‘behind the scenes talk’ expressing dissatisfaction.
6. It is used in the LXX of Israel grumbling in the wilderness translating the Hebrew *lun* (Ex. 15: 24; 16:2, 7-9, 12; etc cf. cognate verb *gognuzo* in 1 Cor. 10:10).
7. “Disputing” (noun *dialogismos*) is used in connection with things people think (Matt. 15:19; Mk. 7:21; Lk. 2:35; 5:22; 8:8; 9:47; 24:38; 1Cor. 3:20; Jam. 2:5) as well as verbal argumentation arising from the a bad mental attitude (Lk. 9:46-47; Rom. 1:21; 14:1; 1 Tim. 2:8).
8. Paul is aware that believers are under various pressures and he is calling them to avoid a cycle of verbal dissatisfaction which does not serve the witness of the local church to those on the outside.
9. By curtailing this kind of verbal sinning, the Philippians will maintain and enhance their corporate witness towards those that have them under a microscope.
10. This congregation was under intense scrutiny by those who were looking for anything to use against them.
11. Obviously there were other things to be avoided, but Paul singles this one out because it is a common STA trait.
12. It is critical that believers appear unified.

13. By so doing, the believers there would “prove [themselves] to be blameless and innocent, children of God.”
14. “Will/Become” (aor.dep.subj. *ginomai*) refers to over evidence, that is, a good witness.
15. The descriptive adjective “blameless” (*amemptos* blameless, faultless) views individuals from the divine perspective.
16. Other references include: Lk. 1:6; Phil. 3:6; \*1 Thess. 3:13; Heb. 8:7.
17. “Innocent” (adj. *akeraios*) is perhaps better translated “harmless” as per Matt. 10:18 (of Christ in Heb. 7:26).
18. “Children of God” refers to their status within the family of God via the salvation adjustment.
19. “Above reproach” (adj. *amomos* faultless, without blemish) refers to a condition that satisfies the divine standard (cf. Eph. 1:4; Col. 1:22; Rev. 14:5) for believers in Ph 2 (of Christ in Heb. 9:14; Jude 1:24; of believers under Ph 3 sanctification: Eph. 5:27).
20. “In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation” refers to society at large.
21. “Crooked” (adj. *skolios* crooked, twisted; of people morally and spiritually; and of roads) carries the connotation of ‘dishonest’ or ‘unfair’ (cf. 1Pet. 2:18).
22. NT references: Lk. 3:5; Acts 2:30; 1Pet. 2:18.
23. “Perverse” (pf.pass.part. *diastrepho* distort, pervert; depraved).
24. Jesus used this term to describe His generation (Matt. 17:17//Lk. 9:41).
25. “Generation” (noun *genea*) refers to contemporaries living in a particular era.
26. Living “in the midst” (prep. *mesos* w/gen. ‘in the midst’) along with “among whom” (*en w/rel.pro.loc.pl. hois*) views believers living before the unbelieving cosmos.
27. “You appear” (pres.pass.ind.2p. *phaino* shine, give light) is what negative volition is supposed to be observing.
28. The noun “lights” (*phoster* luminary; of that which gives off brilliance; cf. Rev. 21:11 of precious stones) implies a surrounding darkness (cf. Matt. 5:14-16; also Jam. 1:17).
29. The cosmos made up of human activity is always viewed in terms of a darkened realm (1Pet. 2:9; 1Thess. 5:4-5; Col. 1:13; Eph. 5:8, 11-12; Rom. 13:12).
30. It is a realm of lies ruled by the father (author) of all lies.
31. In v. 16 Paul presents the benefits to staying faithful to the content of the Christian faith as it pertains to himself.
32. “Holding fast” (pres.act.part. *epecho* notice, give close attention to, stay; hold firmly to or hold forth) refers to sticking with “the word of life.”
33. What this will mean for Paul is here related to the “day of Christ” that is the Bema Seat coming in connection with the Rapture of the Church.
34. “Day of Christ” occurs here and in 1:6, 10 and 2Thess. 2:2 and is equivalent to “day of the Lord” (1Cor. 5:5; 1Thess. 5:2; 2Thess. 2:2; 2Pet. 3:10).
35. It is a period of time extending from the close of the CA, the tribulation, second advent, millennium, and the Great White Throne judgment (cf. 2Pet. 2:10; cp. “day of God” for the eternal state in 2Pet. 3:12).
36. Paul views this time as an occasion for him to “boast” (*prep eis* w/noun acc.nt.s. *kauchema* basis for boasting).
37. Sanctified boasting is in view here and again the occasion is the Bema Seat when he and the Philippians will receive “the crown of boasting” (1Thess. 2:19).
38. Paul refers specifically to the Philippians as his “joy and crown” in 4:1.
39. The Philippians will be proof positive that Paul did his job to the end.

40. “Run in vain” is an athletic figure of speech here and in 1Cor. 9:24, 26 and Heb. 12:1 (cf. 2Tim. 2:5).
41. “Toil in vain” refers to hard work to accomplish an objective (aor.act.ind. *kopiaō* work hard; cf. 1Cor. 15:10).
42. Paul is not saying that if the Philippians fall short that he will be denied the prize; what he is saying is that they will be further proof of the validity of his ministry if they “hold fast” to the end.
43. “In vain” is used of not achieving the pinnacle of Ph 3 blessing which is the crown or the prize (1Cor. 15:2, 58; 2Cor. 6:1; 1Thess. 3:5).
44. If Paul had failed to fulfill His ministry then the grace of God extended toward him would have been in vain (cf. 1Cor. 15:10).
45. Paul early on in his ministry made sure his gospel was the right one so he would not “running in vain (Gal. 2:2).
46. When believers who have been taught sound doctrine and subsequently abandon it, the pastor’s efforts on their behalf prove to be in vain since these believers fail to gain maximum glory at the Bema (still get their accumulated SG3; Heb. 6:10).