

## *Philippians 1:9-11*

LOVE ABOUNDING IN KNOWLEDGE

## *Larger Context of Philippians*

--- REVIEW ---

- Paul's prison epistle to the Philippians addresses the following:
  - To reassure the Philippians about the important role of Epaphroditus (2:25-30)
  - Expressing thanks for the Philippians' love gift to Paul in prison (4:10-14)
  - Announcing Timothy's approaching visit (2:19)
- Some have called this letter a thank-you note to the saints in Philippi for their generous gifts. Others have referred to it as a letter of friendship and moral exhortation.
- Of all Paul's epistles Philippians is the most consistently positive and personal. It reflects a joyful spirit. One popular exposition of Philippians stresses the importance of living joyfully in spite of circumstances.

## *Immediate Outline*

--- REVIEW ---

Salutation 1:1-2

I. Prologue 1:3-26

A. Thanksgiving 1:3-8

B. Prayer 1:9-11 ←

C. Progress report 1:12-26

## *Immediate Context of Ch 1*

--- REVIEW ---

**1:1** - This was a personal letter from Paul rather than one giving correction that needed apostolic authority behind it so the recipients would accept it and act on its instructions. Paul and Timothy are called bond-servants - stressing their loving commitment to their Lord. Paul recognizes the plurality of leadership present at this church when referring to the overseers and deacons.

**1:2** - Christian greeting that points to the truth that before there can be any genuine peace there must be a personal response to God's grace, His unmerited favor seen on the cross. Both grace and peace find their source in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## *Immediate Context of Ch 1*

--- REVIEW ---

**1:3** - The Philippians must have been filled with joy to hear Paul, who was in Roman chains some 800 miles away, tell them that his love and interest in them had not changed. Every time Paul thought of them he thanked God for them.

**1:4** - Paul fulfilled 1 Thess. 5:17 "pray without ceasing" when he prayed for all the Philippian believers and he didn't with a spirit of joy

## *Immediate Context of Ch 1*

--- REVIEW ---

**1:5** - Paul was moved by their participation in the gospel. Here he uses the word *koinonia*, meaning fellowship. We see three uses of fellowship in Philippians:

- **First**, there was fellowship with Christ, which was revealed in suffering (1:29).
- **Second**, there was fellowship with one another, which was revealed in unity (2:1-11).
- **Third**, there was fellowship with Paul, which was revealed in financial giving (4:16).

## *Immediate Context of Ch 1*

--- REVIEW ---

**1:6** - A statement of confidence in the Lord's ability to energize the work of partnership in Paul's ministry that has been started in Philippi, all the way to the time of the Lord's coming

**1:7** - Paul had an emotional connection with these people. They were one of heart for the message of the gospel...partakers of grace with him.

**1:8** - Paul repeats how deeply he felt unity and love for these Philippians because of their common relationship in Christ.

## *Philippians 1:9-11*

--- TODAY'S PASSAGE ---

**1:9** - And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,

**1:10** - *so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;*

**1:11** - having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

## *Philippians 1:9a*

**1:9a** "**And this I pray...**" - Paul had already prayed for them (vv. 3-4). Now he prayed so his readers would know in detail what he was asking God to do for them. Paul's hope was that they continue to grow in intelligent and discerning love.

*What is prayer to the Christian?*

*Does prayer matter to what God is doing in the world?*

## *Thoughts on Prayer*

**Prayer should avoid fatalism**

*(II Sam 12:14, 16; II Sam 12:22; Dan. 9:15-19; Jas. 4:2b)*

**Prayer should be built upon God's Immutability**

*(Mal. 3:1-6; Heb. 6:17; Jas. 1:17)*

**Prayer should be thoroughly grace oriented**

*(Dan. 9:5-14; Psa. 66:18)*

**Prayer should have for its ultimate objective the glory of God**

*(Dan. 9:17-19; Rev. 4:11; 5:9 Matt. 26:39)*

## *Philippians 1:9b*

**1:9b** "...**that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment**" - Paul's prayer to God was that the Philippians' Spirit-produced love (agape) for other believers would abound, run over as a cup or a river overflows.

*What is love tied to here in this verse?*

Love should be more than sentimental; it should be knowledgeable and discerning. Having genuine spiritual knowledge (epignosis) of God and depth of insight into His ways enables Christians to love God and others more. (This Gr. word for "insight" [aisthēsis] occurs only here in the NT.)

*Eph. 4:15; 2 John 3; 2 Corinthians 8:7*

## *Philippians 1:10a*

**1:10a** - "**so that you may approve the things that are excellent**" - **approve** means to test something so as to approve. It is used in some very early literature to refer to a physician who passed his examinations.

*What do you think Paul means by "things that are excellent"?*

**excellent**—literally translated "the things that differ." Paul is not talking about learning to discern right and wrong, but rather learning to discern between better and best. The definite article is used to show he is pointing to specific things, not things in general.

Paul is praying that they would grow in knowledge and discernment so as to test the finer points of Christian conduct

## *Philippians 1:10b*

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**1:10b** "...in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;" -

WUEST - Thus, a Spirit-produced love in the heart and life of the saint, which has been confined like a river within the limiting banks of a full experiential knowledge and a sensitive moral and ethical tact, is the thing that sharpens the moral and spiritual perceptions for the discernment of the finer qualities of Christian conduct. This will result in the saint being sincere and without offense until the day of Christ, which latter expression refers to the Rapture of the Church.

## *Philippians 1:11a*

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**1:11a** "having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ" - the phrase "having been filled with" is a single word in the Greek that is a perfect verb tense meaning that the filling happened in the past which produced the state of being for the Phillipians at the time Paul wrote. The exact same word is used here:

*Col. 2:10* - "and in Him you have **been made complete**, and He is the head over all rule and authority;"

This verse is saying that when the Phillipians trusted Christ for salvation they were completely filled with the **fruit of righteousness**. They had a righteous standing before God, resulting from being clothed in Christ's righteousness. The source for this fruit **comes through Jesus Christ**. This is a positional verse which should have an future conditional effect that will be evident to others (Gal. 5:22-23)

## *Philippians 1:11b*

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**1:11b** "...to the glory and praise of God." - the result of God having filled the Phillipian believers with righteousness produces glory and praise of God.

**Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14**

**6** ...to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved... **12** to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory... **14** who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.