

Apostolic Prayers – Philippians 1:9-11

(NASB), “9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

I. Book of Philippians Context

- a. The book of Philippians is a letter written by Paul to the saints in Philippi between 60 – 40 AD during his first imprisonment at Rome. It was the first Christian congregation, which was founded by Paul during his second missionary journey.
- b. Philippi was a Greek town that was a Roman colony and it was a gateway between Europe and Asia. The Greeks Paul was writing to could not vote, didn't have access to Roman Law, and had grandparents that lost land to the colonists (*Yet those colonists brought prosperity to their land – meaning the Greeks didn't necessarily want them to leave*).
- c. There was a sanctuary to the goddess of Artemis (Diana) mostly worshipped by women in Philippi. There was a prominence of Women in the New Testament relating to Philippi. For a woman to abandon Artemis and follow Christ would not be something to undertake lightly.
 - i. Lydia and a possessed slave woman

(Acts 16:14-18 NASB), “14 A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us. 16 It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling. 17 Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, “These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.” 18 She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!” And it came out at that very moment.”

ii. Eudia and Synthyche

(Philippians 4:2-3 NASB), “2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.”

- d. Believers in Philippi supported Paul financially

(2 Corinthians 11:7-9 NASB), “7 Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you without charge? 8 I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to serve you; 9 and when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so.”

(Philippians 4:15-18 NASB), “15 You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. 18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.”

II. Basic Outline of Apostolic Prayer

- a. And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment so that
 - i. You may approve the things that are excellent,
 1. In order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ
 - ii. Having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ
- b. To the glory and praise of God

III. Verse 9

(NASB), “9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,

(NIV), “9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight,”

(AMP), “9 And this I pray, that your love may abound more and more [displaying itself in greater depth] in real knowledge and in practical insight, “

(TPT), “9 I continue to pray for your love to grow and increase beyond measure, bringing you into the rich revelation of spiritual insight in all things.”

- a. Key words
 - i. **Love** – *agape* – love, affection generosity, kindly concern, devotedness, love-feasts
 - ii. **Abound** – *perisseuo* – to be over and above, to be superabound (in quantity or quality), to be better
 - iii. **Knowledge** – *epignosis* – the coming at the knowledge of a thing, ascertainment, a distance perception or impression, acknowledgment, insight (The tendency of the word in N. T. usage is to denote knowledge which is not merely intellectual, but of the nature of spiritual experience).
 - iv. **Discernment** – *aesthesis* – judgment, perception, not only by senses but by intellect
- b. Your love – Paul knowing these believers and having been financially supported by them was well aware of the love that was already evident in them.

- c. Your love would abound still more and more – Paul is praying for a continual increase in love. Not just a love that would fill them, but a love that would so consume them they would overflow in it. Some may already have love but Paul prays for an enhanced abundant love in them.
- d. In knowledge – knowledge that is gradually rising to perfection. It is a personal knowledge of God in Christ that is only gained through interaction with Him. Love that abounds in knowledge is intelligent affection based on an enlarged view of divine things according to one having a firm grasp of His presence.
- e. Perception (discernment, judgment) – Is insight that recognizes a truth. It applies to the senses and through intellect. Abounding love in perception is when one has tasted and seen of love and has concrete examples and evidence of love.

(Hebrews 5:14 NASB), “14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.”

- f. **Summary – Paul prays for the love (which he had already experienced) of the Philippian Church to abound (continually overflow) that they would have an experiential and intelligently intentional affection toward and others.**

IV. Verse 10

(NASB), “10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;”

(NIV), “10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ;”

(AMP), “10 so that you may learn to recognize and treasure what is excellent [identifying the best, and distinguishing moral differences], and that you may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ [actually living lives that lead others away from sin];”

(TPT), “10 This will enable you to choose the most excellent way of all—becoming pure and without offense until the unveiling of Christ.”

- a. Key words
 - i. **Approve** – *dokimazo* – to test, assay metals, examine
 - ii. **Excellent** – *diaphero* – to convey through, to carry (bear through) different ways, across; subjectively to “differ” or surpass
 - iii. **Pure** – *eilikrines* – that which being viewed in the sunshine is found clear and pure; spotless sincere, ingenuous (innocent) tested as genuine (Properly found pure when examined by the sun’s light)
 - iv. **Blameless** – *aproskopos* – not stumbling or jarring (jarring against moral rule, unblamable, clear, free from offensiveness, not led into sin and not leading into sin)

- b. To approve the things, which are excellent – The word for “approved” means the kind of trial to which metals are exposed in order to test their nature. “Excellence “is used to mean “the intelligent choosing of a superior path”. Paul’s plea to approve the things which are excellent are for the saints (by trial) to be well informed of their left and right as they choose what paths (decisions) to take (make). This is only possible through love that abounds in knowledge and depth of insight.
- c. That you may be sincere and without offense – the result of approving things which are excellent is to be pure and blameless.
 - i. The word for sincere is defined as, “that which being viewed in the sunshine is found clear and pure”. Sincere is to be tested and found clear undoubtedly of any mixture.
 - ii. To be without offense is to live consciously void of offense or stumbling of error and to not provoke a brother to offense. One commentator defines blameless like this:
 - 1. *Inoffensive to others. Not injuring them in property, feelings, or reputation. This is a negative virtue, and is often despised by the world. But it is much to say of a man that he injures no one; that neither by example, nor opinions, nor conversation, he leads them astray; that he never does injustice to their motives, and never impedes their influence; that he never wounds their feelings, or gives occasion for hard thoughts; and that he so lives that all may see that his is a blameless life.*
- d. Until (unto) the day of Christ – The day of Christ’s appearing is full of sincere believers who are without offense. Paul is praying for ones who are mature in righteousness and without mixture.
- e. **Summary - Abounding love leads the way to a path of tried and proved excellence that results in the believer being tested and found undoubtedly clear of any mixture when all is in the light, and to live above reproach while not causing others to stumble in offense.**

V. Verse 11

(NASB), “11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

(NIV), “11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”

(AMP), “11 filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God [so that His glory may be both revealed and recognized].”

(TPT), “11 And you will be filled completely with the fruits of righteousness that are found in Jesus, the Anointed One—bringing great praise and glory to God!”

- a. Key words

- i. **Fruit** – *karpos* – from the Hebrew, fruit of the womb, offspring
 - ii. **Righteousness** – *dikaiosyne* – fair and equitable dealing, justice; German (The condition acceptable to God)
- b. The fruits of righteousness – A common Old Testament phrase and is mentioned in the New Testament. The way that it is meant to be understood is; “Fruit that springs from righteousness”, meaning righteousness has already take place (through the blood of Christ). The fruit isn’t righteousness the fruit is because of righteousness. The end goal isn’t righteousness it’s the wisdom and riches of ripe maturity that flow out of Holy living.

(Proverbs 11:30 NASB), “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who is wise wins souls.”

(Amos 6:12 NASB), “Do horses run on rocks? Or does one plow them with oxen? Yet you have turned justice into poison And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood,”

(James 3:18 NASB), “18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”

(Hebrews 12:11 NASB), “11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

- c. To the glory and praise of God – All of this prayer is unto Jesus receiving the glory that's due His name. Our lights shine before others that He would be clearly displayed so they might be provoked to Christ that He would receive all the glory.

(Matthew 5:16 NASB), ““Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

- d. **Summary** – There is fruit that is born from righteousness (pure & blameless). Paul’s prayer isn’t just for the Saints to be righteous but to experience the benefits of having a new identity in Christ unto only the Glory due His name.