

# SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

## *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians*

### **Philippians 1:7-11 – “Paul’s Prison Prayer”**

Philippians 1:7-11, *“Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”*

We talk about prayer but don’t pray. Paul had a very deep and abiding love for the believers in Philippi.

- He thanked God for them (vs. 3)
- He prayed for them (vs. 4)
- He was confident about them (vs. 6)

But now, *“...because I have you in my heart...”* (vs. 7)

*“...greatly I long after you...”* (vs. 8)

Paul’s prison strengthened their fellowship in the gospel.

In verses’ 9 to 11, we find the things Paul actually prayed for.

*“And this I pray...”* (vs. 9)

The character and content of Paul’s prayer educates, encourages and serves as a pattern for us on what we should pray for ourselves and others.

Notice, Paul’s prayer was for spiritual growth and maturity.

Paul’s Prison Prayer has four requests:

I. Abounding love (vs. 9)

Philippians 1:9, "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;"

A. Notice what's on top of Paul's prayer list: love

Why? It's the mark of the child of God and it's the greatest (1 Corinthians 13 – faith, hope and love)

B. Paul is not praying for them to love.

C. Paul prays that their love would abound or overflow.

1 Thessalonians 4:9-10, "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;"

Abound – the image of a river overflowing its banks – literally, keep on overflowing.

Notice the word 'love' (Greek: Agape -1 Corinthians 13) seen in service.

Does your life overflow with agape?

How?

1. the Spirit of God

Romans 5:5, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Galatians 5:22, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,"

2. the Word of God – in knowledge

We grow in love by feeding upon God's word!

3. In judgment, or discriminate

No sloppy agape – wise and discriminating (discerning).

II. Discerning Approval (vs. 10a)

Philippians 1:10a, "That ye may approve things that are excellent..."

This action is the result of discerning love.

The word 'approve', is used for testing money to determine whether it is real or counterfeit; it's also used for assessing metals to determine their value and worth.

The word 'excellent', refers to the things which differ.

It's not between good and bad, it's between primary and secondary.

It's between the temporal and eternal values.

The New International Version renders it: "*Discern what is best.*"

The J. B. Phillips Translation: "*Recognize the highest and best.*"

It's the ability to distinguish the difference.

Application: Even as Christians it's easy to spend our time and attention on things of secondary values and not of eternal worth – it's priorities.

Illustrations:

*Isaiah 55:1-2, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."*

House, job, sports, TV, ext.

I love that song: Rise up, O men of God!

Rise up, O men of God!  
Have done with lesser things.  
Give heart and mind and soul and strength  
To serve the King of kings.

- William P. Merrill

We need wisdom to know the difference.

### III. Blameless Character (vs. 10b)

Philippians 10b, "*...that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.*"

Paul prays for their character in three dimensions:

1. As it concerns themselves (*sincere*)

From the Latin *sin-cere* - Literal meaning: *Without Wax*

It also carries the idea of being judged by the sun light.

Don't be two faced, hypocrisy or duplicity

We won't be sinless, but we can be sincere (2 Corinthians 4)

We are "jars of clay, cracked pots"

2. As it concerns others (*without offence*)

We are to walk so as not to be a stumbling block – our liberties.

3. As it concerns Christ (*till the day of Christ*)

Live in light of His coming.

#### IV. Spiritual Fruit (vs. 11)

Philippians 1:11, "*Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.*"

1. Because we have been given the righteousness of Christ in our position before God.
2. We can and should practice righteous living before man.
3. How? It's by Jesus Christ

John 15:5, "*...for without me ye can do nothing.*" (So abide!)

It's the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5)

Notice the results (vs. 11) "*... unto the glory and praise of God.*"

Jesus said in John 15:8, "*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*"

Matthew 5:16, "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*"

May our lives:

1. Overflow with the Love of Christ
2. Be devoted to the things of Christ
3. Sincere and without offense until the day of Christ

4. Bear the righteous fruit of Christ

All to the glory and praise of God.

Copyright © Calvary Chapel San Bernardino