

## **The Blueprint of Love Philippians 1:7–11**

### **In Philippians 1:7–11, The Apostle Paul Hands Us a Blueprint.**

**Every builder needs a blueprint.** Without one, walls go up crooked, foundations crack, and the structure cannot stand. In our text, Paul shows us what Christian growth looks like, how to pray for it, and what it produces.

**Every Great Structure Begins with A Blueprint. Paul has handed us one.**

### **The Structure of Verses 7-11**

It's not flashy. It is not trendy. It is not culturally engineered.

It's timeless. It's love that grows. It's Wisdom that guides. It's Lives that prepare for Christ.

It's Fruit that glorifies God. May we not be content with spiritual mediocrity in 2026.

**May we build according to this blueprint.**

**What a practical and powerful blueprint it is! It teaches us:**

That we will know what Christian growth looks like.

That we will be encouraged to pray for Christian growth in our brothers and sisters.

That we will be equipped to pray for that Christian growth.

Two weeks ago we saw that God is not finished with us yet, that God who began a good work in us will carry that work to completion until the day of Christ.

In other words, the Christian life is not static but dynamic. **We're supposed to change. We're supposed to grow as believers.**

**That's the theme Paul addresses in our text – Christian growth.**

To begin, we will look at the motivation for Paul's prayer in verse 7-8.

Then we will look at the content of the prayer in verses 9-10.

And finally we will look at the result of the prayer in verse 11.

### **The Motivation for Prayer – Love for Each Other (Phil. 1:7-8)**

Paul clearly says that the motivation for prayer is our love for each other as partners in the gospel.

*“It is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and the defense and confirmation of the Gospel.”*

**Grace Is Not Only the Grace That Forgives;** it's the grace that sustains in suffering and strengthens in gospel defense.

In verses 1-6, Paul was full of joy and thanksgiving every time he remembered the Philippians. And the reason he gave was his absolute confidence that God would complete the good work He began in them.

**Now he gives another reason, a much more personal reason.** He says it is right for him to feel this way because he has the Philippians in his heart. **What a beautiful expression.**

Paul doesn't just have the Philippians on his mind, he doesn't just have them on a piece of paper or on a prayer list. **He has them in his heart.**

**Even his circumstances didn't affect his prayerful love for them.**

Whether in prison or free, they had shared in God's grace together as **partners in the Gospel.**

Something mind blowing jumps out at us here. The words, "*both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.*" **That's an astounding phrase.**

It didn't matter to Paul where he was. Prison didn't stop him preaching the Gospel.

He could say with conviction, "*I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation.*" What a blueprint for us to make sharing the gospel more central in our lives.

**Loving Each Other with The Affection of Christ Jesus (8)**

**Paul goes on to speak about loving each other with the affection of Christ Jesus.** "*For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.*"

**He uses strong language here.** He calls God as his witness to testify to the truth of what he's saying. He longs to see and be with the Philippians again.

**Let this beautiful phrase sink deep into our memory banks for it raises a question.**

How is it possible to love each other with the affection of Jesus? **It's possible because as brothers and sisters together in Christ, we all share in God's grace.**

It's possible because there is a three-way bond between you, me and Jesus.

**What is the motivation here for prayer?** The motivation is love for each other, love for each other as partners in the gospel, loving each other with the affection of Christ Jesus.

**The Content of The Prayer – Christian Growth (Phil. 1:9-10)**

Paul says, "*And it is my prayer.*"

How cool is that? He doesn't simply tell the Philippians that he is praying **for** them. He tells them **what** he is praying for them, **and the content of his prayer is Christian growth.**

**Do you want to encourage a fellow believer? Let them know you are praying for them.**

Paul is not praying for love alone, but for intelligent, discerning love.

We often treat spiritual growth like a mystery, something that just "**happens**" to some so called super spiritual people and not others. **But in his letter to the Philippians, the Apostle Paul pulls back the curtain.** He doesn't just wish for our maturity; he outlines the practical blueprint for all of us to follow.

He shines a laser beam on what Christian growth actually looks like, how to find the fire to pray for it in others, and to be equipped with the specific language to ask God for it.

**My church family, we cannot effectively pray for the growth of our brothers and sisters if we don't first love them with the heart of Christ.**

There are many things we can pray for each other. We can pray for each other to get well when we are sick. We can pray for each other to be safe when we are travelling.

We can pray for each other to find work when we are unemployed. **Those are all good things.** If we love each other with the affection of Christ Jesus, then we will certainly pray for each other's needs.

**But we should especially pray for each other for Christian growth,** because the biggest need we all have is to grow in Christ.

I'm sure Paul prayed for the various needs of the Philippians, but his primary prayer for them was a prayer for Christian growth.

**How do you pray for someone to grow in Christ? Here's the blueprint laid out for us.**

Pray to grow in love, pray to grow in knowledge, pray to grow in discernment, and pray to grow in holiness.

**First, Pray to Grow in Love. (Philippians 1:9a)**

*"It is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more."*

**The first prayer we should pray for each other is growth in Christian love.**

**There is no Christianity without love. "God is love."** (1 John 4:8) That's his nature. *"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son."* (John 3:16) **That is the gospel.**

*"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."* (1 John 4:11)

**That is our calling. Take away love, and you no longer have true Christianity.** You just have some empty shell of religion that faintly resembles the original.

Paul's prayer though is not just for love, **but to grow in love,** *"that your love may abound more and more."*

**When we pray for each other to grow in love, don't just ask for baby steps in growth.**

Pray that each other's love **would abound** and then pray that it would continue to do so more and more. God has infinite reserves of love and mercy, and we can never outgrow the need to grow in love.

Can you recall when Jesus was asked what is the greatest commandment? **What was his reply? Arguably, some of the greatest words ever recorded.** (Matthew 22:37-39)

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”*

Pray for each other to grow, to abound more and more in love for God and for others.

### **Pray To Grow in Knowledge (9b)**

**Secondly, we should pray for each other to grow in knowledge.** *“This is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge.”* Paul doesn't just pray for their love to grow, but for their love to grow in knowledge.

**Christian love is not just a warm fuzzy feeling without any basis or support.**

Christian love is firmly grounded in knowledge of God and His ways. **To grow in love, we must also grow in knowledge.** Not just knowledge **about** Christ, but personal knowledge **of** Christ through saving faith.

This personal knowledge comes through the Word of God, so the Bible must be central to our life and worship as believers and as a church.

In the words of the old song, “To know, know, know him, is to love love love him.” The more we know God and His Word, the more we will love Him and others. Pray for each other to grow in knowledge of God.

### **Pray To Grow in Discernment (9b-10a)**

**Thirdly, pray for each other to grow in discernment.** *“that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment.”*

**Knowledge is important but knowing how to apply that knowledge is equally important.** Pray for love and knowledge but also pray for discernment. Paul says we are to *“discern what is excellent, or “I want you to understand what really matters.”*

**Why?** We are to pray for discernment for each other so that we may make the right choices, so that we can discern what is best – **the good from the bad, the better from the good, and the best from the better.**

The Christian life is not merely choosing between right and wrong, but between good, better, and best.

Out of many good things, what are the best things; what is the very best choice in each situation, so that we will choose the things that really matter in life.

### **Who Among Us Has Not, At One Time or Another, Made the Wrong Choice?”**

Not every choice is a good choice.

Not every relationship is a good relationship.

Not every friendship is good for us.

Not every job is a wise career move.

Not every purchase is a wise use of our money.

**We make our choices and then our choices turn around and make us.**

The choices we make today shape the rest of our tomorrows. **So we need to pray for each other to grow in discernment.**

**Pray To Grow in Holiness (10b) Be Pure and Blameless for The Day of Christ.**

Just as the goldsmith puts the gold into the fire to test it for impurities, and to discern what is pure gold and what is not, we are to test the things around us in life, we are to practice discernment.

Paul prays backward from eternity. He prays with the Day of Christ already in view

In a world full of options — entertainment, voices, movements, ideologies — believers must learn to ask: What most honours the Lord? What most builds holiness? What most reflects eternal priorities?

We need to pray for each other, pray to grow in love, to grow in knowledge, to grow in discernment, and also to grow in holiness. *“be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.”*

He prays that holiness would mark our lives.

**Why?**

Because one Day — the Day of Christ — we will stand before Him.

On that Day, popularity will not matter.

Comfort will not matter. Platforms will not matter. What will matter is this:

Were we filled with the fruit of righteousness?

Did our lives bring glory and praise to God?

**God is still building. He is still shaping. He is still refining.**

The blueprint has been handed to us.

Let us not settle for shallow Christianity in 2026.

Let us not drift into spiritual mediocrity. Let us pray for one another like this.

Let us love one another like this. Let us grow like this.

That word “pure” can be translated pure, unmixed, transparent or wholesome. It carries the idea of something that is found to be pure when examined by the light of the sun. The word “blameless” means “without offense, without any cause of stumbling.”

Paul says we should pray for each other to be this way “*until the day of Christ.*” There is a sense of urgency here, a sense of looking forward, keeping your eyes on the prize, keeping the goal in front of you at all times.

Paul is saying that we should pray for each other to grow in holiness, that our lives should be pure and transparent, that there should be nothing in our life that would cause another to stumble, that our life will stand up to examination by God at the last day who knows all and sees all.

**Wow! This is quite a prayer** – praying for each other to grow in love, in knowledge, in discernment and in holiness. That is the content of Paul’s prayer for the Philippians and should be the content of our prayers for each other.

**The Result of The Prayer – Changed Lives Resulting in Praise and Glory to God!** (Phil. 1:11)

**We have looked at the motivation for prayer – love for each other.**

**We have looked at the content of the prayer – a prayer for Christian growth.**

**Finally, let’s look at the result of the prayer.**

The result of the prayer is changed lives resulting in praise and glory to God.

**The Fruit of Righteousness That Comes Through Jesus** (11a)

“*filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.*” (Philippians 1:11a) This is the result we may expect when we pray this prayer regularly for each other.

You don’t fill yourself, you are filled by Christ. The first step in filling a cup is making sure that it’s empty. So we empty ourselves and allow Jesus to fill us with the fruit of his righteousness.

**Every Blueprint Ends with A Finished Product.** What does the “completed house” of a growing Christian look like?

**A Life Filled with Fruit:** Paul describes a life “*filled with the fruit of righteousness.*” This isn’t a fruit we manufacture through sheer will power. It comes through Jesus Christ.

In the Spring seeing fruit trees in blossom I know they’re alive. Any tree that bears fruit is alive. **But a tree with branches filled with fruit glorifies the loving care of the gardener.**

We see the final result of this prayer at the end of verse 11b: “*to the glory and praise of God.*”

**This Is Every Christian’s Ultimate Goal: The Glory and Praise of God** (11b)

Why do we grow? Why do we pray? Is it so we can feel superior? **No.** Paul ends the blueprint with the only goal that matters, the driving force of all who call Jesus Lord, “*to the glory and praise of God.*”

**The ultimate goal of all Christian growth is not self-improvement;** it's the magnification of God's character through our lives.

The result of this prayer is changed lives resulting in praise and glory to God.

Not personal recognition. Not church reputation. **But God's glory alone.**

**This is the ultimate test of spiritual growth.**

When believers' lives are pure and fruitful...**God gets the praise.**

**Summary: Our Blueprint Is a Model Prayer from Paul on How to Pray for Christian Growth.**

Remember what we learned a few weeks ago – **God's not finished with us yet!** He will complete the good work He began in each one of us, and one of the ways He does that is through our prayers for each other.

Paul does not pray for comfort.

He does not pray for wealth. He does not pray for ease.

**He prays for maturity.**

He prays that love would overflow.

He prays that truth would anchor that love.

He prays that discernment would shape our choices.

And may our lives — individually and together —be so full of Christ that when people look at us, they do not see impressive people...**they see our glorious God.**

**And may it all be to His praise and glory alone.**

**Prayer:** We thank You for the blueprint You have given us in Your Word. Thank You that You have not left us to guess what Christian growth looks like. Thank You for showing us that it is love that abounds, truth that grounds us, discernment that guides us, and holiness that prepares us for the Day of Christ.

Lord, we confess that we are often content with far less than what You desire for us. Forgive us for shallow love. Forgive us for careless choices. Forgive us for drifting into spiritual mediocrity.

Today we ask You to do in us what we cannot do in ourselves. Grow our love for You with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Grow our love for one another within this church family.

Grow our love for the lost in our community. Build this church according to Your blueprint. Strengthen weary believers. Encourage the discouraged. Convict where conviction is needed. Comfort those who suffer. And keep our eyes fixed on that coming Day when we will stand before Christ.

Until then, keep building. Keep shaping. Keep sanctifying. For Your glory alone. **Amen.**