

Philippians 2026 Series – Lesson 4
Love Is To Be Tempered In Knowledge And Discernment
Spheres of Grace Ministries International, Inc

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Text: Philippians 1:9-11

- 9 *“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and [in] all judgment;*
- 1 *That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;*
- 11 *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”*

Introduction:

In our previous study we discovered that Paul was justified in believing that the One that had begun a good work in the Philippian believers would carry it through to completion. The basis for Paul’s confidence that he had was supported by the attitude and actions they had displayed - they manifested evidence that that the good work the Spirit had begun with their participation was producing visible fruit. We also observed Paul claim God as his witness concerning his deep affection for the Philippian believers.

Now, in verses 9-11 we will see that the love and affection for other believers is to be tempered in knowledge and discernment. In today’s churches there are frequent declarations that we are to love others. The declarations declare that we are to love those whose lifestyle is different from ours. However, upon examination, those are really declarations for tolerance and are not self-sacrificial love. Now, while biblical love is self-sacrificial and *“....beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things...”* it is also protective and therefore should not tolerate those things which are a danger to the believer - things like false doctrine and non-biblical immoral practices which are fostered in the church under the guise of tolerance. I was tolerant concerning my children but was protective concerning those things which were a hazard to them. Likewise, our love for other believers is to be tempered in knowledge and discernment. We are not commanded to be tolerant of immoral behavior, but to love one another within the guidelines of biblical doctrine. The ability to do that effectively is through knowledge and discernment. Before the Canon of Scripture was complete there was a spiritual gift of knowledge and one of discernment but now knowledge and discernment are based on the completed Word so we have in print that knowledge by which we can discern truth from error – but we must know the Word of God as we see in verse nine.

Let's look at verse 9....

Verse 9:

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and [in] all judgment;”

“And this I pray” (pro-seu-cho-mai) = **I keep on praying...**

Verb - expresses action

Present Tense - continuous action

Active Voice - I, Paul keep on praying

Indicative Mood - mood of reality

The emphatic position of the conjunction “kai” indicates Paul said, “As a matter of fact, I keep on praying for you.” Remember, I talked to you about the word order in Koine Greek is used for emphasis, here is an example of that with Paul saying, “In fact, indeed with specific certainty, I keep praying for you.”

“that” (hina) = **in order that...**

This word introduces a purpose clause - the purpose of Paul's praying for them is *in order that...*

“your love” (agape) = **your self-sacrificial love that manifests itself in giving and continues to love regardless of the response...**

Agape Love is the foundation of the Christian life but it is important to note that in the development of the Structure of Spiritual Maturity the Capacity to Love is on the Fourth Floor of the structure and its development is dependent upon our developing a Mastery of The Details of Life, which will be in direct proportion to our development of a Relaxed Mental Attitude, which will be in proportion to our Orientation to Grace. That is the reason we have spent so much time on the previous series of studies: Living in the Spheres of Grace, Living the Faith/Rest Life, Acquiring a Mastery of the Details of Life, Living The Christian Life, and The Doctrine of Forgiveness.

Our ability to Love Self-Sacrificially is based on these foundational doctrines as is indicated in Paul's letter here. ***“...that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.”***

“may abound” (peris-seu-ea) = **may have the potential to continually overflow...**

Verb - expresses action

Present Tense - continuous action

Active Voice - subject produces the action – you”

Subjunctive Mood - the action is potential - it is up to you

Paul was continually praying for them that their love might continually overflow - that is that it might be displayed abundantly.

“yet more and more”

This phrase identifies the fact that their love was overflowing already, but he was praying that it would overflow*still more and more...*, specifically that that overflow of love might be in the sphere of knowledge and all judgment.

“in knowledge and [in] all judgment”

“in” (ehn) = **in the sphere of...**

Paul’s prayer for this increase in the overflow of their love was specifically that it might be in the sphere of or the confinement of*knowledge and all judgments...*

“knowledge” (epi-gnoh-sei) = **full and applied knowledge...**

There are seven Greek words that are translated in the King James Version of the New Testament by the word knowledge. The common Greek word for knowledge is “gnosis.” Paul’s choice of word used here is “epignosis” which means full knowledge resulting in understanding its application. This word also indicates participation in the object known - thus, it refers to a fully understood and applied knowledge. The degree of Categorical Bible Doctrine we have understood and are applying determines the degree of our ability to love self-sacrificially. Knowing and applying doctrine by category is basic to effectively live the Christian life. The degree to which we understand and apply grace is basic to our loving other believers with a self-sacrificial love.

So, Paul indicates first that he was continually praying for them in order that their love would overflow more and more in the sphere of ...*fully applied knowledge...*

If ever there was a time when the love of believers needed to operate in the sphere of fully applied knowledge - it is today! We live in the Laodician Age - the final period of the Church Age. So, Satan has stepped up his attack. He has infiltrated the church with human philosophy and empty, self-serving, experiential emotionalism, while preaching a philosophy of tolerance that excuses and redefines sin and denies the very basics of the Word of God.

This tolerance is being pushed for everything but truth and for everybody but Bible believing Christians. And the preaching of this false message has been effective due to a lack of knowledge concerning God’s Word.

“and [in] all judgment” (ais-thea-sei) = **full accurate perception or discernment...**

Ah, herein lies the problem! There is a false perception concerning the church today – faulty discernment. Human perception views the success or failure of a

church by the numbers and excitement it generates. But spiritual discernment reveals that success can never be measured in numbers or feelings. Spiritual success is measured in applied knowledge and accurate discernment. The idea, that if there are great numbers and excitement then it must be of God, is a false perception. I followed a pastor who had been having an affair with the wife of the Chairman of Deacons, while the associate pastor was involved in a affair with another woman in the congregation, yet that church doubled in attendance that year. The growth of a congregation should be judged by the spiritual growth of those in attendance not by the numbers in attendance.

Your capacity for Self-Sacrificial Love is the measuring stick of your spiritual maturity, and it is developed in knowledge and discernment. A personal acceptance of Jesus as redeemer and His teachings as the guide to living a satisfying spirit-controlled life results in Joy.

In Isaiah 55:7-9 God declares,

- 7 *“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*
- 8 *For my thoughts [are] not your thoughts, neither [are] your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*
- 9 *For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

Our love for God and our love directed toward others must operate in the sphere of *..fully applied knowledge and accurate discernment!*

II Timothy 3:1-7 has never been more applicable than it is today.

- 1 *“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*
- 2 *For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*
- 3 *Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,*
- 4 *Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*
- 5 *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*
- 6 *For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,*

7 *Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”.*

Look at these identifying characteristics in today’s society:

“lovers of their own selves” (phi-lau-toi) = **self lovers**

“covetous” (phi-lar-gou-roi) = **lovers of money and possessions**

“boasters” (a-ladzo-nes) = **imposters**

“proud” (huper-e-aph-a-noi) = **arrogant**

“blasphemers” (blas-phe-moi) = **hurtful defamatory speakers**

“disobedient to parents” = **unpersuadable, obstinate rejection of parental guidance.**

“unthankful” (ah-ch-a-ris-toi) = **not gracing others**

“unholy” (a-no-si-oi) = **not governed by that which is right**

“without natural affection” (a-stor-goï) = **not possessing natural protective love**

“trucebreakers” (a-spon-doi) = **those who refuse to maintain a covenant**

“false accusers” (dia-bo-lou) = **making false accusations**

“incontinent” (a-kra-teis) = **uncontrollable desire for power**

“fierce” (a-neme-roi) = **not gentle**

“despisers of those that are good” (a-phil-aga-thoi) = **haters of lovers of good**

“traitors” (pro-do-tai) = **betrayers**

“heady” (pro-pe-teis) = **reckless**

“highminded” (te-tu-phoh-menoi) = **head wrapped in smoke (idiom for conceit)**

“lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God” (phila-do-noi) = **pleasure lovers instead of God lovers**

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof...”

“denying” (ear-mea-menoi) = **having contradicted the...**

“power” (du-na-min) = **natural inherent power**

Today the crowds are thronging to the places where they are howling like dogs and cats, claiming to be slain in the spirit (ignorant of the fact that the Spirit came to give life not slay), and where they are working people into a frenzy, while falsely perceiving it is of the Lord. It contradicts Holy Scripture and sidetracks true spirituality for a feel good, do good substitute. Even in more fundamental churches the focus is on biblical philosophy instead of biblical principles.

Therefore our love is to overflow more and more in the sphere of fully applied knowledge and accurate perception. The reasons for this are given in verse 10 and 11.

Expanded Translation:

“In fact, I continually pray that your self-sacrificial love may keep on abounding still more even to a greater degree by means of fully applied knowledge and all discernment.”

Point of Doctrine:

Paul had commended the self-sacrificial love of the believers at Phillipi and here indicates that he continually prays that their love may continue and then identifies the way to assure that is through acquiring fully applied knowledge and accurate discernment.

Verse 10:

“That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;”

“That ye may” (eis)(to) = with the result that you might....

Paul tells the Philippian believers that he is constantly praying for them in order that their love may overflow in the sphere of knowledge and accurate discernment for the purpose of....

“approve” (do-ki-madz-ein) = as a matter of purpose be continually approving through the process of testing...

Infinitive - denotes purpose

Present tense - continuous action

“things that are excellent” (ta)(dis-phe-ron-ta) = the things that as a matter of principle have greater value...

Participle - establishes a principle

Present Tense - continuous action

Active Voice - subject produces the action

Accusative Case -establishes limits and boundaries

Neuter - no emphasis on initiation or response

So, the overflow of self-sacrificial love in the sphere of knowledge and discernment is for the purpose of being able to approve those things that have more value, only those things that pass the test of knowledge and accurate discernment.

“that” (hina) = **in order that...**

“ye may be” (ete) = **you might have the potential to continuously be...**

Verb to be

Subjunctive Mood - potential

Present Tense - continuous action

“sincere” (ei-li-kri-neis) = **un-alloyed - pure - unadulterated**

Adjective - attributes characteristics to the subject

Nominative Case - case of identification

Masculine Gender - initiator

This old King James word is translated from a Greek adjective that describes that which is pure and un-mixed in substance. Here it is used to refer to that which is singled out through knowledge and discernment, the truth of biblical knowledge and discernment.

Thus, Paul was praying for the Philippian believers to overflow in self-sacrificial love in the sphere of fully applied knowledge and accurate discernment for the purpose of being able to continually approve, through the procedure of testing, those things that differ, in order that they might have accurate truth and discernment.

And, he continues....

“and” (kai) this connecting conjunction indicates that accurate truth and discernment are not all that results from our maintaining fully applied knowledge and accurate perception. A further result is that we will be...

“without offence” (a-pros-ko-poi) = **unoffending**

Adjective - attributes a characteristic to the subject

Nominative Case - case of identification

Masculine Gender - initiator

This adjective refers to our not becoming a stumbling block to others - when we are properly applying accurate truth and discernment, we will be un-offending - not become a stumbling block to others. And this condition is to continue...

“till the day of Christ” = **into the Day of Christ** – refers to Christ coming for us at the rapture of the Church.

Expanded Translation:

“...with the result that you may as a matter of purpose be continually approving, through the process of testing, those things that as a matter of principle have greater value, in order that you might have the potential to be pure and unoffending into the Day of Christ,”

Point of Doctrine:

The purpose of the overflow of self-sacrificial love in an environment of fully applied knowledge and accurate perception will enable us to properly test doctrine in order to distinguish between those teachings which differ-have greater value. This will enable us to be pure and unoffending. Thus we will not be a stumbling block to any one right up into the Day of Christ-the Rapture of the Church

Verse 11:

“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”

“Being filled” (pep-le-roh-menoi) = having, as a matter of principle, been filled completely with the result that you continue to be filled...

Participle - establishes a principle

Perfect Tense - completed action in past time with continuing results

Passive Voice - subject is acted upon

Nominative Case - identification

This is a difficult passage so hang in there with me and we'll investigate it. The Greek text says, ***“...having, as a matter of principle, been filled completely with the result that you continue to be filled with the fruits of righteousness....”*** The Greek grammar gets a little tricky here and too technical to go into detail with the use of the passive voice and the perfect tense concerning the participle ***“...having been filled completely with the fruit of Righteousness in the past with the result continuing”*** seems to indicate we have already been filled by someone else with the fruit of righteousness, so some want to relate this to salvation, but this is dealing with the fruit of righteousness. This is a participle that introduces and unchanging principle, so let's look at it.

When were we filled with the fruits of *righteousness*? The perfect tense indicates in past time. So, you can see that it would be natural to think of this as a reference to salvation where, as a result of our position in Christ, we were made completely righteous. However as I pointed out, this is a reference to the *fruit* or production of righteousness. And, while we were given all the resources that accompany righteousness at the point of salvation - we were just given the resources. When we examine this phrase in the light of the phrase in verse 10 we see Paul is saying, I am praying that your self-sacrificial love will overflow in fully applied knowledge and in accurate discernment so you can distinguish between things which differ, in order that you might be pure, unadulterated and unoffending, not be a stumbling block to

others right into the Day of Christ. The perfect tense and the passive voice is a complicated Greek grammatical structure. When we go into the Day of Christ after conforming to doctrine and having used discernment we will have been filled full with the fruit of righteousness. Positionally, having Christ's righteousness credited to our account at salvation we now have the potential to produce fruit by applying the doctrines of Christ in daily living. Remember Paul's prayer for the Believers back in verse 9 was in order for them to have the potential of their self-sacrificial love abounding. It is there in self-sacrificial love that we maintain a lifestyle that produces the fruit of righteousness. To the degree that we develop and maintain self-sacrificial love is the degree that we will produce the fruit of righteousness.

So, having been filled with the fruit of righteousness is the result of believers following this process - if our love overflows in the sphere of fully applied knowledge and true discernment we will distinguish between truth and error. The result will be that we are morally and ethically pure and not a cause of stumbling to others right into the day of Christ. There!! That is the point of past time in which we were filled with the fruits of righteousness - the time that precedes our going into the Day of Christ having been filled with the fruit of righteousness. As we go into the Day of Christ, having followed the procedure outlined here, we will have been completely filled with all the fruit of righteousness. It must be noted that this is in the passive voice indicating that something, or someone, completely fills us with the fruit of righteousness. The something is identified as our development of applied knowledge and accurate discernment - that is the thing that fills us with all the fruit of righteousness, living according to the word of God- the teachings of Christ. Notice I said, the teachings of Christ. The word "Christ" refers to the complete doctrine of redemption through the Messiah, not just the words of Jesus, but the doctrines found in Scripture, especially the epistles, the doctrines of the Church Age. So, the "fruit of righteousness" is having production by living according to the promises, principles, doctrines, and mechanics of the Church Age. The "fruit of righteousness" is the production of the believer living according to the "knowledge and discernment" applicable in the Church Age.

Let's look at it a little closer....

"with the fruits" (karpon) = **with the fruit**

Noun - thing

Accusative Case - establishes limits and boundaries

Masculine Gender - initiator

Singular - a single fruit of righteousness

The word "**karpon**" refers to fruit or that which is produced, and the source of this production is found in the phrase ***"of righteousness."***

"of righteousness" (di-kai-o-su-nes) **from the source of that which is in conformity to the specification of the blueprint or plan...**

Noun - thing

Genitive Case - descriptive and source (our conformity to God's plan is the source of

production - fruit in our lives)

When we walk according to God's plan for our lives, we produce those things for which He has designed and equipped us.

We are able to walk according to His plan by implementing the formula described in verses 9-10.

Overflowing in self-sacrificial love in an environment of fully applied knowledge and accurate perception for the purpose of being able to properly test doctrine in order to distinguish between those things (doctrines) which differ. This will enable us to conduct our lives in knowledge and discernment. Thus, we will not become a stumbling block to others - right into the Rapture of the church.

When you do the right thing, right up into the Day of Christ, you will have been completely filled with the production which comes from conforming to the plan of God for your life. As we have noted the passive voice of the Greek participle (pep-le-roh-menoi) *"being filled"* indicates that the conformity to God's plan is the action provided by our following the procedure of verses 9 and 10. This is made possible as explained in the statement, *"...which are by Jesus Christ..."*

"which are" = These words are not in the Greek text and must be omitted to maintain a correct translation.

"by Jesus Christ" = This phrase identifies Christ as the means or agent by which we are able to conform to the specifications of God's plan for our lives and affirms that the Christ is that man Jesus. Here the humanity of Jesus (the man) is identified as the Christ, the anointed sent one of God to be our redeemer.

"unto the glory and praise of God" = This phrase indicates that the result is we are entered *into the glory and praise of God.*

Expanded Translation:

"having as a matter of principle been filled completely with the result we continue to be filled with the fruit of righteousness through the means of Jesus Christ unto the Glory and Praise of God,

Point of Doctrine:

When we love self-sacrificially our lives will conform to the applied knowledge and accurate discernment of the doctrines of the Church Age and we will be filled with all the fruits of righteousness- the principle has been established once and for all, the potential is there, the question is, "Are we willing to love with a self-sacrificial love?" (Love God, our Mate, and Others). The degree to which you so love will determine your adherence to the doctrines of the Church Age and your Joy

Conclusion:

1. Our self-sacrificial love is to overflow toward others. That is loving them self-sacrificially regardless of their response and manifesting that in giving according to our ability and their need.
2. This love for them is to be in the sphere of:
 - a. Fully applied knowledge (Bible Doctrine)
 - b. Accurate discernment (a mind programed by Bible Doctrine)

That is, our sacrificial giving must be in conformity with the word of God not their desires, but what is best for them according to Bible Doctrine and our accurate discernment

3. This knowledge and discernment will enable us to distinguish between truth and error. It will require understanding why we are here, what we are to be doing and understanding and applying Scripture through a Dispensational approach while living a Spirit Controlled life.
4. That will in turn enable us to apply true knowledge and manifest accurate discernment, prohibiting us from becoming a stumbling block to others.
5. That will result in our arrival into the Day of Christ having been filled with fruit production which conforms to the plan God has for our life.
6. We will accomplish this through the means of the proper application of doctrine and personal and a consistent relationship with Jesus Christ. As we live according to His teachings, we will produce the natural fruit of the righteousness we acquired through Jesus Christ.
7. The result will be Joy and Inner Happiness through the glory and praise of God

But it all begins at Salvation:

*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...
The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...
With the heart man believes unto righteousness...
But with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...
For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!*

“... and your joy no man taketh from you...”

(Luke 16:22)