

“...walk worthily...” from the Book of Philippians

Scripture Block: Pp 1:1-11

Theme: GOD’S EXPECTATION OF FRUITFUL SERVICE

Life verse: Pp 1:9-11

Today’s passage: Pp 1:9

Notes Interpretation

Before we begin to dig into verses 9-11, I want to remind you of the progression of thought associated with our study thus far. As early as verse 2 we have begun a dialogue on grace; then moved into the various ways in which we “fellowship in the Gospel”—with an emphasis on personal evangelism; and notice how from there we talked about the way in which God is at work in our lives, conforming us to the image of His Son—combining the topics of grace and personal evangelism. In short, we have developed a string of ideas that are going to come together in verses 9-11.

Verse 9 says: **“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, . . .**

Make sure to connect this to the context—Paul is praying about the **quality** of the love of the Philippian church in the context of both their spiritual growth and evangelistic outreach. What specific qualities is he looking for:

- The word translated “knowledge” refers to a full knowledge. It is a love that covers all aspects: gentleness, compassion, tough love, etc.
- The word translated “discernment” is rare and only used once in the New Testament. It carries the idea of tactical flexibility. In the context, it describes a love that has the ability to adapt and make application within a dynamic environment and changing circumstances.

Application

If this is Paul’s prayer, shouldn’t it be ours too? Let’s develop the idea by thinking about the home—should not our prayer be to show the love of Christ to family members based upon “full knowledge”—looking at all the issues involved, the big picture; and with the flexibility to focus upon and meet the demands of changing family dynamics. Sometimes we need to encourage, others times provide comfort, and at others require accountability. Now lets scale up and make application in the setting of both our local fellowship and communities. Should we not pray for a love that understands the role of the church and the situation of our lost neighbors, while at the same time “always being ready to give a defense for the hope that is within us?” Remember, it is God who is at work within—He will show us the way: the issues, the times to speak boldly, and the times to just listen and comfort.