



**Praying for Love that Discerns and
Discernment that Loves
(Philippians 1:9-11)**

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I. The Description of Paul's Prayer

- A. Paul prayed that the love produced by the Holy Spirit within those believers would increase.
- B. Paul prayed that this love would increase with attentively noticing, discerning, fully perceiving, observing, and discovering truth (i.e. knowledge).
- C. Paul prayed that this love would increase with experiential use of wisdom and knowledge applied to life situations accordingly (i.e. discernment).
- D. Paul prayed that the purpose of this love increasing with knowledge and discernment is so that one may determine the best course of action, that which is of greatest quality and value.
- E. Paul prayed that one would function in that best of course of action with integrity and a clear conscience in light of the return of the Christ.
- F. Paul prayed that one would function in that best course of action knowing one has been supplied with the harvest of righteousness coming from Jesus Christ to demonstrate the greatness of God's character and to bring applause to God accordingly.

II. The Direction of Paul's Prayer

- A. Paul wanted this body of believers to walk in a growing love, fed by proper knowledge and moral insight, so that they could see the best way to live in light of the day of Christ.¹
- B. In essence, Paul wanted this body of believers to have and increase in love that discerns and discernment that loves.
- C. Having and increasing in love that discerns and discernment that loves results in an accurate knowledge gained by experience with every kind of moral and ethical tact.
- D. Having and increasing in love that discerns and discernment that loves results in one looking at situations with spiritual eyes, being able to get to the heart of issues and choose the best course of action with integrity and a clear conscience, to the glory of God and the praise of His name.

¹ Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, The New American Commentary, Vol. 32 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 66.

- E. Having and increasing in love that discerns and discernment that loves results in one living a life that reflects excellence in character, conduct, conversations, commitments, commodities, communion, and care through the power of God and for His glory and praise.
- F. Having and increasing in love that discerns and discernment that loves results in knowing Jesus Christ, becoming like Jesus Christ, and being useful to Jesus Christ in light of the coming of Jesus Christ our Lord.

III. The Discernment We Must Embrace in Light of Paul's Prayer

- A. The practice of saturating your mind with truth will lead you to attentively noticing, discerning, fully perceiving, observing and discovering truth (i.e. knowledge). (Romans 12:2)
- B. The practice of submitting your will to the truth will lead to experiential use of wisdom and knowledge applied to life situations accordingly (i.e. discernment). (Hebrews 5:14)
- C. The practice of loving others will lead to clarity in living. (1 John 2:10)
- D. You cannot grow in love that discerns and discernment that loves if you are growing more and more in selfish ambition. (James 3:16)
- E. You cannot grow in love that discerns and discernment that loves if you are growing more and more consumed with the cares, riches, and worries of this life. (Luke 8:11-14)
- F. You cannot grow in love that discerns and discernment that loves if you are growing more and more in lack of love for others. (1 John 2:11)