

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 19th June 2022 Hymns ps 116 v1-8 T Jesus name (58), 271, 228, Read: Philippians 1:9-11 Text Philippians 1:9

Series: Philippians (19) Title: Praying for Abounding Love

The words of **Philippians 1:9-11**, form Paul's prayer.

Paul is praying for all who are mentioned in **verse 1** **all the saints** or the called out ones at Philippi, which includes the oversight or office bearers of the church, the **bishops** who are the **elders** and the **deacons** which are **the committee men of the church.**

This is a prayer for growth in grace, growth in the things of God, and their is application for all believers.

Paul's prayer is that their life will be characterised by their gospel **love**, that it will **abound more and more....**" because when believer's love abounds more and more they will seek to do good unto all men and woman, but especially unto the household of faith.

The word **abound** means **abundant, to exceed, greater, it rises, it overflows, to be in affluence, to excel.** The idea is when a river overflows is banks, there is an abundance of water, it exceeds.

The same thought is used in the life of Christ, when He feed the multitude over 5000 people, **Matthew 14:20** "***And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.***

the word **remained**, is the word **abound**. In fact the original greek reading is **they took up that which was over and above of the fragments.**

Everyone was satisfied, individually and as a family, all were feed. The work and word of Christ exceeded everything and

anything else. None but Christ can satisfy. Every need is met by Him. His grace, goodness, love and mercy overflows, greater than all.

This is the word Paul uses.

Since Paul desire's that God's people will have the mind of Christ, then Paul is praying for the believers at Philippi that their love in spiritual matters, in gospel truth, in Christ, toward one another will **abound, overflow, burst over to live right and impact the lives of others around them.**

Not only is this the pastor's prayer for the congregation, may it also be the congregation's prayer one another and for their pastor.

That your, our, my **love may abound more and more....**"

I FIRST, PRAYING FOR ABOUNDING LOVE THAT IS INSERTED

Notice the opening words of Paul's prayer "**that your love may abound more and more....**"

In English, the word **love** spoken or written is used in a general sense, on the same level.

For instance, you may say or write, I love reading books, I love going on walks, I love pizza, I love plantain tostones with salami, I love mum and dad.

No doubt there are different levels, strengths to those meanings, they are based upon feelings, but we would not know that because the same word love is spoken or written.

However, in the Greek language the word the **love** has different words and emphasis or strength's though we do not see that in translation, as seen in John 21 where Christ ask Peter lovest (agape) thou me, Peter answered.. I love (phileo-friend) thee

The word Paul used for **love** in **Philippians 1:9** identifies the **strongest, highest and deepest** word in meaning and strength in the Greek language that there is for love.

It is the word **agape**. It is a covenant love, a sacrificial love.

It is love not based upon feelings or circumstances, it gives. It pays the price, it is put into action.

This is the agape love which God chooses to speak of Himself in **1 John 4:8** “**...God is love...**”

It is the love, God the Father has for His Son, as Christ prayed in **John 17:23** “**as thou hast loved me.**”

It is Christ's love for His Church, **John 15:9** “**As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.**”

It is a love which dwells in the believer by the work of the Spirit, **Gal 5: 22**, **For the fruit of the Spirit is love.**

God loves His Son and through His Son He loves all His redeemed people.

This was demonstrated by **Romans 5:8** “**But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**”

This is a strong word to speak of spiritual matters. John could write in **1 John 4:19** “**We love him, because He first loved us.**”

Like John, Paul recognises it is only by the love and grace of God and peace with God that believers “**..love may abound more and more....**”

It is a love that springs forth from the fountain of love who is God.

The point Paul is making, the good work which God has begun in them at Salvation started by putting the love of God, in their hearts for the things that God loves.

God loves, righteousness, holiness, His name, His Word, His son and all His people.

Paul prays these words, because a love for Christ is already present, inserted.

A love that exists as a result of regeneration.

At the moment of **regeneration** meaning **new life, spiritual life, the new birth, new a new walk, new desires, a new beginning, new principle of life.** There was sown in the heart a love for Christ, which reaped, produced a love for the people of God.

Before the saints at Philippi were saved by the grace of God, they were spiritually lifeless, at war with God, their fellow man, and no love for God.

John in speaking of the Jews, but all including fallen humanity, confirms in **John 3:19** “...men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” The Lord in speaking to unbelieving Jews, said in **John 5:42** “...ye have not the love of God in you.”

We naturally love self, but not God. **1 Corinthians 16:22** “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.” Let him be accursed.

However, when spiritual life is received, Paul says in **Romans 5:5** “...the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

This love centres upon Christ. it is identified inserted, as God by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit puts or insets a love in the sinners heart for Christ.

A love that was once absent.

The Spirit's ministry is to speak of Christ, and lead sinners to Christ for salvation and believers in sanctification, living holy lives unto Christ.

Therefore, a persons love can only abound in Christ, and live out the gospel when the love of the gospel has first been inserted within by Christ's power.

Unsaved one, you can be forgiven of sin, guilt removed, for there is power in the blood of Christ, to deliver you from sin's bondage & burden & and empower to walk in the newness of life.

II SECOND, PRAYING FOR ABOUNDING LOVE THAT IS INCREASING

Notice Paul prayer “*and this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more....*”

Since there is a love for spiritual matters, that is been inserted Implanted, rooted in the heart, then the love sown must grow, develop, thrive, flourish, the root must spread out, bearing fruit.

Spiritual love inside will blossom and bloom outwardly. gospel branches of God's grace in the life will mature.

In other words, ***that your love may abound yet more and more....***”

The words ***more and more***, are translated in **Matthew 6:26** as ***better, v30 much more***.

Paul uses this same word **5 times in Philippians**, notice **Philippians 1:23** ***For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.*** the word ***far*** means ***more and more, far better***.

It is a love that goes further, advances, and grows.

Paul desires the believers love to be **superabounding**.

The word **Abound** is in the progressive **present tense** indicating Paul's prayer to God was that the love of saints at Philippi, would be continually overflowing, rising, growing, maturing, and developing in the gospel which centres upon Christ's person and accomplished work.

Paul loved the Philippian believers, with a pastoral care, they were on his heart. Paul desired that their love abound, grow, increase more and more, in the gospel.

Therefore believer, this is my desire that your love be abounding more and more, increasing, greater and greater in Christ.

Lord take us up to higher ground.

(**1 Corinthians 15:58** *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”*)

it is only by the Lord's grace our love can abound, **1 Thessalonians 3:12** *“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: .*

1 Thessalonians 4:1 *“furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.*

This book is our well of water to our souls, and we must take from it daily. Believer are you living and drinking at well of scripture?

If not come like Issac in Gen 26, and re dig the wells that where filled in.

When wells are not used, neglected, and forgotten, they are filled over with something else, soil, bricks.

what was once active and flowing is now closed and hard.

Is your well of scripture under a pile of magazines in your house, is it abandoned until next week. There is a hardness a blockage in your life that is stopping the water of God's word getting through.

remove any obstacle, take the word and dig again and Let scripture run through you, dwell within you, and your love will abound more and more.

Paul prayed the same for the Philippians as I do for this congregation.

III THIRD, PRAYING FOR ABOUNDING LOVE THAT IS INSTRUCTIONAL.

“and this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in Knowledge...”

The word **knowledge** is made up of two words, **epi** meaning **full or complete**, and then the word **gnosis** meaning **to know**. putting the two together Paul is speaking about **full knowledge, and knowledge that is correct,**

(well this is spiritual or gospel knowledge as seen by Christ's person, His true humanity and deity, His sinless life, atoning death, incorruptible burial, victorious resurrection, and ascension.)

Our love can only grow, mature, when we have a proper, correct Knowledge, understanding of the person and work of Christ in the gospel.

Paul in speaking about religious unbelieving Jews said in **Romans 10:2** “...***that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*** They zealously rejected the gospel, Christ and persecuted Christians, believing they were pleasing God.

Error in doctrinal knowledge will lead to error in practical living.

Or let me say when there is a lack of Biblical instruction or knowledge concerning Christ's person and work, then a life will easily go astray, fall into error both in doctrinal and activity, practises.

But when knowledge grows and is guided by the Word of God, the Word of God will be put into practice in that life.

Just as your doctrine determines your duty, so your belief will be shown by behaviour.

How needful for Paul to pray that their **love may abound yet more and more in Knowledge...**" to be instructed guided according to the truth of Scripture.

There can be no growth in grace except as we grow in our knowledge of Christ.

We may always test whether we are growing by this question, Do I know more of Christ to-day than I did yesterday?

Do I live nearer to Christ to-day than I did a little while ago? Am I pressing on the upward way new heights gaining every day.
Is Your aim higher ground?

when our knowledge of Christ grows there will be growth in Christian living.

when there is spiritual growth our love for Christ will grow.

We need our faith to grow, Lord increase our faith, but in knowledge of him.

This is what Peter meant in In **2 Peter 3:18** "**But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ**".

Paul wrote in Phil 3:8-10 *“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;”*,

Paul knew Christ, yet he says I am striving for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. I want to know more of Him in all His sufferings.

1 John 4:10 *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

God spared not His only begotten son but delivered Him to face the punishment of our sin.

(We have noted this word **propitiation** many times, and that it good for its easily forgotten. But a definition of **propitiation is the turning away of God’s wrath against sinners by means of a sacrifice that covers sin.**

The word means **to be merciful, atonement, to satisfy**. God gave Christ to make satisfaction for our sins, or to turn His wrath away from our sins by shedding His own sacrificial blood. This was the only way God would reconcile sinners back to himself, it was a sacrifice that He provided and accepted.

What did Christ satisfy? It was the holiness and justice of God so that His wrath has been turned away from all who will believe on Him. Sin must be punished, and Christ sacrificially gave Himself a ransom for the many.)

IV FOURTH PRAYING FOR ABOUNDING LOVE THAT IS INTELLECTUAL

“and this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in Knowledge and in all Judgment.

The word **judgment** in this verse means **to discern, intelligence, perception.**

The idea is to perceive, to have insight, to discriminate in various situations, to tell the difference between truth and error, right and wrong, spiritual living and fleshly living, to discern what is good for you, helping your love to abound more and more, and what will hinder your love causing inactivity, and doubting the truth of the gospel.

an Intelligence in making decisions that are scripturally right.

Every day we should pray for wisdom because situations unexpectedly will arise, in the course of any day, decisions to make, answers to give, people to avoid, have discernment therefore, we must use it scripturally.

Therefore spiritual and moral judgment or discernment is the application of spiritual knowledge, wisdom is putting it into practise, doing what is right and need to be done.

Spiritual insight, Discerning error against the gospel only comes from a full knowledge and complete instruction, in the truth of the gospel.

Spiritual discernment is knowing who or what must be avoided, and understanding why it must be avoided, wisdom is avoiding what is spiritually hindering me.

Spiritual discernment is knowing what will spiritually benefit me, and understanding why it will spiritual benefit me,

wisdom is doing what will spiritually benefit me, for the reason Paul gives in **verse 10** "***that ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.***

Paul knew, spiritual perception comes from spiritual knowledge, that is founded on spiritual love in Christ.

As the Philippians love abounded ***more and more in Knowledge and in all Judgment,*** they would as **verse 11** states

be filled with the first fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.