

04 Philippians 1:9-11

Paul's Prayers for Excellence

1. Introduction

- a. Paul's prayers also include requests. Four are made in Phil 1:9-11
- b. His requests reflect what he cares about, what he longs for in Phil 1:8.
 - i. What's in your mind, and in your heart, will come out in your prayers.
 - ii. Spiritual minds will make spiritual prayers – carnal minds, carnal prayers.
 - iii. Walking in the Spirit does not neglect the body, it subjects it - 1 Cor 9:27
- c. Paul's prayer is excellent – they go beyond what is carnal, to what is truly valuable

2. Phil 1:9

- a. *"love abounds more and more"* – there is never enough, there is no limit – Gal 5:23
- b. *"in knowledge and judgment"* – godly love is not carnal/sinful – Luke 6:32, John 3:19
- c. This is the chief description of charity¹, which is above all – 1 Cor 13:6,13; Col 3:14
- d. Love abounds in knowledge – there is much learning that is not of God – 2 Tim 3:7
 - i. Knowledge of the object and the goal – 2 Tim 3:16, Col 1:9, Eph 3:16
 - ii. How can you love the Lord ignorant of the mystery of his will?² 1 Tim 2:4
- e. Love abounds in judgment – Not loving everything, but loving the right thing
 - i. We must be able to discern/judge the right things– 2 Tim 2:15, Rom 14:13
 - ii. The spiritual mind can judge all things - 1 Cor 2:14-15

3. Phil 1:10-11

- a. *"things that are excellent"* are not simply things that differ³
 - i. Israel had something more excellent than the nations - Romans 2:17-18
 - ii. The new covenant is more excellent than the old – Hebrews 8:6, Isa 60:15
 - iii. There is a more excellent way than spiritual gifts – 1 Cor 12:31
 - iv. The manifold wisdom of God excels all – Eph 1:10, 1:22-23, 3:10
 - v. By the mystery we learn the excellency of Christ – Eph 3:18, Phil 3:8-9
- b. *"approve"* – to adorn, to confirm, to commend, to justify – Titus 2:10
 - i. We are saints, do we live like it? We own a heavenly place, the proof?
 - ii. Life is filled with choices between good and better, better and best.
- c. *"sincere"* – speaks to singleminds, singlehearts. Saying and doing the same thing.
 - i. Sincerity and truth does not put on a front, but lives in honesty – 1 Tim 2:1
- d. *"without offence"* – though Paul is offensive – Gal 1:8-9, 5:11; Rom 16:17; 1 Tim 1:20
 - i. In behavior before men, in doctrine before God -1Co 10:32, 2Co 6:3, Act 24:16
 - ii. Christ died for our offences but they are still offensive – 1Co 15:34, Eph 4:26
 - iii. Ask: 1) will it cause men to stumble? 2) will I be ashamed before God?
- e. 3 qualities of the fruit: 1) righteous, 2) by Jesus Christ, 3) unto God's glory
 - i. The fruits of righteousness are here – Gal 5:22-24, Rom 1:13, 6:22; Col 1:10

¹ See the online article 'Charity vs. Love'

² See the online article 'The Secret to Loving the Lord'

³ See the online article 'Things More Excellent'