***Fellowship in Grace - PH14-02

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:7-8***

We are studying the book of Philippians, and now we're going to look at Philippians 1:7-8. Just to review for a moment, in verse 6, the apostle Paul has expressed his confidence in the Lord that He will carry to completion the good work of salvation and of Christian service which He has begun in every Christian. No matter where you go with your life as a Christian, God is going to carry you through to a point of success. He may have to beat you blue and bloody to get you to that point of success, but He is going to carry you through. All things are going to work together for good to that end for you. This work, we pointed out, included at least 37 distinct provisions, all of which the believer receives as a package unit at the point of salvation. We presented those in total for you last time in order to try to give you the full impact of how great, fantastic, and marvelous is the experience which is ours as believers.

All of this, these 37 points, constitute the divine good work of Jesus Christ in the believer which follow through, Paul says, right to the day of Jesus Christ which is the day of the rapture. There are certain implications that verse 6 has for us. This verse says, "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This implies that God has a plan for every believer in the church age. No one is excluded from this plan because he may be a failure at some particular point.

Secondly, this verse implies that God's plan for each Christian will follow through right to the rapture or to physical death. It's never going to stop short of that. As long as you're alive, God has a ministry for you. You can delay your progress in that plan, and you can get sidetracked with sins and with producing human good. However, as long as you're here (you have not been taken by death or the rapture), God expects you to be performing the ministry through your spiritual gifts that He has planned for you. Only when you are dead is this terminated. The one thing that functioning in God's plan requires is confession of sins; forgetting those sins; and, moving on, no matter what you've done to yourself, or what you've done to others.

Verse 6 is a clear declaration that God moves on with us. That's what Paul said: "I have complete confidence that what God began in you (and they were not all perfect people in Philippi), He's going to carry on right to the day he takes you to heaven. So no matter how discouraging things may get for you and no matter how you fail, remember that the plan of God goes on for you. The confession of sins technique is your provision for grace recovery, so use it. Get out of carnality. Forget the spiritual failure, and get moving.

**Awaiting the Rapture**

In the meantime, while you're awaiting the rapture and moving in the plan of God, here are certain things that you should do:

1. You should use the faith rest technique (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2).
2. Exercise patience (James 5:7) while you're waiting the Lord's return.
3. Philippians 1:6, that we just read, says to have confidence while awaiting His return.
4. 1 John 2:28 says to stay in temporal fellowship.
5. Also, get where you can learn doctrine in a grace atmosphere while you're awaiting the rapture (James 5:8, Hebrews 10:25, 2 Timothy 2:15). That's very important.
6. Finally, while you're awaiting the rapture, serve the Lord with your spiritual gifts (Philippians 1:6).

**Philippians 1:7**

In verse 7, the apostle Paul says, "Even as it is right for me to think this of you, because I have you in my heart." The phrase "even as" means "since it is." This signals introducing a new idea. Here it is used in a causal sense. It's explaining the cause of his confidence that he talked about in verse 6. This confidence that God is going to carry through His plan for the Philippians. So we may translate it as, "Since it is right for me to think this of you." The word "right" is "dikaios," and it means "just" or "fair." It conveys the idea that Paul's confidence which he expressed in verse 6 is a very appropriate thing to have.

I want you to notice that he is not saying that he's confident in the Philippians. He is not confident in people. This is the kiss of death. The day you have confidence in people, you are going to get hurt and shot down. This is the first thing you want to learn. Your confidence can only be in people to the extent that the grace of God is functioning in them. What the grace of God is doing, have confidence in that. That's what Paul is talking about. He says, "It is very appropriate for me to declare this kind of complete confidence toward you Philippians because I'm not confident in you. I know that in you as people there is nothing good. However, what God is doing in you, I am confident that he will carry through." It is in God that his confidence lies.

Consequently, it is appropriate that he should think this. The word "think" is the word "phroneo." It really means "to be minded;" that is, "to think in a certain way." His attitude is expecting the completion of God's work to be done in them. That's what he means by this ("For me to think this"). This means to be so minded concerning you. It's in the present tense which means that it's a constant attitude on his part. It's active, which means he chooses to think this.

**Our Mentality**

Here's how this works in reality. In the mind is the mentality of the soul. The mentality has two functions. It has a learning function which we call the perceptive side of the mind. It has a decision making side, or the directive side of the mind. In the Bible, the word "noos," meaning "mind," is applied to this perceptive side. "Kardia," or heart, when the Bible speaks about the heart, that means the directive side.

So information comes into your mind. It could be information that you learn at school, or information from the Word of God. This information is called "knowledge." The Greek word is "gnosis." You process that information in your mind, and either you believe what somebody tells you or you don't believe what somebody tells you. If you believe it, in spiritual things, it follows the cycle of going down to your human spirit with all of its compartments and classifications of truth. There it becomes full knowledge, or the Greek word is "epignosis." That's because you have believed it, and now it's usable. The information in the perceptive side is not usable. Under the filling of the Holy Spirit, as a situation arises where you need to make a decision, this information is cycled up to your directive mind. It is cycled up as the full knowledge that it has become--usable knowledge. This knowledge in your heart is the basis upon which decisions are made and actions are taken.

If you're studying in school, the things that you learn in school you also take in, but they go directly (if you believe them) over to the directive mind. You either believe it, or you don't. If you've been told at school that around Christmas time, a fantastic comet is going to appear in the sky, Comet Kohoutek, and that you will be able to see this comet, and that it'll probably be even more spectacular than Haley's comet, either you believe that, or you don't. If you believe it, that information is transferred over to your directive side, and some morning or some evening at whatever the appropriate time is, you'll be standing outside looking up in the sky trying to see Comet Kohoutek. If, however, you believe that's a big fat lie, you're going to keep getting your sleep, and you're not going to be getting up at all hours to try to see the comet.

This is what Paul is talking about. He has received some divine information--doctrine. He has had some experiences at the same time in reference to his dealing with these Christians at Philippi. He knows that they have received a package deal of 37 wonderful things at the point of salvation. He knows that right now when he writes this letter, it is an answer to a third time that they have sent him a money gift (a big financial gift) for his ministry. He knows the experience that he has had in the past with these people. He puts his experience and doctrine together; he is cycling his information and the doctrine that he puts together; he ties the two together in his directive mind (in his heart); and consequently, he makes a decision (an expression of confidence) toward them. This conviction is based upon divine viewpoint, which is what you have in your directive mind as the result of doctrine, and it's appropriate and right.

That's what he means when he says, "It is right for me to think this of you. It is for me to be so minded." Why? Because he knows doctrine, and he knows what these people are doing, and he has put the thing together, and he knows that God is going to carry through concerning them, no matter what their situation may be. Some of these Philippians (by and large--most of them apparently) were really going on with the Lord. Some of them were not, and Paul was saying, "I know that even in your case, God is going to carry through. You are not going to frustrate His purpose and plan of blessing and good now that you are in His family."

He says this is right because, "I have you in my heart." This is the reason for his attitude about the Philippians. The word "heart" is (again) this directive mind. This is where decisions are made. Therefore, when he is speaking about the heart, he is not speaking about the actual physical organ. He is speaking about the directive side of the mind that makes his decisions.

Incidentally, you may be given information that's false. You may learn false information, and you may take it over into the directive side of your mind, and then you will act upon that false information. False doctrine will not cycle through. You will simply learn that in the same way that you learn things in school. You can learn false doctrine and it will pop right over to the directive side of the mind. False doctrine does not go through your human spirit. God does not teach your spirit falsehood. However, you can have false information; you can believe false information; and, you can act like the world's greatest fool. You can do this in any realm of life, and you can do this in spiritual things. By and large, this is exactly what happens to people spiritually. They are given false information, or very often they are given true information in such a way that it comes out false in its implications. Consequently, their use of it is a false use.

Paul says that he has something in his heart. Romans 10:10 tells us how a man believes with the heart. In other words, the heart is not just the physical organ. It is this part of the mentality with which we learn and with which we believe. That's what he is referring to here. Therefore, his esteem stems from the conviction that the Lord is doing a good thing. In his mind, he esteemed these Philippians just as you and I esteem Christians who stand by us in the Lord's service. We expect great blessing upon those who do stand by the Lord's service. We naturally hold the people in highest esteem who are there who are functioning on the Word of God; who are exercising their spiritual gifts; who are doing it without being pushy, but are being ambitious; and, who are doing it in modesty and unto the Lord's glory. You can imagine how tough it was when Paul had to deal with that Corinthian church and their carnality. What a refreshing thing it was to have the Philippians to turn to, and to view as partners in the Lord's work.

He says, "I hold you in my heart," and he esteems them because (looking at the end of verse 7) he says, "You all are partakers of my grace." Therefore, let's look at "partakers of grace." This is the basis of his greatest esteem for these believers. This explains why he had the Philippians in his mind with such confidence. The word "partakers" is the word "sugkoinonos." It simply means "partners" or "joint fellowshippers," if you want to put it that way. In verse 5, the apostle Paul says, "For your fellowship in the gospel." He has been making requests for joy and prayer for them because he remembers their fellowship, and that's the word "koinonia." Now he uses "sugkoinonos" which is an emphatic and an intensive application of that same word. He's calling them "joint fellowshippers" or "joint workers" or "partners."

**Paul's Imprisonment**

Verse 7 explains how the Philippians were in fellowship with Paul in the gospel: "You all are partakers of my grace." The word "my" should not go with grace. It should go with partakers: "You are all my partakers in the grace" is what it really is saying. "My partners in the grace" is the way that should be translated at the end of verse 7. So here's how they're partners. First of all, he says you are my partners in my "bonds." This is "desmos." Actually, it's not just chains or handcuffs. What the word means is "imprisonment." Remember that Paul is now at the end of almost 4 years that he has been in prison in various places, finally ending up in Rome itself for a trial in the imperial court. His imprisonment has been the result of his preaching of the gospel and the false accusations brought against him by the Jews all the way back in Jerusalem.

So for almost 4 years now, he has been in prison. Included in that were undoubtedly fetters and restraints and chains. However, this word is simply emphasizing that these Philippians share the same grace that enable Paul to carry on under imprisonment. Most of us are really kind of pathetic, in a way, when we stop to realize that we can't carry on in freedom for the Lord, whereas Paul was carrying on in imprisonment. Yet, how could he do this? There was something overriding all of the natural human elements of discouragement, and that was the grace of God.

Therefore, one of the things he shared with the Philippians was a quality of grace relationship that enabled him in his imprisonment to carry on and to enable them to stand by him while he was in prison. He says that they also shared in my defense, my "apologia." "Apologia" is the defendant's plea. This is purely a legal term. This is the defense that Paul made concerning his gospel ministry before the courts in Rome. This is not the defense of Paul. It doesn't say, "And in my defense." It says "In defense of the gospel." It was not so important what happened to Paul, but it was very important as to what happened to the gospel in the Roman Empire. Now he stood before Nero's court, and he had to defend that the gospel was not a bad thing. It was not causing the bad things that had been declared that it was guilty of. So he stood before this court, and "apologia" is simply the term for a defendant pleading his case in court. You have this used in the verb form in Acts 26:2 where Paul is pleading his case on another occasion before a ruler.

This defense is tied to confirmation. These two are tied together, and they are tied together in such a way that confirmation is a further explanation of defense. The word "confirmation" is "bebaiosis." This means stable. It means to be established. What Paul is saying here is that he added confirmation to his defense of the gospel; that is, he established the reliability and authenticity of the gospel. He had to not only say, "I am not guilty of the charges," and he not only had to defend what the Jews had accused him of as being false, but he also had to defend that the gospel accomplished fantastically wonderful things in human lives--that the gospel was the power of God. That's what he had to establish. That's a tough case to plea in Nero's court, that the gospel is the power of God. It is non-subversive, in other words, that's what Nero wanted to know. Nero wanted to know, "Is the gospel subversive to this government? That's what you have been accused of, Paul." So what Paul did was to confirm, in his defense, to establish and to stabilize the gospel as a non-subversive factor in the Roman Empire.

In this way, he preserved freedom for evangelism, and the Philippians shared in that victory while Paul stood before the court. This indicates at this point that the plea has already been made. As we know, he won this case upon his first imprisonment. The next time they pulled him into the imperial court, he lost his case. Along with it, he lost his head in the execution that terminated his ministry.

However, the grace of God has made the Christians at Philippi and Paul partners in a ministry that he was actually the leader of. Do you see what this is saying? Paul is saying you are my fellowshippers and you are my fellow defendants (co-defendants) in defense and the confirmation of the gospel. You join me in this imprisonment. Together, you have shared the grace of God that carried me through to victory, and that victory is to your account. What Paul is saying is that, "Everything I have done in evangelism; in establishing churches; in getting the Word of God out; the reception of that Word; the effect that it has upon people and for all eternity; and everything of my ministry, you have shared in. You are co-fellowshippers with me. The Philippians said, "Paul, I didn't do anything, but I sat there and listened." That's right. You listened to the Word, and you were positive, and God's good work was carried on in you because of your positive volition. They said, "I gave a little money, and I gave a little time." You exercised your spiritual gift--that's what you did.

That's why I am trying to impress you people here at Berean Memorial Church that you are a select company. You are nothing short of the shock troops comparable to the United States Marine Corps in our military service. You are the elite. You are upon the shoulders of whom it all hangs when the crunch really comes. You may sit here and think you do little. That's why I tell you to go up and look at those two new audio rooms, and walk by, and you'll come out with your mouth hanging open like everybody else's. People come up to me and they're shaking their heads, and I almost know what they're going to say. If they come walking to me shaking their heads, and they come from that direction, they're going to say, "I can't believe it."

Well, the thing you want to remember, not only with spectacular things the Lord has done there, but that setup of rooms is part of the source of fantastic information about the Word of God, and you have a part in it. Unless you understand that, you're going to get in trouble, and you might even get detached from it. You have a part in putting out the Word of God as no generation in this congregation has ever had before. There are hundreds and hundreds, and it's going to come up to the thousands, who are going to be receiving the Word of God because of you. You are going to be joint fellowshippers in this enterprise. You are. You may lose that privilege if you do not esteem it. If you doubt that, go home and read Romans 1 and see what happened to people when they became ungrateful for the part that they had in the information and the service of the Lord.

Therefore, no wonder Paul said, "I know what's happened to you. I know doctrine. I know your experience. I know what God is going to do. I know what I have done. I know what I had to do in this court. I know the grace that carried me through to victory, and we won our case, and the gospel has been established and stabilized as a non-subversive element. Evangelism is now wide open to us in the empire, and I know why it was possible. It's because you and I shared the grace of God together, and you made this possible--every victory that I have had." You're going to walk into heaven, and you're going to feel a little scrunchie when God starts rewarding you for things you didn't even know you had a part in. You're going to have more reward for things that you weren't even conscious that you were a part of. I know that for a lot of you, that comes as a great sense of relief. You thought you weren't doing too well. You're doing better than you think you are. So were the Philippians.

**Philippians 1:8**

Therefore, in verse 8 Paul makes a very wonderful declaration of his affections. He says, "For God is my witness, how greatly I long after you all in the tender mercies of Jesus Christ." In the Greek, there is no verb. It simply says, "For God my witness." When the Greek talks like that, it's because it wants to punch something. It just drops the verb, and when the verb is dropped, then something stands out. You know that this fellow is saying something, and he wants to hit you with it. "For God my witness." Furthermore it is "the God" which means it is God the Father. The word "witness" is "martus" which incidentally gives us our English word "martyr"--a person who witnesses even unto death. This again is a legal term. Paul has been popping Greek legal language at us, and this is another one. This is the word used for a person who is called up to the witness stand and is to confirm or is to deny a testimony.

So Paul here is stressing his own truthfulness by calling upon the very character of God to confirm what he says as to how he feels on the inside toward these Philippians. They can't see the inside. They can't see his thinking. They can't see his emotions. So he says, "I now call upon God whose character does not permit Him to lie. You Philippians know well the essence of God. Therefore, the God who has that kind of character, I call upon to witness my statement to you before Him that I tell you the truth as to how I feel about you." How did he feel? He says, "I long after you in the tender mercies of Christ." The word "greatly" is not in the Greek. "Long after you" is "epipotheo." This is from the preposition "epi" which means "upon," and "potheo" is a verb which means "to miss" or "to long for" someone. When you put it together, it means "to miss and long upon" for someone. It makes it very intensive. He misses these people in a significant way. Thereby he is reflecting his feeling of love for them. The love that Paul has for the Philippian Christians, he specifies, is not something that he simply humanly cooks up. In other words, it's not sentimentality.

**Sentimentality**

A lot of love that exists between Christians is sentimentality. Sentimentality is based upon compatibility of old sin natures. I meet your old sin nature; you meet my old sin nature; I like your old sin nature; and, your old sin nature doesn't scrape against my old sin nature. Therefore, we are pretty nice old sin natures, and we get along together. This other character, he's kind of a fink. His old sin nature scrapes against mine, and I don't like to be around him. That's sentimentality. However, if you change your old sin nature, then I'm going to lose my sentimentality toward you because you're going to be a fink too. That's how compatibility on the basis of old sin natures goes. What Paul is talking about here is something, he says, that's bigger than that. This isn't just because my sin nature is compatible with your sin nature. He says, "When I tell you that I long for you; when I tell you that I miss you; and, when I say to you that I would like to see you again," that's what comes in when you love somebody. One of the factors that constantly comes up is, "I sure would like to see that person."

Paul says that the love that he has is the very love of Christ. The Greek uses the word "splagchanon." "Splagchanon" is kind of a hard word to translate. It is an interesting Greek word. What it means is "inward parts," "intestines," or "entrails." The apostle Paul is saying, "I long for you with the intestines and entrails--the inward parts of Jesus Christ." That's literally what it's saying. That doesn't make too much sense to us. This word is used in Acts 1:18. This very word is used to describe to you what happened to Judas when he split asunder, and his inward parts poured out of him.

**Emotions**

This is because, in the ancient world, they viewed the body organs as the seat of the feelings of our emotions: our feelings of kindness; benevolence; and, affection. Therefore, this is all figurative language. In other words, when we think about where our emotions lie, we center on the organ of the heart. We speak about feeling something with our heart. Well, in the ancient world, they didn't view the heart so much as they did the internal organs like the liver; the stomach; the intestines; the bowels; and, the lungs. All of these were viewed more as the place where a person felt things and where his emotions lay.

So the word "viscera" is kind of a summary word for these things. This to them meant the place of feelings. Our old King James Version originally had the word "bowels of mercy." The Revised Scofield Edition has "tender mercies." However, that's really an interpretive word--tender mercies. That's trying to convey what the figurative language means rather than the actual thing that it is saying. Well, the idea is that he has a deeply felt affection (a strong love), and a deep emotion accompanies this.

The ancients were not too far off in thinking about the internal organs in this way. As you know, our feelings do affect the internal organs or the body, and it's not unreasonable to associate the two. The emotions of sadness and grief will cause you to lose appetite. When you are under great stress, you don't feel like eating because your emotions have affected a bodily organ. Part of our nervous system is called the autonomic nervous system. It does not reflect something that we control. It is automatic. If we come under a crisis or a fear, the autonomic nervous system simply jumps in; pours adrenaline into the body; and, sets the body for a crisis situation. You feel this internally in one way or another.

Therefore, he is saying here simply the deep emotions, which they viewed as residing in these organs, the emotion of love and particularly the love of Jesus Christ. Paul's love for the Philippians is really the love of Jesus Christ working through Paul. This is the love that is the fruit of the spirit in Galatians 5:22. Paul's love is flowing because he has that spiritual maturity structure in his soul as a result of his positive response to the Word of God, so he can love his Philippian friends. The expression of love flows from the capacity that doctrine gives us. In other words, it is doctrine that creates the capacity of love in the soul. If you don't have this capacity, then you come up with a pseudo fake love. Don't think that socializing with somebody is loving them. There are some people that think if we socialize with one another, then we show each other that we love one another. However, unbelievers can do that, and any nightclub can do that, and it doesn't show love at all.

It is the Word of God that enables you and me to adjust ourselves to God so that we're able to love Him, and therefore He can also be our friend. Unless you adjust yourself to your husband, you cannot love him. A wife who will not adjust herself to her husband cannot love him. She is told in the Word of God to respond to her husband. She is told to fall into line. "Hupotasso" is the word. It's a military term. It means to fall in line or to line up under him. If she refuses to do it, she's not ready to be a wife, and she has no business walking down the aisle. Unless she is willing to adjust to her husband, she cannot love him. How can she adjust to her husband unless she gets to know him? Well, if she has been fooling around during the dating period and getting physical right off the bat, she certainly hasn't gotten to know him. There are all kinds of things about him that she has not learned, but that she learns later to her regret. Then she finds, "I don't want to adjust to these things in this man. Consequently, she has a problem in loving him.

As we learn doctrine, we come to understand God. As we come to understand God, our positive volition says, "I adjust to Him," or my negative volition says, "No, I won't." So we love Him, or we don't love Him, accordingly. A simple definition of love is simply this. What is love? Love is the fulfillment of God's commandments (John 14:23-24). That's why we tell you that nobody can love who does not know the Word of God. He has to fall back on pseudo love which simply is the old sin nature cranking out a contaminated emotion. Paul tells us that love flows from a pure heart (that is, a mind); a good conscience; and, faith that is not hypocritical. These three requisites of love are impossible from the old sin nature. They are impossible for the unbeliever. Love flows from a pure mind, a good conscience, and faith that is not hypocritical. The natural man can never keep his mind pure; he cannot keep his conscience good; and, he cannot keep his faith without hypocrisy. These only come from our instruction in the Word of God.

**Love for Friends**

Therefore, let's look now to tie this up with the doctrine of love for friends. Paul could say, "I have a great longing and a love for you people as my friends in the congregation at Philippi.

1. There are three kinds of love. "Eros" is one of the Greek words--the "eros" love from which we get the English word "erotic." This is sexual love. This word is never used in the Bible. That's not because the Bible is against sexual love, but it has not included that word. It has covered it under the other two words. One of the other words is "philos" which means "compatibility" or "rapport" which is expressed in emotions. "Philos" love is a compatibility expressed in emotions. Then the third type is "agape" love which is a mental attitude of goodwill which is not expressed with an emotional element, but simply is an attitude of the mind.
2. The unbeliever, as well as the Christian, can participate in all three kinds of love. Whether you are a Christian or an unbeliever, you can participate in "eros," "philos," or "agape" love. It doesn't matter whether you are a believer or an unbeliever. There is a certain difference in the outcome of these three, whether you are a believer or unbeliever. In the unbeliever, the source of these three will be the old sin nature, whereas in the believer, the source of these three will be God the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Spirit-filled believer produces all three by means of God the Holy Spirit, and so his love is divine love. That's what you have in Galatians 5:22. The unbeliever produces these three from the old sin nature, so his love is human love. When a believer is not Spirit-filled, he also produces human love in these three categories. Then his "eros," "philos," and "agape" is simply human love. However, God has designed the believer to operate on sexual love; on emotional expression; and, on mental attitude free of bitterness. All three He has designed that God the Holy Spirit should produce these in you. Then it is divine love.
3. "Agape" love is produced only in the mind of the soul by the filling of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). That means there are no mental attitude sins that you have not confessed in your mind, and you have a respect for the volition and privacy of others. You are not a pushy Christian. This is speaking about Christians. For the Christian, "agape" love is produced by God the Holy Spirit.
4. "Philos" love is the filling of the Holy Spirit plus Bible Doctrine applied. This is love flowing from all the facets of your soul. It is love flowing from your mind; from your will; and, from your emotions. Your self-awareness is occupied with Christ. Your conscience is operating on divine standards. "Philos" love requires the application of doctrine which you have learned. You cannot have "philos" love without knowing doctrine (for it to be divine love). You can have "philos" love without doctrine, but it's just a human cranked out production. It's the kind of thing that you see on your television screens, and that the Hollywood motion pictures seek to portray. This is entirely a "philos" love apart from a divine origin. Without doctrine, you cannot operate on "philos" love. It is the fulfillment of God's commandments.
5. "Agape" and "philos" are both expressed toward God and toward people. This includes people in the form of your friends, as well as your husband or wife. A Christian is to express "agape" love toward all people. This kind of love can be commanded, and it is. "Philos" love is toward God and toward some people. It cannot be commanded. However, you must have "agape" love before you can have "philos" love toward a person. You cannot have an emotional attachment of love to a person until you have a mental attitude free of bitterness toward that person. "Philos" love toward God is the result of using the grace system of learning doctrine. You inhale doctrine into the soul, and you establish rapport with God.

"Philos" love towards your friends or toward your mate means that you have two people who are thinking, loving, talking, and living Bible doctrine. Unless they are doing that, they do not have rapport. This compatibility is built around doctrine. Otherwise, you're building the compatibility around your old sin nature. "Philos" love is based upon the status of your mind. You have to have this relaxed mental attitude--mental attitude love. Otherwise, it doesn't work. Husbands and wives are told in the Word of God they are to share both "agape" and "philos" love (Song of Solomon 5:16).

Sometimes a woman does not appreciate when a man tells her, "You know, I not only love you, but I like you." You don't know what a great compliment that is sometimes. Somebody comes up and says, "I not only love, you but I like you." What he is telling you is that, "I not only love you. I not only have 'agape' mental attitude love. I don't have any bitterness, grudges, or real feelings against you. That's not that I don't have cause for them, but I've forgiven whatever cause I have, so I'm not hung up toward you in anything. But I also have a "philos" emotional attachment toward you. I like you." That's what like means. "I also have enough Bible doctrine, and you have enough Bible doctrine, that we've got a rapport and a compatibility, and I like you."

You might say, "Well, my goodness, if that's true, that really limits my circle of friends." That's right. You're going to have a lot of acquaintances, but you're going to have yourself only a handful of friends. If you move in circles where doctrine is taught, your circle of friends is going to be larger. But it takes "agape" love first; then it takes "philos" love which is functioning on doctrine; and, then you have the ground for two people to get together on a compatible basis. The Word of God says that husbands and wives should not only love each other, they should also like each other. The divine love of one believer for another is to glorify God and not man, and this is how it's done.

1. Love for friends can be either for male or female by both sexes. This is in contrast to the love for the opposite sex which is a one-to-one relationship. Love for friends involves only the soul, while love for your husband or wife involves the soul and body. In the case of the Christians, it involves spirit, soul, and body between a husband and wife. In the case of Christian friends, their "philos" love attachment includes spirit and soul--the two of them. Therefore, on this basis, lesbianism and homosexuality are not simply sicknesses, as psychiatry might tell us, but they are downright sexual perversions. It is violating the ground of relationship between friends. That relationship has to be a soul relationship. If Christians, then its soul and spirit.

So in love for friends, you can have any number of objects of that love. However, when you have a love for your mate, it's only a single object of love. But it is God's will for believers that they should love each other (1 John 4:11).

1. Love for friends creates stability and power in one's life. 2 Samuel 1:26 tells you about the tremendous relationship between David and Jonathan, and the stability that came in the lives of both of them under very trying situations (Proverbs 17:17, Proverbs 27:9-17, John 15:13, Galatians 5:14).
2. Love for friends creates a relaxed and happy environment (Romans 13:10, Proverbs 10:12). When you are with a true friend with whom you exchange "philos" love, on the basis of having previously established the "agape" love toward one another, you don't have to be on your guard against that person. People we cannot trust are not our friends. They're just acquaintances. Sooner or later you discover that there are some people you cannot trust. You are on guard in their presence, and you are careful what you say.
3. Love for your friends is free from hypocrisy (Romans 12:9, Proverbs 27:6).
4. Love for friends is outgoing and objective rather than self-centered and hypersensitive (Galatians 5:13, 2 Samuel 1:26). Subjective hypersensitive people have trouble making friends. They like to use their friends for ego satisfaction, and that drives their friends away. Self-pity because you like friends discourages people from wanting to be your friend.
5. Love for friends among Christians motivates grace orientation in their dealings with one another (Philemon 9-12).
6. Love for friends is motivated to give on the basis of one's capacity to love (1 Samuel 18:1-4). Love is an act of grace giving, so there are no strings attached. You cannot buy love.
7. Love between friends has enemies which can destroy it. You always have enemies who can destroy genuine rapport relationships between friends. These enemies are mental attitude sins (Job 19:19). They are sins of the tongue (Proverbs 16:28, Provers 17:9). They are false doctrine or ignorance of doctrine which results in pseudo spirituality, legalism, and emotional domination of your soul.
8. Love for friends can be counterfeited (Proverbs 19:6-7). This is a pseudo friendship, and those are the people you want to watch out for. Spot them, and recognize that you do not really have a compatibility ground with that person who is acting so friendly. That is a common practice among Bible Christians, and it is a false faith front that they are encouraged to put on in order to show that they love the Lord.
9. Loss of friends is a part of extreme divine discipline (Psalm 38:11, Psalm 88:18). You find yourself longing for people that are no longer your friends--that God has removed. It may be a signal that it is part of discipline that He has placed upon you.
10. Finally, a right relationship in the human race is based upon a right relationship with God. The apostle Paul had a great confidence in these believers because of what God had begun in them. He had seen that the grace that carried him through his bonds; through his imprisonment; through his defense; and, through his confirmation of the gospel and the victory he won in that court case, they were partakers of it. They would share the reward with him in heaven. Because they had stood by him; because of the kind of people they were; and, because of their response to the Word, he found himself with a deep-seated affection toward them as his friends in the Lord.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)