***The Apostle's Prayer, No. 2 - PH15-02

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:9-11***

This is the apostle's prayer, part two. We are still looking at Philippians 1:9-11. Verse 9 introduces Paul's petitions which, in verse 4, he says that he offers in behalf of the Philippian Christians. These petitions were items of considerable importance because they were indicative to us of the things for which Paul takes the trouble to pray in behalf of a group of people who live in a society very similar in many respects to ours, in its state of advancement and its sophistication politically, socially, and economically. The petition that we looked at first of all, that he presents in verse 9, is for their divine "agape" love which is something that people are not born with. "Agape" love can be a human product which is simply a mental attitude free of an area of bitterness, or it can be a divine product. He is speaking about a divine "agape" love not, just something that a human being has. This also applies to the other type of love, the "philos" love which is an emotional quality. This too can be divine in its production, or it can be human.

We tried to show you last time that the world is destroying itself with human "agape" and human "philos" love. Consequently, it is disoriented to reality, and is in fact therefore a satanic kind of love. We tried to show you how this kind of human love on a governmental level affects the lives of all of us in many ways that are really almost beyond our control.

So in verse 9 Paul says, "And this I pray, that your love may abound more and more." We have pointed out that this is a prayer directed to God. This Greek word for prayer is a prayer to God as such, and its purpose is that their love, which is of the "agape" type (that is of the mental attitude free of bitterness type) may abound. The word "may abound" is "perisseuo." This word means to exceed a fixed number or measure. In other words, there is an overabundance. There is a surplus of this kind of love. It is present tense which means that he's continually praying that their divine love would expand. It's active which means you must do your own loving. Somebody else cannot expand this kind of love for you in your own soul. It is not what is attractive to somebody else. It is what your soul is drawn to. It is subjunctive which means that it's potential. It depends on the extent of your own capacity to enter in through the Word of God into this kind of love.

He prays that it may abound yet more and more which is simply a Greek idiom for expansion. It is a growing tidal wave of divine viewpoint oriented mental attitude love. This is the Bible's way of saying, "What the world needs is love." However, this is a love which has a control factor on it. This I pray to the God who is out there and listening, that your mental attitude divinely produced "agape" love may abound like a flood tide growing more and more in knowledge and in judgment.

This word knowledge is "epignosis." "Epignosis" means full knowledge. It is that knowledge that you have learned as the result of instruction, and which you have gone positive toward--which you believe and which you accept. Consequently, this is knowledge which is stored in your human spirit. The capacity to abound in divine "agape" love is governed by your progress in learning the Word of God, in other words. The basis for erecting a spiritual maturity structure in your soul (one of the facets of which is the capacity to love) is the learning of the Word of God. So your capacity to love does not depend upon experience. Many a young woman has been duped by some con artist who is getting physical with her under the guise that she would learn what love is about if she would permit him a physical experience with her. The love that God has for us is not learned through experience. It is a capacity which is developed as a result of knowing the Word of God. "Epignosis" then produces the experience of true love. It is this kind of knowledge that will govern our love and protect us from the madness that I've been trying to describe to you which is permeating our society under the form of the destructive human oriented love. This, in other words, gives us divine viewpoint direction.

He also prays that this love would be governed by judgment. This is the Greek word "aisthesis." "Aisthesis" means perception. Here it says under divine viewpoint discernment. Spiritual good judgment, when it comes to love, is an imperative. Love which lacks the perception of the Holy Spirit gravitates toward pseudo objects and toward human viewpoint objects of love.

**Paul's First Petition**

This is a prayer for discrimination, in other words, in love which is the only kind of love that God honors. In all things, he says, we are to have a discriminating love. Therefore, in verse 9, Paul's petition (his first one) is this: for a continual expansion in divine mental attitude "agape" love, but one which is governed by full knowledge of doctrine stored in the human spirit, and by the consequent spiritual discernment for expressing this love in all situations. If you want to be a person who loves the way God loves, then learn the word; believe the word; and, start acting upon the Word of God, and you will have a divine viewpoint knowledge your spirit which will guide you to a discernment and a good judgment in the objects of your love; in the treatment of your finances; of your time; and, in the investment of yourself as governed by the motivation of love. If you do not have this, you will fall into self-destructive courses.

This kind of love will abound in 3 directions. We have already looked at the abounding of this love toward friends, and we have already summarized that for you. However, I would like to summarize briefly the doctrine of love for God. This is one direction in which this outlook--this mind attitude of love--will be expressed.

**Love for God**

1. Love for God is commanded in Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:5, Deuteronomy 10:12, Deuteronomy 11:1). This is something more than standing up in church and singing, "Oh, How I love Jesus." The person who can stand in church and sing, "Oh, How I love Jesus" may be the greatest hater of the Lord that ever walked into that place. Unless you have the capacity which the Word of God builds in you to know God so that you can love Him, it's useless for you to stand around and mouth words like that.
2. Therefore, no one can love God until he is born again. Before salvation, we are attracted by the Holy Spirit to the Savior (John 6:44, John 12:32). At the point of salvation, we enter position love of Christ for God. Because we are in Christ, we share His love for the Father. After salvation, our love is expressed, first of all, in the filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:2, 18), and then it reaches a maximum level of love toward God through our spiritual maturity (Ephesians 3:17-19, 1 John 4:17-18).
3. Capacity to love God comes from learning doctrine through the use of the grace system of perception. That's what capacity comes from (Colossians 3:1-2, Philippians 1:9, 2 Timothy 1:13).
4. Jesus Christ is the aggressor, and our love for God is in response to Him (Ephesians 5:25-27, 1 John 4:8-19. This, of course, is comparable to the relationship between a right man and his right woman. He is the aggressor, and she is the responder. Jesus Christ initiated his love in eternity past, and that aggression is called grace. So grace is the expression of divine love, and we respond to that love. He is the aggressor, and we are the responders.
5. A believer who does not love Jesus Christ is under a special curse and continual discipline (1 Corinthians 16:22). There you have the phrase which means "accursed till our Lord comes." Ignoring Bible study will create this indifference toward love of the Lord Jesus Christ. When you don't love Him, you will have all kinds of false objects that you will love.
6. Love for God is the true motivation for Christian service (2 Corinthians 5:14-16). This is why so many pastors have so much trouble getting people to serve in the local church ministry. He is trying to get them to serve on the basis of some motivation other than their love for the Lord. The love for the Lord cannot be developed until they have learned enough of the Word of God to become acquainted with the Lord so that they can learn to love Him. That's how the capacity develops.
7. Divine love is the expression of God's grace. Therefore, one's depth of love for the Lord is intensified by orientation to grace. The more grace oriented you are, the greater is your love for the Lord (Psalm 119:132, 1 Corinthians 2:9).
8. Love for God is the basis for personal blessing and happiness (Deuteronomy 30:16-20). The people who really love the Lord are the happiest people around.
9. Love for God provides courage in battle (Joshua 23:10-11). The soldier on the field of battle who does his job in combat the best is the one who is most deeply in love with the person of God.
10. God is invisible, so we can only see Him through His Word as the object of our love (1 Peter 1:8). We cannot love Him whom we have not seen unless we know about Him through His Word.

**Love for Your Mate**

Then the direction of this "agape" love for which Paul prays not only goes first toward God and toward our friends, but it also goes toward our particular man or our particular woman--that man or woman that you marry, or that man or woman that you may someday marry that is in your future. Therefore, let's summarize love for your right man or right woman.

1. This is defined as love for a particular member of the opposite sex. It was designed by God in eternity past. God has designed the one person for you to have this kind of love toward in eternity past.
2. Love for your opposite number is as final as death, and it cannot be quenched by the pressures of life (Song of Solomon 8:6-7). There is something very terminal about death, and there is something very terminal about finding the right person that God has designed for you. You never go any further. You never look any further. It's the end of the line.
3. Love for a particular man or woman excludes all others from that type of love (Proverbs 5:18-19). It includes, consequently, exclusive body love to that one right person. Divine sex love can only be found with one person. All the rest is human love, and merely a physiological experience. While the world calls it love, it is not that in the true meaning of the word.
4. Love for your particular man or woman produces a relationship which is satisfying apart from other factors (Proverbs 15:17). It is, in other words, a self-sustaining love. It needs nothing else to provide you with happiness. Even unbelievers, when they find their right person, have a certain satisfying happiness as a result of that.
5. Love for the right man or woman is a fragrant memory when you are separated (Song of Solomon 1:13). It is a source of protection when you're together (Song of Solomon 2:4).
6. Right man and right woman love illustrates the relationship that the believer has with the Lord (Ezekiel 16:8, Ephesians 5:23-33). He is the head, and we are we the responder.
7. Mental attitude sins are destructive to love for the right man or woman (Song of Solomon 8:7). You and I as Christians possess all the factors that are necessary for producing true love, but mental sins will destroy those factors so that they are ineffective. Mental attitude sins are the worst kind.
8. Love for a particular man and woman is the provision of God's grace (Proverbs 18:22). If you are married to the wrong person, you will recognize then how true that is, and what a grace it is.
9. God has set aside the right time in life for love for the opposite number (Ecclesiastes 3:8). Here is one of the things that many parents fail to teach their children--that there is a right time. Many a young person barges into marriage at the wrong time, and marriage to the right person at the wrong time undermines your happiness. God has set a right time in your life for that move.
10. The woman is the responder in love with her right man, and this must be learned (Titus 2:4). A woman has to learn how to be a responder. Her old sin nature fights her. Her old sin nature expresses itself in the women's lib concept that she is to be an aggressor and not a responder. Some women are raised with the idea that they enter a committee relationship with their husband. He has one vote, and she has one vote (or maybe one-and-a-quarter, in case it comes out a tie so somebody can break it). This is soul training that a woman needs--not physical training. Man is the aggressor. We are not told that he is to be trained to respond. He is called a lover. A man is never told to respond to a woman. He is told to love her. It is a very foolish wife who falls into the habit of giving her husband directions. If you're with people, you can spot a wife like that. He'll be doing something, and just out of the blue (and it might be the most inconsequential trivial thing), she'll give him directions: "Turn here. Pull up there. That's a good spot. Pull in there. Don't do it that way. Let me show you how to do this."

I don't care if he's a big stumble bum. I don't care if he's hanging the picture upside down. Let him hang it upside down. A little later on, say, "Don't you think it might look better if we put it this way?" He'll think it over and turn it over. You were right all along. Sure, you're right. Have you ever known when you were wrong, ladies? Of course, you're right. That's not the point. The point is that you play a fool's game to be giving directions to your husband. Remember Abraham and Sarah finally came to great spiritual maturity. They got the thing in its right relationship when it came to the roles they had to play in marriage. You remember that Sarah called Abraham, "Lord." But, by the same token, he called her, "Princess." So don't forget that that's the relationship. You are foolish to try to be giving him directions because the minute you do that, you ask him to be a responder. You know where it started. That's exactly what Eve did. The first time Eve ever gave directions to her husband was at that tree. That's the first time she ever told Adam what to do. Because he didn't handle the problem right then, the whole human race, subsequently, got into fantastic difficulties that we're under today.

**Paul's Second Petition**

In verse 10, Paul says, "That you may approve things that are excellent." Here is the second petition. The word "that" is a little Greek "eis" which simply indicates the result. He is praying for this result--"that you may approve things that are excellent." The word "approve" is the word "dokimazo." It means to test with a view to approving something. Satan never tests this way. We are told how Satan tests, or sometimes it's translated "attempts." It is never "dokimazo." When Satan comes into the picture, he does it in a different way. He does it with "peirazo." "Peirazo" is a test to see what is good or what is bad. It is an attempt to see what he can discover, in his case, for what is evil--for what he can work with. This is in the present tense, so it's a continual evaluation that we need as believers to be able to approve what is good. It's an active thing from our own souls, and it's infinitive which is his purpose in praying. His purpose is that these Philippian Christians would have some good judgment when it came to evaluating things, and to recognize what is excellent and what is sub-excellent. It refers to spiritual good judgment, so that you will approve after testing what is God's choice.

It says, "Things that are excellent." This is the Greek word "diaphero." It means things of greater value. In the Greek, it has the little article "the" because it is emphasizing specific things that we must make decisions on. So, divine love in a Christian is going to give a person a taste for things that are excellent rather than things that are of the inferior values, or things that are approved by society and your peers. It refers to a finer distinction of values than the person of the world is ever able to make. Only a Christian can have this discernment, and he can have it constantly. He can choose the excellent; that is, the eternal values over against the passing temporal.

The goal of this is excellence--"that you may approve things that are excellent that you may be sincere (without offense), till the day of Christ." "That you may be" indicates another result. It is the word "hina." "That you may be" is simply a word of status--a situation. It is present, so it is a constant state for these Christians. It is active, that they would seek it. It is subjunctive--maybe they will and maybe they won't. What is it he wants? For them to be sincere. Sincere people are usually very dangerous people. Sincere people are those who operate on human love and that's why they get us and themselves in such trouble.

What I have been describing to you in these case examples out of our government is the result of sincerity. However, this is not what the Bible means here. The word sincere is "eilikrines." This comes from two words. The first part comes from a word meaning "sun." The second part comes from a word which means "to judge." Therefore, what the word means is "judged in the sun," or it comes out meaning, in use, "something which is pure or unmixed." That is, a Christian's life is to be free from hypocrisy and deceit, for which the Lord will judge him at the "bema," the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is divine love operational in the life of a Christian that enables him to have the spiritual discernment to invest his life in the Lord's worthy choices. It protects him from being cheap and from being mixed with the world's values. In other words, Bible doctrine is the sunlight which creates the judgment for these choices. Christians can see things as they are.

This is so that he may be without offense. This is the Greek word "aproskopos." This means "not causing to stumble." Sometimes it means not causing yourself to stumble. Sometimes it means not causing other people to stumble. In 1 Corinthians 10:32, it has stumbling in reference to others. In Acts 24:16, it's passive. It's stumbling in reference to yourself. Here it probably means stumbling in reference to yourself because it's tied with the day of Christ judgment that we are to face. You may compare that with verse 6.

Therefore, what we have here is the desire on the part of the apostle Paul that we may have a capacity to have a discernment to approve the things that are of real value in our lives and pursue those, so that we may be standing in the sunlight, unmixed with all the false values that our society imposes upon us, so that we may be without offense. We may be unashamed when we stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ and our works are judged. He says, "I don't want any of you Christians in Philippi to be humiliated when you stand in the Lord's present. That would be terrible."

Therefore, the first request he makes is that their divine "agape" love may expand. The second request he makes is that they would have such discernment through the Word of God that their choices would be centered upon things that they would never be ashamed of and regret when they stood before the Lord. They would not be mixing the world's values with theirs.

**Paul's Third Petition**

The third petition is in verse 11: "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God." This is the third petition which is for the Christians good works. "Being filled" is the Greek word "pleroo." This means to fill up a deficiency, and here the deficiency is good production which cannot be done apart from the Holy Spirit. It's in the perfect tense which means permanent results of these actions here in verses 9 and 10. If you have abounding love, and if you have a discerning quality that you develop (the quality of discernment), then you will also be producing divine good works. Passive means that it will flow out of these factors under the work of the Spirit of God. It is a participle so a divine principle is stated. This Christian is to be fully possessed and fully influenced by the quality of divine good production. His love for God, mate, and friends cannot be seen. What he does with his life can be seen. Therefore, this love is seen in its effects--the effects of divine good production. It flows from really loving God and really being oriented to the Word of God. It's not something you crank up.

**Divine Good**

The fruits of righteousness refer to divine good. Here are a few points, just to summarize the idea of divine good works:

1. There are 3 sources of divine good. First, there is the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is all a baby believer can do. Secondly, it's doctrine stored as full knowledge in our human spirits. The adolescent Christian has that along with the filling. Then when you become a mature Christian, you add a third source of divine good, and that's a spiritual maturity structure in the soul.
2. The grace system of perception (that is, learning doctrine) is the means for creating the sources producing divine good (Colossians 1:9-10, 2 Timothy 2:21, 2Timothy 3:17, Titus 2:7).
3. Divine good works represent the Christian's victory in the angelic warfare (Romans 12:21).
4. Salvation is the product of divine good alone (Romans 4:4-5).
5. The believer is the product of divine grace for the purpose of producing divine good (2 Corinthians 9:8, Ephesians 2:10).
6. The production of divine good requires stability in the Christian's life (2 Thessalonians 2:17). If you want to get yourself out of being useful to the Lord and out of His service, just go unstable.
7. Divine good will be rewarded by God (1 Corinthians 3:12-14).
8. The opposite of divine good is human good works from the old sin nature. Here he calls divine good the fruits of righteousness. The opposite is our human works. Human good is classified as dead works (Hebrews 6:1). Human good flows from the old sin nature. It is never acceptable to God. Human good has no place in the plan of God (2 Timothy 1:9). Salvation does not come through human good works (Titus 3:5). The believer's human good is disposed of at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). The unbeliever's human good is judged at the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). So, God is going to deal with the human factor all around. Human good, finally, is to be distinguished from morality (Romans 13:4-5).

So verse 11 says, "Being filled with the divine good works" (which we have a way of producing). "Which are" is not in the Greek. It is simply, "by Jesus Christ." Christ is the divine instrument for the production of divine good. "Unto the glory (that is, to the honor and adoration) and the praise of God" (to God's credit). Christian service that exalts the servant is suspect. Christian service that is genuine gives the Lord the glory and the praise.

So, here are three prayer requests, and you may pray these for yourselves, and you may pray these for one another, for your brethren in Christ. These are three strategic requests. The first request is that your divine "agape" love may mount increasingly like a tidal wave, getting bigger and bigger and bigger. Request number two is that you have a discriminating spiritual taste so that you can identify the things in your life that are the most excellent and most desirable for the investment of your life, and that which is trash and of passing importance, and which will be hay, wood, and stubble at the Judgment Seat of Christ in the day of Christ, the day of the rapture, when you must face the Lord concerning your life. This is to be able to tell the difference. Prayer request number three is that out of these two things will flow divine good production from your life. You'll just become a river that is producing that which is blessing to yourself; blessing to this world; and, giving orientation to a world which is deluded by the human love concepts. This is so that the Lord Jesus Christ is honored and praised, and God gets the credit for having produced something very fantastic in us. That's your calling. That's a good prayer to repeat.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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