

# Paul's Lockdown

A MIDWEEK STUDY IN PHILIPPIANS

WISE LOVE  
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Philippians 1:9-11  
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## Slide 3-5

### Slide 6

❖ **THE GREAT NEED FOR LOVE TO GROW** *Phil. 1:9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more...*

- Paul not only tells us he prays with joy (4), but he gives us the content of his prayer—more love.
  - It matches the prayers in Colossians 1:9ff and Ephesians 1:15ff; 3:14ff.
- The Philippians were loving, but their love was underdeveloped.
- With persecution from the outside and division on the inside, the Philippians needed more love.
  - Birthed in persecution (Acts 16; Phil.1:29-30).
  - Arguing & complaining (Phil.2:1-14; 4:2).
  - Experiencing a religious type of pressure to conform (Phil. 3).
  - Experiencing anxiety (Phil. 4:6) & perhaps \$ trouble (4:19).
  - Problems are often opportunities to discover more love.
- Paul wants their love to “overflow more and more” (super-abound) into acts of love. The Christian life is to be one of overflowing love.
  - “to abound, overflow, be more than enough” (*perisseuein*), describes our life.
  - 1Th. 3:12 ... *make your love increase and overflow for each other...*
  - Eph. 3:17 ...*I pray that you, being rooted and established in love...*
- God’s love, the overflowing love, is a unique type of love---*agape*.
  - Selfless love: based on giving not getting.
  - A free gift not performance-based or earned.
  - Intentional not whimsical.
  - A behavior not mere affection.
  - Love at its highest level is an intentional selfless act of faith.
- Step one in growing love is to become aware of the gap between my love and God’s; i.e. overwhelmed with God’s grace.

❖ **WISE LOVE DESCRIBED** *Phil 1:9 ...in knowledge and depth of insight.*

- Transformation seems to begin with *knowledge* and *insight* (cf. Col 1:9). What kind of knowledge? About people, about the world or about God?
- *Knowledge (epignosko)*- “intense or experiential or real knowledge.” God on the move—his will in everyday life.
  - It is more than knowledge *about* God.
  - It refers knowing God’s love personally by faith and objectively.
  - A deeper knowledge of God and his ways begins at conversion.
  - This is an awareness of God’s love revealed in Jesus Christ. Without knowledge, love is easily misguided (John 3:16; 1 Cor 13:4ff).
- *Depth of insight (eisthesis)*--“insight, experience, perception”
  - This word is used for *wisdom* and *knowledge* in Proverbs (LXX).
  - A similar request is in Col. 1:9: *He will fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.*

- Wisdom is knowledge applied;
  - Phil ch 2 is an example: 2:6ff is knowledge; 2:3-4 is wisdom.
- Knowledge is learning of God's nature and ways, wisdom is the moral insight learned through applying our knowledge to experience.

❖ **THE ETHICAL PURPOSE OF WISE LOVE** *Phil. 1:10 ... so that you may be able to discern what is best...*

- Wise love chooses the best action or the things that really count.
  - *dokimazo*- "put to the test, or to accept after testing."
  - *diapheronta*- "the things that differ, surpass, excel, stand out above"
- It is possible to have dumb or uninformed love (kneejerk action).
- Wise love learns from the Source (Jesus) then learns about the Object—the person being loved.
- Beware: wise love usually will cost you something (time, pride, your way, energy, money). But it will tie your heart to behavior—integrity.

❖ **THE SHINING RESULT OF WISE LOVE** *Phil 1:10... and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ --to the glory and praise of God.*

- We Shine like Christ (pure without offense---the real deal).
  - Stars (Phil. 2:15).
  - "spotless, tried or tested." (*eilikrines*) The real deal.
  - "blameless, without offense," (passive), or not causing an offense (active)." (*aproskopos*).
- With a view of Jesus' return. An act of love for Christ.
  - That day will be a day of scrutiny.
  - That day gives a seriousness to Christian ethics (behavior).
- *Filled with the fruit of righteousness*
  - This is the fruit of faith; i.e. changed lives, which Paul has in mind.
  - God is the source of righteousness and it returns to him for His glory.
- Wise love ties us both to the cross and to the return of Christ.

❖ **THINKING IT THROUGH**

- When you hear the words in verse 9, "abound more and more" what picture or substance do you think of? How is love like this?
- Often we only learn "about God" instead of experiential knowledge of God that is life changing? How do we change that?
- Have you ever loved "dumbly?" Have you ever bought or done something for someone that they didn't want or need?
- What happens when you are displaying wise love and they aren't?
- Wise love usually costs something: time, effort, \$, attention, etc. Why is that the case? Why isn't it always easy?
- Explain how wise love ties us both to the cross and to Christ's return.