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a *Grace Notes* course

## **Philippians**

### **Lesson 1: Philippians 1:1-11**

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*Grace Notes*

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# Philippians

## Lesson 1

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## Philippians

### Course Outline

There are ten (10) lessons in the Philippians course. Each lesson has a Quiz, to be completed and returned to Grace Notes after studying the lesson. Here is a list of the Philippians portion to be studied in each lesson.

<b>Lesson 1</b>	<b>Philippians 1:1-11</b>
Lesson 2	Philippians 1:12 to 26
Lesson 3	Philippians 1:27 to 2:8
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Lesson 8	Philippians 3:17 to 4:5
Lesson 9	Philippians 4:6-9
Lesson 10	Philippians 4:10-23

### Instructions for Completing the Lessons

Begin each study session with prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who makes spiritual things discernable to Christians, so it is essential to be in fellowship with the Lord during Bible study.

Read the whole book of Titus often. It is a short book, and reading it many times will help you understand the story much better.

#### Instructions

1. Study each topic carefully. Take particular care to trace all of the discussion through all of the Bible passages which are included. **Review** all of the notes in the all of the topics. **Some Quiz questions will be taken from the Scripture passages which are called out in the lesson.**
2. Go to the Quiz page and follow the instructions to complete all the questions on the quiz. The quiz is “open book”. You may refer to all the notes and to the Bible when you take the test. But you should not get help from another person.
3. When you have completed the Quiz, be sure to **SAVE your file**. If the file is lost, and that can happen at Grace Notes as well, you will want to be able to reproduce your work.
4. To send the Quiz back to Grace Notes, follow the instructions on the Quiz page.

**Philippians 1:1-3**

Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,

**“I thank my God”**

Of the letters that Paul wrote, six of them were written from prison. It is an astonishing thought to think of how much of Paul's writing ministry took place in jail. He wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Hebrews (if Paul wrote Hebrews) and II Timothy while incarcerated. Paul would not let himself give way to self-pity. As a result we have this jubilant letter of joy.

1:3 begins the body of the letter, verses 1 and 2 were the salutation. This paragraph runs from verse 3 to 11, Paul's prayer for the saints.

Paul begins his prayer with thanksgiving. Whenever a group is worthy of his thanks he begins this way. There is only one group of churches for which Paul does not thank God--the Galatians. He just could not bring himself to thank God for them because of their doctrinal error.

**“upon every remembrance of you”**

“Every time I remember you, every time I think of you, I thank God.” Paul's capacity for thanks was vast. Paul and the Philippians were separated by hundreds of miles and for a number of years yet his faculty for thanking God for them remained. The Philippians must have been a wonderful church with a great testimony in order to impress Paul so much. It would be a wonderful thing for other people to say of us, “I thank God for that person. I thank God that I met them, what a blessing they have been to me.”

However, many of us have a testimony whereby people say, “I don't know what I did to have that person come across my path! I thank God that I can forget that person!” Every believer is either a blessing or a curse; a wing or a weight; an asset or a liability. We either help people in their Christian life or hinder them.

Remembering brought no regrets for Paul; he had only blessed memories. Do you have a capacity to give thanks? Do you thank God for your church? Do you thank God for individuals in your church?

“UPON” does not mean “at.” Paul does not thank God at every remembrance of the Philippians. It means “on the basis of.” That is, the Philippians form the basis for Paul's thanksgiving.

There were unpleasant memories in Philippi if Paul cared to dwell on them--the rage of the masters of the girl set free from demons and the conduct of the city officials and populace toward Paul. Currently two women were locked in a bitter battle (4:2). But, Paul chose not to remember the petty irritations. Gratitude springs out of what we choose to think about. A common fault of the believer is to fail to thank God for the common courtesies and favors of life.

**“every remembrance of you”**

The Greek indicates that Paul thanked God for his entire connection with them

**PRINCIPLE:** It is important to recognize our current blessings are from God. That recognition is a capacity or faculty for appreciation of what God has brought into our lives.

**APPLICATION:** The word “thank” is in the present tense in the Greek and indicates a constant thankfulness. Do we intentionally and on a daily basis develop our capacity for appreciation for what God is doing in our lives?

**Philippians 1:4**

“always in every prayer of mine making request for you with all joy.”

**“always”**

The word literally means “on all occasions.” It did not make any difference what the occasion was. Whatever it was, wherever it was made no difference to Paul. He was independent from his circumstances.

**“making request”**

The Greek indicates that prayer was regularly given by Paul for the Philippians. Paul was in the habit of praying for them.

**“for you”**

The word “for” means “on behalf of.” Paul was interceding for the Philippians. The prayer life of the apostle Paul was an incredible witness to his character. His prayers are constantly set forth in his epistles (Rom. 1:9; Eph 1:16; Co 1:3,9; I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:11; Philemon 4).

**“with joy”**

“Joy” is emphatic by position in the Greek sentence. For him to pray for the Philippians was a joy. Paul entered a spiritual rhapsody when he entered prayer for the Philippians. Prayer was no mechanical duty whereby he labored to find words or thoughts as he forced prayer for them.

This joy was not mere excitement; it was not a commonplace pedantic necessity of life. However, this joy was a serenity of spirit in the face of adverse circumstances in which he was confident God was able to manage the problems. While sitting in jail Paul could do little for the Philippians. Yet he enjoyed a serenity of spirit which drew its reliance upon God. Paul was the most content man in Rome much less the Roman jail! His joy was irrepressible.

The word “with” in “with joy” means “accompanying.” Joy had the company of prayer! Have you found joy in prayer?

**PRINCIPLE:** There is joy in prayer; therefore, there should be no reluctance and misgivings when we pray. We should have an attitude of expectation of God's intervention with accompanying joy.

**APPLICATION:** Have you evaluated your attitudes in prayer? Is it a duty or task? Is your attitude “accompanied by joy?”

**Philippians 1:5**

“For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now”

Paul is in the process of thanking God for the Philippians. He says, “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you...for your fellowship in the gospel...” One reason Paul thanked God was for the fellowship they had with him in getting the gospel out.

Of all the churches with which Paul was associated, it is quite obvious that the church at Philippi was the closest to his heart. He loved them all, but they loved him more than other churches did. “I wish I could be out of jail and be with you folks.”

**“for”**

“For” means “on the basis of.” Paul gave thanks on the basis of some substance. Paul's capacity for thanksgiving went beyond warm “fuzzies.” His love for them had a basis to it-- their participation in advancing the gospel.

**“fellowship”**

This word means “a community of interest, cooperation, share things in common.” The Philippian church participated in the gospel. Their interest was getting the gospel out. They cooperated in advancing the cause of Christ.

They had a partnership in the gospel. An old saying about fellowship among Christians is that it is “two fellows in one ship.” They had a partnership with Paul in getting the gospel out to the world. That is partnership in the gospel.

**“from the first day until now”**

This church supported the apostle Paul from the first day they met until the moment he was writing them sitting in jail. They never forgot him. They continued to support him. It is now over ten years later and their commitment is still faithful to him. No wonder he thanked God for them.

In the last chapter at verse ten Paul says, “But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.” (4:10-12) Paul is talking here about financial support. Of all the churches the Philippian church was the church that remembered that Paul had a stomach as well as a soul.

There were occasions when they lost track of him. But whenever they found him they supported him financially.

The Greek indicates that their commitment to him was unbroken--"until (the) now." In the Greek the word "now" has a definite article before it. This means right up to the moment Paul was sitting in jail they were still supporting him. They had sent a messenger from Philippi to give Paul financial support. That messenger almost lost his life in the process of doing so.

**PRINCIPLE:** Getting the gospel out requires joint participation. Paul views those of us who support messengers of the gospel as participating in evangelism.

**APPLICATION:** Have you given yourself to the missionary cause--heart and soul? What are you doing in a concrete manner to participate in advancing the gospel?

### Philippians 1:6

"Being confident of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ,"

#### "confident"

"I am persuaded of this. I am certain of this." Paul was certain that the God who launched a good work in the Philippians would continue it. When God begins the work of salvation in us he will finish it. God never starts anything that he cannot finish. When God begins a work in us he will see it through to completion.

God will either work in us or he will work on us but he will finish the job. He will finish it whether we want it finished or not! Once we have come to know Christ we cannot say, "stop the process, I want out." Paul says, "I am certain of this; this is not debatable; I am sure; I am confident."

It was this confidence that gave Paul joy. "Confidence" means to come to a conclusion based on a reasonable ground. God has taken care of billions of people over thousands of years and has not let one person down. Paul's confidence was in the capacity of God, not in men. The Greek tense indicates that this was a settled confidence in Paul's mind. Paul's faith in God's ability to finish what he starts did not waver.

#### "that he who has begun a good work in you"

God began it; God will finish it. At the point of salvation God did a complete job. In no way was it inadequate or incomplete. God did the most that he could for us in our salvation. Here is the principle of this passage: if God did the most for us at salvation when we were his enemies, what can he do now that we are his children? Answer: much more than the most. This is a paradox but note what he says in the next phrase.

#### "will complete it until..."

The word means "to bring to a completed end." God finishes what he starts. He puts his finishing touches on it.

Many people are bedeviled by the idea that God may lose control of their situation. But God will not give up on us. He will let us go about as far as a dog on a leash. When we run from the Lord and come to the end of our leash we come to a terrible jerk. "The Lord will perfect that which concerns me" (Ps. 138:8).

God is in the business of keeping regenerated people regenerated. There is the finished work of Christ and there is the unfinished work of Christ. "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. 5:10). "Shall be saved by His life" means that he is keeping saved people saved. What life is he talking about here? The life after Jesus died. His life in glory. The glorious life of the exalted Son of God will keep us saved from the power of sin. "Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25). This verse is speaking about saving a saint. He is living at this moment to save saints. Jesus saves us from both the penalty and the power of sin.

Once we have become part of the family of God there is no way we can become disowned. Once born we cannot become unborn. Your human father or mother may be disgraced by your life, but you are still their son or daughter. However, in the family of God we can go only so far and then God's loving discipline will go into effect.

God always finishes what he starts. This is the point of Paul's confidence. This is the place where we leave self confidence. Either God will finish it in time or in eternity, but he will finish it. Paul could leave that in God's hands.

**PRINCIPLE:** The unfinished work of Christ intercedes for us in time.

**APPLICATION:** Do we have confidence in Christ's present work for us? Can we trust him to intercede for whatever we are currently facing?

In the first part of verse six Paul expressed his confidence that God who had commenced a good work in them, the work of salvation, would consummate it all the way to the time when Jesus comes back again.

Now we come to the last part of verse six...

### **“until the day of Christ”**

The word “day” is used three ways in Scripture: a twenty-four hour day; less than a twenty-four hour day (when Jesus comes in a twinkling of an eye); more than a twenty-four hour period (Day of the Lord; millennium).

Grace is followed by “more grace.” In grace God saved us from the penalty of sin; in grace God saves us from the power of sin; in grace God saves us from the presence of sin. The “good work” which was begun at the cross will continue in time and on into eternity. That is “more grace.”

The expression “the day of Christ” occurs a half dozen times in the New Testament and three of those six occur in Philippians. It always refers to the time when Christ comes to catch the church away.

“...that you may be sincere and without offense 'till the day of Christ” (1:10).

“...holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain” (2:16).

“...eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Co. 1:7,8).

“...deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” (I Co. 5:5).

“...(as also you have understood us in part), that we are your boast as you also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus” (II Co. 1:14).

This is the day of the consummation of our salvation, the first resurrection; all of which takes place at the same time. This is the next day in God's prophetic program.

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:12).

This day is the same day of Ephesians 4:30, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” The “day of redemption” is the day of the redemption of our bodies. That is the day when our physical bodies will be redeemed. We will be saved physically then. That is the day we will receive everything the Saviour purchased on the cross. Right now we have spiritual redemption. In that day I will no longer need glasses or dentures or artificial limbs. Our body will be fashioned like his glorified body (Phil. 3:21).

**PRINCIPLE:** God has given us grace in our salvation but he is not finished with giving us grace. There is “more grace” yet for the Christian both in time and eternity.

**APPLICATION:** Do you always look to your past salvation? Do you look to your current and future salvation? God has given us more than one kind of grace.

### **Philippians 1:7**

“Just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace.”

### **“right for me to think”**

It is proper or fitting for Paul to think what he is thinking. “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7).

The word for “think” means to have in mind, to hold a mental attitude about something. Paul held an attitude toward the Philippians. An attitude is a habit of thinking. Paul had a habit of thinking about the subject of verse seven. He formed this

attitude based on divine viewpoint. That is why his attitude was proper. Without the Word of God he would not have standards or criteria by which he could form judgments about values. The measuring stick for forming attitudes in the Christian realm is God's Word. If we did not have a standard not only could we not distinguish between good and bad but we could not distinguish between good and good. We would not be able to put priority on important things. We need "the mind of Christ" (I Co. 2:16).

### **"because I have you in my heart"**

Paul had taught the Philippians and it was his responsibility to think about them. It is important for leadership to think about the people they lead in the light of the Word of God.

The word "heart" means the total person. This word means far more than the emotional life of the believer. In North American society we think of "heart" in terms of either Valentine's Day or the physical pump for the body. The biblical term means neither. Paul had thought about the Philippians in terms of his total person. He gave his total self to them.

In II Co. 7:3 Paul says, "I do not say this to condemn; for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together." Ministry was not just a job or profession to Paul. God's people were on Paul's heart. They had hold of him; they were part of him.

### **"inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel"**

"In my chains"--Paul was in prison.

Paul had the Philippians in his heart in two categories: in both the defense and confirmation of the gospel. The folks at Philippi were partners with Paul in defending the gospel and confirming the gospel. They were in it together. They were both on the same team.

Paul did not manufacture the message; he simply passed it on and they accepted it at face value. The message did for the Philippians what it did for Paul on the way to Damascus many years before. Now they are partners in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

The gospel is defended with words and confirmed with works. We defend the gospel with our lips and confirm the gospel with our life. It is one thing to speak the gospel; it is another thing to live it out. That is quite another matter. So there are two things that need to be done with the gospel: to affirm (defend) it and confirm it. To confirm the gospel means to ratify it, reinforce it, underscore it. We give credence to the gospel when we live the gospel; people are inclined to believe the gospel if they can see a demonstration of someone living the gospel.

What has the gospel done for you? Has the gospel transformed your way of living? Did the gospel ever help you? Yes? Then tell me how. This is what it means to bear a testimony. To confirm the gospel means to report what the gospel did for you. "Before I became a Christian I was thus and so and now that I am a Christian I am this." That is what it means to confirm the gospel.

"Confirmation" means guarantee, firm establishment or security. It means to establish something so that it becomes a guarantee or security. The gospel is secured guaranteed by our life.

**PRINCIPLE:** There are two aspects to sharing Christ: the lip and the life. Both are necessary to present a total package in our representation of Christ.

**APPLICATION:** Are we manifesting the gospel, confirming the gospel with a changed life? Do you give credence to the gospel?

### **"you all are partakers with me of grace."**

"Partakers" means partners. The Philippians were part of Paul's gospel team even though they were separated by hundreds of miles. God never intended that one individual do all the serving and producing. That is the point of the allocation of spiritual gifts to every believer. We are all partners and on the same team. That is why every believer is a priest and an ambassador of Christ. The life of every believer has definition and purpose.

There are not many Christian articles about the person who goes to work everyday and lives out his routine. No one writes about ordinary events: "The thrilling story of his ride downtown on the bus and how the air conditioning went out which

almost caused heat prostration!” No, people do not write about the daily routine. They are much more likely to write about an overseas adventure.

No matter how much monotony people may have in their life, if they are serving Jesus Christ, they are in partnership with believers all over the world. No matter how much our lives may be in a rut, our lives are just as important as any person on the mission field or in any other area of Christian service. It is just as difficult to live a conventional life as a life of adventure.

It is a great strain for sports writers to write about linemen. It is much easier to write about the 80 yard run and how many touch downs were made. Without great linemen there would be no great running backs. The “silent partners” of the apostle Paul were the Philippians. Without people who give to Christian work and those who work behind the scene, little would be accomplished for the cause of Christ. Many of the Philippians had routine experiences yet they were partners with the great apostle Paul. Paul travelled all over the Roman empire yet many of the Philippians did not get much farther than the outskirts of the city.

The people in Philippi supported Paul both spiritually and materially. They not only shared in the same grace that brought Paul to Christ but they shared in the same grace that made Paul a missionary. They shared in Paul’s ministry.

Every time they helped Paul financially they had a stake in his work; they had a share in his work; they had shares in him. “I have invested \$500 in Paul’s ministry; I have invested \$1000 in his ministry.” Would it not be great to have a \$500 share in the ministry of Paul?! Just think of the dividends that would come back at the judgment seat of Christ! Do you look on evangelistic enterprises like that? We would have a share in an evangelist. That eternal investment would pay dividends in glory.

“...for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and enduring possession for yourselves in heaven” (Heb 10:34)

Every time an evangelist wins someone to the Lord we get a percentage of that at the judgment seat of Christ. God keeps the books.

When people see a boxer with potential they buy stock in that young man. It is a business deal. Maybe five men will buy stock in him. They expect to get their money back and some profit. When we invest in the Lord’s work we expect something back, not here but hereafter. God does not expect you to invest and get nothing in return. God’s returns will be beyond our expectations. The world operates on the basis of money but what will it yield? When we invest our dollar we want to get the best return. When we invest in God’s work we get eternal returns.

**PRINCIPLE:** We share ministry with those we support.

**APPLICATION:** Are we investing our resources with an eye on eternity?

### **Philippians 1:8**

“For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.”

#### **“For God is my witness”**

There is no verb in this phrase and the word “God” is very emphatic. God knows all the facts. God knows everything Paul is thinking. He knows whether the statement I am about to make is true.

This is intense language. Paul was a man of dead earnestness. This is the same as to say, “God is my witness,” “God knows I am telling the truth.” Paul uses this language a number of times in his epistles. You would think that this would not be necessary since an apostle is doing the communicating. But he was a man of such dead sincerity that he feared others would think that he was resorting to exaggeration.

Paul is telling the Philippians how much he loved them. It was common then, as it is now, to tell people you love them and not be genuine about it. There are a lot of people who go around uttering sweet clichés. Some people are Pollyanna in their dealings with other people. Paul did not want to leave the impression that his love was cosmetic, sketchy and surface.

Paul knew his heart well enough to call God to witness to it. He knew he was not manipulating them. He knew the purity of his own heart. How many of us could say that? How many of us could call upon God to witness to the authenticity of our character and statements?

### “how greatly I loved you all”

“Long for” means earnestly desire. This is a strong word for affection.

Paul says, “I would dearly love to see you. I would love to get out of prison and come to see you. One of the first places I will head is Philippi to see you when I am released.” Paul was eventually released and made the trip to Philippi. Later he was rearrested and the last time he was in prison he wrote II Timothy. When he wrote II Timothy he knew he was not going to be released.

### “with the affection of Jesus Christ”

This was Paul's way of saying, “I love you.” The word “affection” means the inward parts. Metaphorically it means the seat of feelings. Paul had deep feelings for the Philippians. In fact, he had the same feelings that Jesus himself had for them! They evidently knew that Jesus had a deep inner love for them. Now Paul wants them to know that he has that same love for them. No wonder he took a solemn oath to prove it.

**PRINCIPLE:** It was Paul's desire to accurately communicate his love for the Philippians. He felt it necessary to disclose his heart for them.

**APPLICATION:** Do you have a dedication to tell those close to you that you love them? To what extremity will you go to do this?

### Philippians 1:9

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,”

### “and this I pray”

In verses 9 to eleven we come to one of the splendid prayers of Paul. Paul's prayers are very suggestive. They are never superficial and half-hearted. They are always germane to the situation. This prayer has the very whiff of heaven. Paul's prayers are a high water mark of spirituality in the

New Testament. A person ought to be at their best when at prayer. Prayer is conversing with God. The white heat of the flame of God's presence melts way all superficiality in our lives.

In this prayer there are three petitions all of which begin with the word “that.” Verse nine is the first “that.”

### “that your love may abound”

The first essential that Paul prays about is that their love may “abound.” It is one thing to have love; it is yet another to have abounding love. Their love needed to be enlarged.

The word “abound” means to overflow, to be over and above, more than enough. This is a love that dominates one's life. Love is no mere category. In unbiblical love there are categories of love. In one category there is love yet in another category there is bitterness and resentment.

### “still more and more”

Here is a piling up of adverbs, an exuberance of love. Wave after wave of love should hit the banks of our souls. The more we grow in grace the greater is our capacity to love. One way we know we are growing is how much we love the unlovely.

We rub elbows with people who are more difficult than others. All people do not appeal to us equally. It may be their disposition, their dress or their way of doing things. If we love with abounding love all that melts away. All that is irrelevant. We do not love them for their sake; we love them for Jesus' sake.

So the first earmark of a growing Christian is a dynamic love which is both over and against a static love. Immature Christians wax anger at the drop of a hat; they become exasperated quickly; they are aggravated by people who do not seem to appreciate them. But as we grow more and more in love those things become petty. In the light of the stern realities of heaven and hell, sin and righteousness, God and the Devil, such things become irrelevant and inconsequential. They are too tawdry to deflect the child of God from his original purpose of glorifying God with his life.

When we let people get under our skin or in our hair, when we let people vex our souls, we are deflected from reflecting God's glory in our lives.

When children do something in an immature way people say “that’s baby fat, they will outgrow it.” Feeling slighted is something we outgrow when we grow in love.

**PRINCIPLE:** Biblical love is dynamic; it both abounds and keeps developing so that it moves the child of God out of childhood and into spiritual adulthood.

**APPLICATION:** Are we still caught up in bitterness and indignation? Are we trapped at the initial stages of Christianity? Have we recognized signs of babyhood?

We have already examined 1:9a where we found that our love needed to “abound still more and more.” However, a dynamic love is not complete without some other norms. In 1:9b we find two norms which are necessary for a dynamic love: knowledge and discernment.

### “in knowledge”

Paul’s prayer is that love will abound in knowledge. This word knowledge means full, experiential knowledge. To love in God’s economy is to love beyond emotion and feeling. There is something at the foundation of this love.

To love in knowledge means that we do not call every “honey” or “darling.” This is not saccharin, imitation love. This is not authentic love. Authentic love loves on the basis of substance or content.

Love has nothing to fear from light. Suspicion puts the light out; it kills love. Intense love makes people sensitive to slights and misunderstandings unless they apply full knowledge. This word denotes fineness of perception.

Knowledge is important for any specialist in any field. I do not want my plumber to perform surgery on me. Neither do I want my surgeon to work on my plumbing! Each specialist is adept at his specialty because of what he knows. A Christian is to be a specialist in love. That love is to abound in knowledge. An indifferent, vague, sloppy love is not Christian love. It is an informed love.

Love grows best in the radiant light of knowledge.

### “and all discernment”

Knowledge is the accumulation of facts. Discernment, however, is an advance upon knowledge. Discernment is the correct use of the facts. But we must have knowledge to have discernment.

The more we know the more we can divide things that differ. We can separate and make distinctions. Discerning love can tell the difference between maudlin love and authentic love. Maudlin love may not employ “tough love” when necessary. Maudlin love loves on the basis of sympathy, not empathy.

**PRINCIPLE:** Authentic love requires both knowledge and discernment. As well, God wants us to “abound still more and more” in love that loves on the basis of knowledge and discernment.

**APPLICATION:** Do you love purely with your emotions? Can you dislike someone and still love them? It is valid biblically to deplore the foolishness of an individual and still love them.

### Philippians 1:10

“That you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.”

In this passage we have two more items for which Paul prays. Today we will study the second petition--“that you may approve the things that are excellent.”

### “that you may approve”

The word “approve” means test for approval. This is spiritual discernment. Discernment is the ability to distinguish between the chaff and wheat, the dross and the gold, the genuine and the superficial.

Automobiles need to be tested on a torture track before they are sold to the public. If a car’s breaks do not meet the test they are sent back for redesign. You do not put a car with faulty breaks on the market. Lives are at stake. In order to test those breaks some standard for testing needs to be applied. A standard or measure for what is good breaks is needed. God wants us to test for approval, have a criterion for whatever comes into our lives. That criterion is “excellence.”

If we have this criterion we can resolve the priorities of our life. Any problem or set of alternatives which is set before us should be measured by this standard. If we operate by this standard we should be able to resolve any priority.

### **“the things that are excellent”**

“Excellence” is a sense of what is vital. Greek--excellence means to bear apart, like metals, you learn how they differ from lesser metals. So excellence means things of greater value.

We should be able to test for approval the things which are the most valuable in life. None of us operate in life without some scale of values. The question is not whether we have a scale of values but the question is more which scale of values we choose. Do we chose God's highest values or some set of values we may chose?

Where there is no scale of values utter confusion follows. If we want to live a flustered life, then live life without an adequate set of ultimate values. In this situation nothing is of value, nothing of importance. To live life with everything of equal importance is to live life at a trivial level. Lesser things are as important as greater things.

If we chose our ultimate value to make and save as much money possible, then we have chosen a lesser value in God's economy. If we chose to put God's glory first no matter how much money we make, then we live by God's scale of values. It is a matter of what comes first. If our main objective is to make money then we are number one in our values and God is number two. We need to decide what is important.

**PRINCIPLE:** Christians need to test for approval the things of greatest value in God's economy.

**APPLICATION:** Do we have God's scale of values? What is the highest item on our scale of values? What is first or most important to us? A good way to measure these questions is how do we use our time? Answering these things will reveal what is important in our lives. Then we will have a sense of what is vital.

Verse ten is the second and third petitions of Paul for the Philippians. Today we will study the third petition “that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.”

### **“that you may be sincere”**

“Sincere” literally means “unmixed, pure, unsullied.” Therefore, this word means to be genuine or authentic.

The word “sincere” comes from two Greek words: “sun” and “to judge.” It means to judge by holding up to the light of the sun. Broken pottery in the ancient world was often covered with wax and painted over. People were deceived into thinking they were buying a sound vase, for example. However, if a person were to hold this vase up to the sun, the sun would reveal the cracks.

The believer should be transparent, when held up to the light of the sun, of who God is. There is nothing to hide. No “wax” can be found in his life. There is no dilution or hypocrisy. God expects us to be the “real thing.”

### **“and without offense”**

“Without offense” is blameless. The word means “a trap.” This was a crooked stick on which a bait is fastened, which, being struck by the animal, springs the trap. Therefore, it is anything which one stumbles against.

The believer is to be void of offense. This word also occurs in I Cor. 10:32, “Giving no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God.”

One of the greatest criticisms the world has of the church is that it is “hypocritical.” This has become a standard, stock excuse that those without Christ have for not receiving Christ. “There are too many hypocrites in church.”

We admit that there are hypocrites in church. Yet there are hypocrites at the office. Do we quit work because there are hypocrites? Do we turn in our membership at the lodge because people are inconsistent? There is hypocrisy about hypocrisy!

The teaching of the Word of God has a tendency to create a spiritual atmosphere that is difficult for hypocrites to thrive in it. They become annoyed by the hammer like blows of the Word upon their lives. If we are not genuine, if we are a counterfeit Christian, a make-believe Christian sitting under the conviction of the Word, we will become more of a counterfeit or move out from under the influence of God upon our lives.

**“till the day of Christ”**

This is the day when Christ comes back again. This day terminates the Christian life in time for all Christians.

Paul prays in this phrase that the Philippians will live an authentic life and a life that is not susceptible of censure until Christ comes again.

**PRINCIPLE:** When people examine our lives God wants us to be viewed as authentic (“without wax”). If people see that Christians are genuine then they will not have an occasion for accusing us of hypocrisy.

**APPLICATION:** Have you moved into a mode of covering rather than confessing your sin? Is it more comfortable for you to rationalize sin than to deal with it?

**Philippians 1:11**

“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.”

Verse eleven sets forth the characteristics of those who produce the three requests for which Paul prays:

1. “...that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,”
2. “that you may approve the things that are excellent,”
3. “that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,”

Those who have these characteristics in their lives will produce fruit.

**“being filled with the fruits of righteousness”**

“Being” indicates this is something we receive. We receive it by God's grace. We do not earn it or work for it.

“Fruits” is singular in the Greek. This may refer to the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is the produce of righteousness. The harvest.

“Of righteousness”--produced by Christ and so supernatural. The word “of” indicates source this is imputed righteousness (righteousness which God unilaterally gives). The believer has a righteous stand before God, resulting from being

clothed in Christ's righteousness, ought to produce fruit for God. Practical righteousness is to flow from what God has done.

Filled with the fruits of uprightness which come through Jesus Christ: The term of Christian growth and development is the status of uprightness before God, yet it is not a status that one achieves by oneself; rather it is begun by God (1:6) and has its fullness in that which comes only through union with Christ (see 3:9).

Such inner qualities, partially described in Galatians 5:22-23, will be evident to others. The fruit of the Spirit comes through Jesus Christ, for it is really His life lived out through believers. Such fruit magnifies God, not self.

**PRINCIPLE:** God is the source for the fruit that is produced in our lives. God has given us imputed righteousness (a legal righteousness which he put in us) so that we might produce a practical righteousness.

**APPLICATION:** Do we recognize the “harvest” of God's work upon us? Do we praise him for what he has done?

**“which are by Jesus Christ”**

“By” means “through” instrumentality. It is through the instrumentality of Christ that fruit is produced in our lives. The Greek has a definite article before the word “through”--“the through” “by that I mean the kind which is through Jesus Christ.” This would mean by the death of Christ on the cross, for example. The death of Christ makes it possible to be delivered from our sins. The death of Christ makes it possible to live the Christian life.

**“for the glory and praise of God.”**

A life that exhibits such traits is to the glory and praise of God. God produced the fruit so God gets the glory for doing it. If God does the doing, God gets the glory.

God is glorified by the fruitfulness he produces in our lives, John 15:8, “In this is my Father glorified...bear much fruit”. There are three kinds of Christians in this passage: those that bear “fruit”, “more fruit” and “much fruit.” But there is no such thing as no fruit in the Christian. If a person is a believer there is going to be fruit.

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The purpose of Christ's death was to glorify God. His attributes are glorified such as righteousness, justice, mercy and love in his death. As in 2:11 the career of Jesus and his influence on man are ordained only for the glory of the Father (cf. Rom 15:7; 1 Cor 10:31; 2 Cor 4:15).

We glorify God by utilizing divine provisions. Glory is provided inside each believer because the Holy Spirit resides in each believer, I Co 3:16; 6:19,20. The ministry of the Holy Spirit produces the character of Christ in the believer, Gal 4:19; II Co 3:3,18; Eph 3:17; Gal 5:22,23.

Matt. 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

I Pet 4:11 "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God gives: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever."

**PRINCIPLE:** If God does the doing in our lives, he gets the glory. If we do the doing, we get the glory.

**APPLICATION:** One of the saddest things in the family of God is a case of arrested spiritual development. We reach a spiritual plateau and there we remain. We need to realize that something is stunting our growth. We need our spiritual vitamins.

Paul prayed for the Philippian church for 3 things. What **KIND OF GRADE** would you get on these 3 items? Each one would count 1/3. If you have all three you get a 100!

How would you make out with love for 1994? If your mate would grade you, what would you get?

How would you do on discernment? Did you live your life with a sense of priority?

How did you do with glorifying God by righteousness? Did you live before Him as His exclusive use.

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## Lesson 1 Quiz

### Instructions

The following questions relate to your study of this lesson.

To answer a question, type your response in the space provided after the word “Answer:”. A question may be True/False, multiple choice, fill in the blank, or short answer type.

If a question requires you to write one or two paragraphs in “essay” form. Use the space provided; it will expand to accommodate your response.

You have choices about sending the quiz back to Grace Notes.

- If you received an email file containing the quiz, you can use the REPLY feature of your e-mail application to open the quiz. Enter your answers in the reply message. Then SEND the message to Grace Notes.
- You can enter your answers on these pages, then send the whole file back to Grace Notes as a file attachment. As an alternative,
- After you answer the questions here, copy and paste the whole list of questions into a new MS Word document; then, send the new file to Grace Notes as an attachment. The new file will, of course, be much smaller than this main file.
- Finally, you can print the Quiz pages on your printer and send your response back to Grace Notes in the regular mail. If you do this, send the mail to:

#### Grace Notes

% Warren Doud

1705 Aggie Lane

Austin, Texas 78757 USA

Whichever transmission method you use, when Grace Notes receives your completed Quiz, the next lesson will be sent to you, by the same means you received this one. EXCEPT: when you have sent in the FINAL QUIZ, we will send your certificate to you, by regular mail.

### Questions on Philippians, Lesson 1

1. How many epistles did the Apostle Paul write from prison?

Answer:

2. There is joy in prayer; therefore, there should be no reluctance and misgivings when we pray.

[True/False]

Answer:

3. What does the word “fellowship” mean?

Answer:

4. Where is the scripture where Paul writes ““But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.”?”

Answer:

5. What does the phrase “the day of Christ” refer to?

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Answer:

6. Where is the scripture verse found which says “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”?

Answer:

7. Principle: there are two aspects to sharing Christ, the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.

Answer:

8. In Philippians 1:7, what word means “partner”?

Answer:

9. Paul’s continual prayer for the Philippians was that they would grow in knowledge and discernment.

[True/False]

Answer:

10. Discernment is \_\_\_\_\_.

Answer:

End of Quiz

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