



INTRODUCTION

Paul is writing this letter of thanks, exhortation, and instruction while under arrest. In this country, a person under arrest has the right to remain silent, because anything that the incarcerated says can and will be held against them in a court of law. If Paul were in this country under arrest he would not remain silent about the things of God. None of us are currently under arrest and yet we often exercise the right to remain silent about the things of God. We should be like Paul and not be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ (**Rom. 1:16**). Let's exercise our freedom of speech and preach the word in season and out of season, (**II Tim. 3:2**) in bonds or free.

Philippians 1:7-11 (NKJV)

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.
⁸ For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.
⁹ And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,
¹⁰ that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,
¹¹ being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

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Paul knows that the way he thinks of the church of Philippi is right. What does Paul think about the Philippians? **Philippians 1:5-6 (NKJV)**

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; Why does Paul know to think this way is right? He knows it's right because he has them all in his heart. Most of us can truly say that many of the members of our fellowship are in our hearts, but not all of them. The body part that some of the fellowship gets on, is our last nerve. Well!!! That's alright! You can still love them all through Christ Jesus and that love isn't dependent upon our current circumstances or situation. True love isn't contingent upon the lovability of the individual. That kind of love is only possible through the power of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In other translations, the love Paul has for the Philippians is a mutual love.

Then Paul calls on God as a witness to confirm what he is writing! How bold is that! If we were to call upon God to be our witness, we must know that God is not going to lie for us. He loves us but He is not going to lie for us. He was willing to take stripes upon His body for our healing, but he will not lie for us. Before the foundations of the world was laid He was willing to die for us to be cleansed of our sins, but He will not lie for us. After all, God is not a man that He should lie (Num. 23:19). It is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18). From this we know Paul's affection for the Philippian church is real!



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It is reassuring when we know that the man of God has us in his prayers. Thankfully the Holy Spirit knows what we need before we ask. Unfortunately, we often pray for the desires of our flesh. These things are not always bad in and of themselves, but these are things the flesh desires, but not what the spirit needs.

Paul's pray for the church in Philippi is that their love is overflowing in their knowledge and discernment in the things of God. Paul doesn't pray just for their ability to discern between good and bad, just and unjust, not just between good and better, but between better and the excellent! Why is that so important? It is so important that the things of God be determined in sincerity and without hurting anyone in the process. Just because we are right, doesn't give us the right to be offensive to others in the process. Paul doesn't mean we are to be this way just for the meantime, but until Christ comes again.

When we do this, we are planting a seed that will produce a filling of fruit called righteousness. Hallelujah! But we must be careful to recognize that this fruit is abundant only through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the honor and glory of God the Father. Give Him praise and glory! "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." **Matthew 6:13 (NKJV)**