



*from the inside out*

## Week 2 Home Study: Paul's Prayer – Phil 1:1-11

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### MEMORY VERSE

And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, 11 having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9-11)

### BASIC STUDY

#### QUESTION 1

Read Philippians 1:1-11. Review the Class Notes. Be sure and note anything you want to bring up in small group.

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### QUESTION 2

Despite Paul's very positive prayer (Philippians 1:9-11), the Philippians were actually having a very hard time living together as a community of believers. Paul teaches us to pray this intercessory prayer for believers who are struggling to follow Christ. Let's give it a try...

Think of a believer who is struggling in their Christian life.

Let's prepare ourselves to pray for them. First Paul points out (verse 4) that we need to pray with joy (great delight) for them. Paul teaches us two things to do to build up joy in our hearts for this person by:

- 1) Remember how God has used them to do his work in the past (verse 5).

Jot down how they have been faithful to Christ:

*Example: They put effort into loving their neighbor who does not know Christ.*

- 2) Remind yourself that God already sees them as perfect and complete because of what Christ has done and is doing for them (verse 6). Picture them as Christ's completed work. Jot down what they might look like completed by Christ's work in their lives:

*Example: They will learn to inspire people to do good things (instead of being bossy). Their gift of writing will be perfected even more.*

Allow any feelings that are not joyful toward this person to be overcome with thoughts of their past good works and who they will become in Christ. Now Pray Paul's prayer for them:

“May <insert their name>'s love abound more and more  
with knowledge and full discernment.”

As God answers this prayer, God's love within the believer is coupled with knowledge and full discernment, Paul tells us what will be the two outcomes in their lives:

1. What is Outcome 1 (verse 10):
2. What is Outcome 2 (verse 11):

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### QUESTION 3

Now think about preparing to pray the above prayer for yourself. Are you able to pray for yourself with great delight (joy)?

First, write down all the things that Christ has done through you:

*Example: I gave money for the Chinese ministry at NAPC.*

Second, write down what you will look like when you are completed in Christ:

*Example: I will not worry any more so I will enjoy each day a lot more.*

Now pray the prayer for yourself:

“May my love abound more and more  
with knowledge and full discernment.”

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### QUESTION 4

In Paul's prayer (Philippians 1:9-11), there are three things that he requests for the Philippians. All are necessary for Christian maturity:

1. Overflowing Love. Read 2 Corinthians 5: 14-15. Whose love is it that abounds in us? How does this love bubble up within us?
  
2. Love coupled with knowledge. It is popular in our culture to say "I am spiritual, but don't believe in anything in particular." It is as if our culture is saying, "I love God, but don't know God." Does Paul think this is possible? What are ways that you can gain knowledge of God?
  
3. Love coupled with full insight. Full insight is wisdom that comes from the Holy Spirit. It is the kind of wisdom you need when you are seeking which house to buy or who to marry – things not specifically stated in the Bible. What can happen if you have love, but no insight from the Holy Spirit?  
*Note: The Holy Spirit can work in any way it wants, but there are three ways that I have consistently observed: 1) Prayer and meditation, 2) Scripture, and 3) Through other believers. What are you doing or what do you need to do to experience the Holy Spirit's guidance?*

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### DEEPER STUDY

#### QUESTION 5:

Read through Philippians and list all the problems that the Philippians are experiencing. Can you relate to any of these problems among those Christians you are in fellowship with?

| Verses | Problem Experienced | Have you experienced these in your fellowship? |
|--------|---------------------|--|
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The overarching problem in Philippi that was causing all of these “symptoms” was that they had love, but not knowledge and discernment. Can you see how this might be the overarching problem in your fellowship of believers too? If so, how can it be overcome?

If you are experiencing any of these problems in your fellowship now, pray Paul's prayer (Philippians 1:9-11) for those who are struggling – including yourself.

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### QUESTION 6

In Philippians 1:5 Paul writes about “sharing in the gospel.” Other translations say “partnership in the gospel” or “fellowship in the gospel” The Greek word is *koinonia*.

Paul mentions this fellowship 6 times in Philippians. From these verses, what should fellowship be like?

- 1:5-7
- 2:1
- 3:10
- 4:14-15

Here are other places in scripture where *koinonia* is mentioned. What can you learn about how our fellowship should work from these verses (read the surrounding verses to get the full picture):

- Acts 2:42
- I Corinthians 1:9
- I Corinthians 10:16
- 2 Corinthian 6:14
- 2 Corinthians 8:4
- Galatians 2:9
- Ephesians 5:11
- I John 1
- Philemon 1:5-6

How does our church measure up? It is more of a social club or do we do the work of God together? How can you make positive change (or maintain the good stuff)?

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### QUESTION 7

How can God's love that is already in you "abound more and more?" God's love flowing from us is not a matter of having discipline or control. It is simply a matter of letting God's love fill us until it overflows from us.

Think of God's love as a stream that bubbles up in you and overflows out of you like a river. Read the following stories and reflect on the image of water being God's love: John 4:7-15 and John 7:37-39. *Note: Remember God is Love.*

Write your reflections here:

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### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. 9:45 am (5 min) – Say or read the memory verse together. Read the whole scripture.
2. 9:40 am (10 min) – Does anyone have anything in particular that they wanted to discuss about the lesson this week?
3. 9:50 am (10 min) -- For you to be effective, you must have all three of these things:
  - a. God's love overflowing
  - b. Knowledge
  - c. Full Insight

Where do you think you do well in these things? What fruit do you produce to prove it? Where do you think you could improve? How can your small group help you?

4. 10:00 am (10 min) -- The Philippians had problems working together for God's purposes. For a church to be effective, it also must have all three of these things:
  - a. God's love overflowing
  - b. Knowledge
  - c. Full Insight

Where do you think our church does well on these things? What fruit do we have to prove it? Where do you think we could improve? How can you be an agent of change (or even maintenance) within our church?

5. 10:10 am (20 min) – Ask “what has God been doing in your life this week?” Pray for each other.
6. 10:39 am (1 min) -- Close by saying the Philippians Prayer:

*Dear God, May our love abound more and more with knowledge and full discernment; so that we may choose the things that are excellent, so that in the day of Christ we may be sincere and blameless, being filled with the fruits of righteousness that come through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. Amen*