

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 26<sup>th</sup> June 2022 Hymns Par 2, t Salzburg, 334, 495, 413 Read: Philippians 1:9-11 Text Philippians 1:10

Series: Philippians (20) Title: Abounding Love Proved (1)

In **verses 9-11** Paul records his prayer for saints at Philippi, that their love **may abound yet more and more in Knowledge and in all Judgment.**"

The theme of Paul's prayer is love for Christ, a love that will continually overflow keep rising, growing, maturing, and developing in the gospel which centres upon Christ's person and accomplished work.

This is a spiritual love applied by the power of the Holy Spirit.

A love that is a spiritual characteristic or spiritual quality of a born again believer,

and upon those basis Paul has every right to pray that this love will deepen because

**1 John 4:8 He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." 1 John 4:21 "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.**

Believer this ought to be the prayer of our hearts, not only for ourselves, but for one another, and within families,

pray for your spouse, children, parents, pastor that their love will abound more and more by Christ in spiritual wisdom.

You will often find when a person is in tune with Christ that person it is in harmony with everyone else, in the church, home, work and society.

Paul wrote in **1 Thess 4:9 "for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."**

When our love is bubbling up, and overflowing for Christ then it will leave its mark, it will impact in every part of our lives, and effects others around us.

**Verse 9** Paul prays that that Philipians will **recognise** what is a help from a hindrance in spiritual growth, discern, what will lead them on in the ways of God, or hold them back.

**Verse 10** is **the response or reaction the proof** to what is recognised.

**How is abounding love proved?**

**I FIRST, ABOUNDING LOVE IS PROVED BY IT'S PRIORITES.**

Paul as he continues, he prays that Philipians will prioritise that which is needful and beneficial to assist that their love will abound more and more.

**To get the line of thought I'll read verses 9-10** "***And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent..***"

The word **approve** means **to test, discern examine, scrutinise, to see if worthy.**

Therefore, it is no surprise that the word **approve** is connected to the word **Judgment** in **verse 9** which means **to discern.**

***and in all judgment; That ye may approve things***

It is putting into practise, it is choosing or making the best decisions in order to press toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

we judge or discern situations, ***that*** we or ***ye may approve things that are excellent.***"

This word **approve** in an interesting word, it was used in past times for the testing of metal, gold to determine its purity, genuineness, its value and worth.

This is why Peter used the same word and meaning when applying it to the trials of a Christian.

Listen for the words **tried with fire** in **1 Peter 1:7** it is the word **approve**, examine. (faith that cannot be tried cannot be trusted.)

**1 Peter 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be **tried with fire**, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**

Since the word **approve** is in the **continual tense**, then Paul prays that the Philippian believers, **will continually, examine, keep putting things to the test, to prioritise; for the purpose of approval.**

In other words keep thinking, keep discerning the present situation, activity, not only what I am doing but also how much or how long am I doing it for.

**am I engaging, involved in a certain activity, hobby, which in and of itself there is nothing wrong, but its got to the point,**

I've used all my energy and time and now when it comes to spiritual matters, Bible reading and prayer, it's too late, I'm too tired, no energy and as a result they are put off, neglected.

Take the motto from the last two years, during covid, **keep testing, keep testing, watch out for signs or symptoms that you might have covid,**, but apply it spiritually.

Discern, Know the spiritual signs and symptoms of zeal abating, weakening in spiritual matters, a coldness of heart, going through the motions, a love that is not flourishing, abounding or growing.

Therefore, when it comes to spiritual matters, our love will abound more and more, as we keep testing, examining scrutinizing, our present situation, frame of mind, approving ***things, that are excellent.***

The word **excellent** means *to differ, different*, and so it could be read ***approve things that are different.***

**Different in the sense these things are the best of the best, greater, superior in helping your love to grow and abound more and more.**

It is prioritising energy, time and talents, distinguishing between the good and best,

knowing and being able to determine what is most the important thing so that our love will abound more and more.

Paul prays that the Philippian believers will focus and prioritise themselves with ***things, that are excellent.***

And the only way to **discover** and **discern** what is excellent comes from a spiritual **knowledge** of the person and work of Christ according to the word of God.

**Remember the scene** in **Luke 10:38-42** two Sisters Mary and Martha, both faithful servants of Christ.

in this scene the difference is between service for Christ and spending time with Christ.

About working for the Lord and waiting upon the Lord.

**Luke 10:38** "***Martha received him into her house.*** Christ had entered into the home, He was present among them, the Saviour was in the house.

Martha invited Him, but that was as far as she went.

The first thing that comes into Martha's head is that I must prepare supper. We learn from other passages such as **John**

**12:2**, Martha was involved in suppers and no doubt spent time with Christ.

But on this occasion, **Martha has taken on to much.**

**Martha did not realise that her devotion to serving Christ turned into distraction from Christ.**

**Verse 40** *Martha was cumbered about much serving,* the word **cumbered**, means **to be to draw in different direction, distracted, having ones attention divided move to something else.**

The word **cumbered** is continual tense meaning **is it keeps happening, Martha keeps getting distracted** from spending time with Christ, when there seems to be the minute when she can enjoy time with Christ, something pops up, so that she can't come to spend time with Christ.

But on the other hand, when the Saviour entered the home, Mary **which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word**" this can mean that both woman sat at Jesus feet but Martha keep getting distracted while Mary remained, or only Mary sat at Jesus feet.

Mary throughout scripture was known for sitting at Jesus feet, here in **Luke 10**.

Mary is **waiting** at the Saviour's feet, Christ her prophet

but in **John 11:32** she is **weeping** at the Saviour feet christ her priest,

and then in **John 12:3** she is **worshipping** at the Saviour feet, Christ her King.

Mary has devoted this time to the Saviour, but Martha keeps getting distracted, shes not spending quality time with Christ, and then because she is under pressure, burdened down, her **aggression** starts to build up,

**atmosphere**, changes

Her **attitude** starts to show,

the **actions** manifest itself, as the pressure builds up, things need done, finally Martha cant take it any longer, and she sees Mary sitting at His feet and because Martha is not then she turns and says Lord don't you care, ***Lord bid make her come I need help.***

Martha is flustered and takes her frustration out on Mary, and at the same time questions the Saviour why He has not rebuked Mary for not helping.

**Verse 41** ***“Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:***

The word **troubled** here means **disturbed, uproar**, The word **careful** mean **to be anxious, to worry.**

Then the Saviour says in **verse 42** ***But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”***

**Let me just say it was not wrong that Martha served.** Or that she was devoted to serve Christ.

**But on this occasion, there was something excellent she neglected, a lack of judgment, which was to sit at Jesus feet and hear His word.**

**This was not a time of serving but sitting, not a time to walk around but to wait upon, not a time to talk but to listen.**

This was a cross Road point in Martha's life, stop, look and listen.

The words ***one thing is needful*** In the original this reads **But of one there is need.**

Christ tells Martha, look to me, turn your eyes back to me. Focus upon me. Prioritise me.

***Martha was giving out, but not taking in, she was feeding others but not feeding herself.***

When this happens we become, stale, when we run on low, spiritual termites eat away, its not long before we burn out, and conk out. We become dry, barren and backslidden.

Your love for the things of Christ will weaken, your love for Christ Himself will fade, coldness sets in.

**Martha received the Saviour into her home but left Him alone, walking past Him, and working around Him.**

Mary **discerned** the situation she chose the better part. ***things, that are excellent.***

The word **part** signifies **union, fellowship**. Mary made sure she had fellowship with Christ.

Therefore, believers discern, test yourself, approve things are excellent, chose the good, the best part,

**Does the Bible sit in our house and you walk past it and around it everyday but neglect to read it. one thing is needful, read it.**

Remember this is about our love abounding, growing.

This is what Jesus said in His sermon in **Matthew 6:33** ***“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”***

But also unsaved one there is a word for you to seek that which is best for you soul, and you will only find the need of your eternal soul meet in Christ.

Of one there is need.

The Lord Jesus said to the multitudes who followed Him, in **John 6:26:27** ***“...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me,***

***not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.***

***27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you..."***

**II SECOND, ABOUNDING LOVE IS PROVED BY IT'S PURITY.**

***That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.***

The word **sincere** in this verse means *pure, unsullied*.

The only other place this **particular word** is used is in **2 Peter 3:1** "*This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds.*"

**verse 18** "*... grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*"

This particular word for **sincere, pure,** properly means "*that which is judged in the rays of the sunshine, that which is clear and manifest.*"

The idea is to test or judge the purity of **something** against the rays of the sun because when the light shines upon it, any inconsistencies, or faults are exposed, any impurities that are secretly hidden will be exposed.

This is a word of inspection, truth finding, it uncovers any false impressions, impurity.

Its not about perfection because no object or person is perfect in themselves, but it singles out and identifies what is unseen by others.

It is interesting to note that the English word *sincere* is derived from the Latin *sine cera*, which means "**without wax,**" why is that



interesting well because the picture of this word **sincere** is often taken from pottery.

commentators make the comparison about pottery in years gone by, **that pottery differed in quality.**

The more expensive pottery was clear in colour, but also thin making it fragile, and so it would often crack in the oven, but instead of throwing the cracked pottery away,

dishonest dealers were in the habit of filling in the cracks with wax that would blend in with the colour of the pottery, giving the impression all is well.

This made the cracks undetectable, especially when painted or glazed, but when brought to the shops.

the object was first held up to the light and if any object had the wax applied it was immediately detected by its lines, the cracks were exposed.

This lead to people when selling pottery to write the words *sine cera*, which means "without wax," having tested it by the sun light to show it's sincere, pure.

A bit like today in shops you have signs pure juice, organic, gluten free.

Therefore, Paul is praying for God's people that their love will abound more and more in spiritual matters, and as it does by growth in the word of God, they will be sincere, they will pass the sun light test, as **John 3:21** states "***he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.***"

Paul prays that believers will be marked by purity, honesty, trustworthiness, in all relationships, transactions, and dealings with all people there will be a Christ like spirit.

But if there are hidden cracks, waxed to cover up inconsistencies, **then the light of God's word**, will shine and show what needs to be put right.

That's why Christ prayed for His people in **John 17:17** "***Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.***"

**The Church who Christ loves and gave Himself for, Eph 5:26**  
**He sanctifies and cleanses, *it with the washing of water by the word.***"

God's word acts as a cleaning agent in our lives, it cleanses and purifies the mind to think upon the Lord.

As we are in the word of God, so our love for Christ will grow. Our lives are tested by the word of God **Ps 119:9** "***Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.***"

Spiritual love that is rooted in the heart by the Holy Spirit will continually grow and blossom more and more toward Christ.

**We turn to Hymn 413 second verse & Chorus only**