

Paul's Prayer for the Philippians

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You might wonder, "why do you talk about the church so much"? Well, it's this time that we're living in right now, which I believe is the finest hour for the church. I'm not just talking about Trinity Fellowship. I'm talking about the Church worldwide.

No mamby, pamby around anymore. It's time for leaders to lead and fathers to father.

Paul's mandate for the rest of his life was that he experienced grace first hand. That was a challenging thing that God did in Paul's life, because it alienated him from his family and from his Jewish friends. Paul's message of grace flew in the face of the scribes, and the Pharisees, and their legalistic religion.

Philippians 1:3: *"I thank my God, upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine, making a request for you all, with joy for your fellowship in the gospel, being confident of this very thing in that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ"*.

Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father, and the Bible says that He ever lives to make intercession for us. He's interceding for you right now, standing in the gap for you. He knows what He did and knows that Spirit of God Who lives in you is able to perfect every flaw, everything that needs to be adjusted, changed and altered in our lives.

He who has begun to work in you is able to complete it. You've said, "well, I'm going through some real trials in my life right now". I'm not surprised. And I think that's a very, very good thing, even though it doesn't feel like a good thing.

There a lot of people right now going through make or break situations. It's easy to see the hand of the enemy and all that, but take some time to look for God in that, and listen to what God is saying to you in the middle of these make or break situations. You're going to make it, trust me. And this is the only thing. You're the only one who can keep yourself from making it.

Keep the focus on. That's the key. We want to be on the front edge of what God is doing, not caught up somewhere, back in the pack, or somewhere off, not paying attention. This is not a time for church business as usual.

Philippians 1:9-11: *"For God is my witness. How greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God"*.

Everyone can say "**Amen**" at the reading of the Word. It just means that it goes into your psyche, your mind, your mental and spiritual makeup. It solidifies what was just said or read from the Word. This helps you to make better decisions because you're embracing truth.

There are several great words that are translated into the English word, "Love" in your Bible. One that we're talking about the most is agape.

Love is a complex and multifaceted emotion, and its definition can vary depending on context and perspective. Here are a few perspectives of the definition of love:

- Emotional attachment: a deep emotional attachment and affection for someone or something. It involves feelings of warmth, care, and a strong connection.
- Action and Behavior: It involves showing kindness, empathy, and consideration for the well-being of others.
- Unconditional acceptance: this involves accepting someone or something as they are, without imposing conditions or expecting anything in return. It transcends flaws and imperfections.
- Sacrifice and Selflessness: putting the needs and happiness of others above one's own.
- Spiritual and Transcendent love: a force that connects all living beings. It goes beyond individual relationships and encompasses a broader sense of unity and compassion.
- Passion and Romance: intense passion, desire, and romantic feelings.
- Philosophical perspective: various types of love, including eros (romantic love), agape (unconditional selfless love) and philo (deep friendship or brotherly love).
- Biological and evolutionary aspect: a mechanism to ensure the survival of offspring and strengthen social bonds within a community.
- Cultural and personal variations: Cultural norms and personal experiences shape how individuals understand and express love.
- In essence, love is a rich nuance concept that encompasses a wide range of emotions, behaviors and experiences. It plays a fundamental role in human relationships.

So, God loves you, and there's nothing you can do about it. He is just going to love you, no matter what. You can't make God not love you.

1 John 4:7-8: *"Let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love".*

It's hard to love someone whom you don't know. We can make a decision to, but you don't know agape love until you have been exposed.

You don't love your kids because you're supposed to. You don't love them for any other reason except that you can't help it. That's how God looks at you and sees you. He can't help but love you. That is unconditional love at work.

We love Him because He first loved us, so I think sometimes we get the cart in front of the horse, in that we should encourage people to lean in to the relationship with the Father. Give yourself to it and give yourself some time.

To know Him is to love Him. That is not just a cliché. If you know Him, you can't help but love Him also. That's the truth.

Genuine love has to first be experienced. You have to experience it first, and then display it and exercise it outward in our lives. Love is a thing that is given. Love gives, it doesn't take.

There's givers and takers. But people who love are givers. I think there are 16 qualities of love found in 1st Corinthians: 13. It would be good to read that.

God loves us with a the perfect love, but it's not perfected until you choose to love Him back. He could make you do it. But it's not in His nature to do that.

When you get by yourself, just you and Him, He always has time for you. Then you begin to see, understand and experience agape. It's then that you are able to display that toward someone else.

Conditional love isn't really love at all. In fact, agape has to be experienced and exercised, or the world will never know God.

Jesus said to the Pharisees: *"you searched the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, but you're not willing to come to me, that you might really have life"*. Because they only know Him from what was written.

I encourage you to get all the biblical knowledge you can get. Especially in this day and time, because the Bible says that in the latter days there's an opportunity (chance) that even the very elect can be deceived. So, it a time to get in your Bible.

One of the key ways that God talks to you is through the Word, combined with the Holy Spirit that lives in you. He quickens your heart to truth, shows you what truth really is, so that you can walk in it.

I'm giving the Bible its rightful place. This is not a substitute for your relationship with God. This should lead you to an encounter with Him, and a relationship, and a deepening revelation, where the two of you connect, just like He did with Adam in the cool of the day.

If you only know God from what's written, you may have a great image of Him, but it's extremely shallow, vague and incomplete at best, as compared to being in a simple, living, ongoing, interactive and vibrant relationship with Him.

"That you may be sincere". There's not very much, for me, that's uglier than a fake, phony Christian. Someone trying to put on a front, trying to impress, trying to pretend that they are someone they're not.

The only people Jesus was hard on were the over religious, self-righteous, doctrinal police, the leaders who would not turn to Him. *"Woe to you Pharisees. You search the world over to make one convert, and then you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are"*.

The Holy Spirit will help us to pray when we don't know how to pray. He will show us things to come, convict us of sin and of righteousness, show us right from wrong so we can do right, so that we can be sincere, that we can be genuine.

All this must be real. If it's not going to be real, let's just don't do it. And maybe some of us need to decide today.

Real is satisfying to the spirit, the soul part of man. It sits well with mankind. It's appealing to the heart. And it means to just be free from religious baggage, bondage, legalism and holier than thou attitudes.

"That you would have a clean heart in regards to your fellow man". Do you have a clean heart in regards to your fellow man? *"Father, please show us if there is anyone that we don't have a clean heart towards".*

These trials that you're going through, these challenges that are testing you to the very core, it's about revealing your heart to you, so if there's changes that need to be made in your heart, you can cooperate with God and He'll make those changes. And when you cooperate, it's not quite as painful.

Psalms 19: *"So let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, Oh Lord, my strength and my redeemer".* That means to be in the highest place with God, where the two of you are walking in union with one another, just like Jesus did.

These are requirements: No offense toward anyone, giving honor to others and forgiveness. Forgiveness is not a feeling you have, it's a choice you make. Make up your mind to forgive even before you are offended.

When someone comes to us with a problem about someone else, we don't try to fix the problem. We tell them what the Bible tells them to do. You take that problem to your brother.

When you're crossways with someone and that person is willing to work it out, but you are not, this is serious. The entire weight of that is going to be on you. What happens is the one who's not willing to work it out will hang around a while and find something, some way, that we, as leadership or the church has done them wrong, and they leave. It's a sad commentary on people who won't grow up.

It takes someone about half mature, or at least wanting to be mature, to take that problem to someone else and be willing to work through it. You may not want to do it, but the glory of God will come when you do. **Determined reconciliation.**

Are you bearing fruit? Fruit is allowing the Father, by His Spirit, who lives in you, to hear testimonies and see miracles. *There's going to be a lot of open doors for you to minister, to pray with someone or speak a blessing over them".* You need to open your heart to allow the Father to do those things through you. It comes down to your obedience and your willingness and your availability for God to do.

This can happen in your job, people you hang out with. Be sensitive to the Spirit when the Spirit when He gives you that little nudge. Be paying attention. You have to allow Him to do that. Will you?

You've already been judged by God as righteous. You've been set free. You have been pardoned. Now, act like it! You have a light, so let your light shine.

Remember, you're not righteous by what you do. You're not righteous because you do something righteous. You're righteous because of what Jesus did.

