

A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families for the week of October 18, 2020

**Abounding Love**

This week, Pastor Steve Shelby preached from [Philippians 1:9-11](#)

<sup>9</sup> And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

- Paul's prayer for love to grow "more and more" (9a)
- In ways he could pray this for himself
- "Not that I have already obtained this, or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus made me His own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind, and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." ([Philippians 3:12-14](#))
- "That's Paul's own attitude. He doesn't for a moment think that he has arrived. The old theological idea that there are certain substances, such as God's love, that as they are spent do not diminish but multiply. Maybe what I'm suggesting is pure fantasy, imagining that our love could be like the loaves and fishes at the feeding of the five thousand." (*Garth Greenwell*)
- "With knowledge and discernment" (9b)
- Love is only love if God says it is.
- This leads to Christian excellence, which is the fruit of righteousness
- "It would be inconsistent with the frankness of my character not to avow that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my Administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy." (*George Washington*)
- "In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. Many nations will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.' The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the Lord Almighty has spoken." ([Micah 4:1-4](#))

**For Further Discussion: [Philippians 1:9-11](#)**

<sup>9</sup> And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

- It is hard to love people. **What gets in the way of your love** for others?
- What is Paul's **specific prayer** for the Philippians (9)? In your own words, **what does he hope and desire** for the church?

- What makes Christian love **unique**?
- Describe an example where **your love grew, overflowed, or increased**. How was that **possible**?
- What does **love accompanied by “knowledge and all discernment”** look like? Read [1 John 4:7-8](#) for further insight into this kind of love.
- When the Holy Spirit gives **an increase of love to the church** (9) what **effect** does that have on us (10-11)?
- Paul **expects the Lord will answer** his prayers for the Philippians. Why does he have that **confidence**?
- None of us is perfect. So, **how is it possible to reach purity and blamelessness** on the day Jesus returns (10)?
- What is the **“fruit of righteousness”** (11)?
- What does Paul see as **the end purpose** of these answered prayers (11)? Does that encourage or challenge the way you typically think about praying for others?
- Take time to **pray together** in light of today’s Scripture passage. Confess that we often run out of our own love. Pray for God’s love to abound in the church. Thank the Lord for His abounding love for sinners in Jesus Christ.

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