



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Heart and Prayers

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The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians (60-62 A.D.), Paul is imprisoned (one of four Prison Letters, the others being Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon) in Rome addressing the established Christian (mostly Gentile) church in Philippi, the first founded by Paul in Europe. In this letter, Paul, having a fondness for the people of the church of Philippi, because of their faithfulness and generous nature, wanted to thank them for their gifts, letting them know why he was returning Epaphroditus to them, sharing his situation in prison, urging unity in church, and warning them against false teachers. While false doctrine had started to plague many of the churches, he wanted to provide encouragement for practical living and support for sound doctrine. While much of the letter deals with spiritual growth, the tone throughout is that there is joy in Christ for those that are His. Paul begins with a greeting and a statement of strong affection for these saints. (Php 1:7-11 NASB)

“For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.”(1:7-8)

I have you in my heart. While a mixed group of believers, the Philippian church and Paul were one in love for Christ and had a strong affection for one another because of that love relationship. That loyalty and relationship was exhibited when the believers in Philippi provide financial and physical support to Paul during his imprisonment. Paul carried that love in his heart. Paul also loved them for their passion to consistently get the gospel out to the people. They were partakers of grace with Paul. He had a longing to be with them with the affection (Gk *splágchnon* deepest inward parts, bowels) tender feelings of Christ Jesus. Paul prayed for the saints.

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.” (1:9-11)

I have you in my prayers. Paul consistently prayed for the saints in the Philippian church, asking God that their love would continue to grow in real knowledge and in a discerning manner. Paul’s prayer focus was on their spiritual growth. First, that their love would be deeply grounded in real knowledge, the truth found in God’s word, scripture. Second, that their love would be discerning, or in other words, that the saints’ love application would be applied biblically, that they would be faithful in their daily walk.

While the believing Philippians may have been offensive to many at the time, they were called to be faithful in the sincere delivery and application of the gospel and would be blameless for this faithful effort. Additionally, they would be filled with the “fruit of righteousness” the transformation of salvation found in and through Jesus Christ, giving glory and praise to God.

For Your Consideration:

- Are you in a fellowship of believers, similar to the Philippians’, that have a passion for sharing the gospel and caring for each other?
- Are they in your heart?
- Are they in your prayers for real knowledge and discernment?

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: SESSION OR HEARING WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE RM. 44

STAFF, LOBBYISTS AND CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY: WEDNESDAYS AT NOON, STATEHOUSE RM.44