

**Philippians #3
Philippians 1:7-11
“A Three Part Prayer”**

Paul prays for that which is most important and, in this passage, Tom will examine Paul’s three-fold prayer for the Philippians believers. This prayer will touch so many practical areas of life in which we still need much reminder and improvement.

There was great diversity in the city of Philippi – and this stratification would have produced plenty of opportunities for conflict and division. Poor vs. rich. Free vs. slave. Greek vs. Jew. Race, religion and education differences were all common. How are these differences being addressed today – and especially in light of these passages?

- John 17:20-23
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

Throughout this letter Paul offers heartfelt thanks for those in Philippi. What words do you observe in verses 7 and 8 that demonstrate how Paul feels? How expressive are you to let others know their importance in your life?

Tom reviewed verse 6 and reminded us of the certainty of salvation using the phrase “the preservation of the saints.” As you reflect on the amazing certainty of heaven (“as certain of heaven as the saints who are already there”), how can you express thankfulness for this eternal security? If you need an example, see Romans 8: 37-39.

The first part of Paul’s prayer is that the Philippians love would abound more and more. Paul was a model of the Great Commandment of Matthew 22:34-38 – To love God and to love people. Which do you feel is harder to accomplish? Why?

Love, genuine love, grows with knowledge and discernment. Tom expounded that love must be both emotional and rational. Love must engage both emotions and our will. What happens when these get out of balance and what can you do to maintain the balance in your relationships with others and with God?

Tom used John MacArthur's list of "joy-blockers." Here are a few of them. Which do you see as the most detrimental to the joy in your life?

- ◇ A false sense of salvation – leads to legalism.
- ◇ Spiritual influence of Satan and his demons.
- ◇ Inadequate view of God's sovereignty.
- ◇ Focus on circumstances.
- ◇ Spirit of ingratitude.
- ◇ Living in the flesh – influence of sin.

The second major part of Paul's prayer was in the category of genuineness. Tom used the illustration of deceitfully filling the cracks in a pot with wax. How can we hold up our lives and be "sun-tested?" These passages can help.

- Psalm 139:23-24
- Psalm 119: 33-40

The third part of Paul's prayer would be that the Philippians would have a fruit-filled life. (verse 11). The "fruit of righteousness" could be the "fruit of the Spirit" that Paul records in Galatians 5: 22-23. Review this list and focus on one aspect of the fruit that you'd like to see God increase in your life. How would a greater measure of this fruit produce a greater measure of joy?