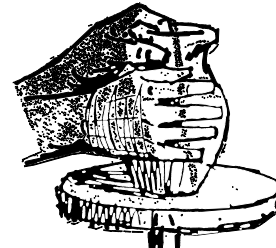


# His Workmanship at Westside

*"For we are His  
workmanship, created in  
Christ Jesus for good works."  
—Ephesians 2:10*



Isaiah 64:8

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## Philippians 1:3-11 Prayer of Thanksgiving *by Mark A. Copeland*

Have any of your good friends ever told you what they appreciate about you? Have you ever listened while others prayed for you? If so, you know what a warm feeling it is to be assured that others care. In Philippians 1:1-11 Paul prayed and thanked God for his friends in Philippi. Imagine yourself sitting with the Philippian Christians as this letter was read for the first time. You might be meeting in the home of Lydia, a business-woman Christian. Perhaps you would be seated next to the jailer who heard about Christ while guarding Paul and Silas.

There are many things we should pray about, but Paul zeroed in on important spiritual matters:

- 1- Pray that you will be more loving (with knowledge and discernment)
- 2- Pray that you will approve what is excellent (be more discerning between the good and the best)
- 3- Pray that you will be sincere and without offense
- 4- Pray that you will be righteous

**I. PRAY THAT YOUR LOVE WILL ABOUND.** "There is nothing that makes us love a man so much as prayer for him." The love here is their love for Jesus, which was ex-

pressed by their giving to Paul to spread the message of Jesus. The Philippians had excelled in their love toward Paul and others in the past. They had sent financial support to Paul and had prayed for him. They had also sent funds to the needy saints in Jerusalem, 2 Cor 8:1-5. But a cardinal principle of growth in Christ is that it never stops! In developing the graces of a Christ-like character, we must always be increasing, 2 Pet 1:5-9. Even if we are in no need for someone to teach us "how" to love, we can always use the admonition to "increase" our love, 1 Thes 4:9-10. Thus, Paul prayed that their love may abound **"still more and more"**—towards more people, with more action, with more fervor. Those who abound in any grace still have need to abound more and more, because there is still something lacking in it and we are imperfect in our best attainments.

Paul prayed that their love may abound more and more in knowledge and judgment. A teacher described this as love flowing like a river, perpetually fed with rain and fresh streams so that it continues to swell and increase, cf. Jn 7:37-39—but

within the banks or boundaries of knowledge and good judgment. Our abundant love is to be directed by truth and usefulness. The word knowledge in Greek is *epignosis*—full knowledge, a greater participation by the knower in the object known, thus more powerfully influencing him. This is not mere blind affection, but an intelligent love which is based on an enlarged view of godliness. Our love grows in knowledge off God's nature, perfections, of our own duty and interest, of Christ's work upon our souls, and His great purposes for us in the gospel. The word for judgment is *aesthesis*—perception, discernment. Our love is to be exercised with proper discrimination. It is to grow in all spiritual or moral feeling so we may have the clearest perception and the fullest enjoyment of our salvation; so we may not only know but feel that we are of God, by the Spirit which He has given us and that our feeling may become action in spiritual discipline; and so we may increasingly discern right from wrong (and good from best) in each situation. Sometimes human love is purely emotional—but this is not the continued on p. 2

**"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." —Philippians 1:9-11 (memorize, use in prayers)**

love that Paul was writing about. He meant discerning love, wise love, love that helps us make good decisions for the other person and for ourselves. Knowledge and perception guard love from being ill-judged. We must love God because of his infinite excellence and loveliness, and love our brethren because of what we see of the image of God upon them. Strong passions, without knowledge and a settled judgment, will not make us complete in the will of God, and sometimes do more harm than good. The Jews had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, and were transported by it to violence and rage, Rm 10:2; Jn 16:2.

## **II. PRAY THAT YOU MAY APPROVE THE THINGS THAT ARE EXCEL-**

**LENT.** It is possible that Paul is being progressive in his thoughts here, i.e., rather than just listing four equal but unrelated thoughts in this prayer, instead each idea builds on what precedes them (a form of "stair-like" progressive parallelism common in Hebrew writings). If this is the case, then this point explains why our love should abound. To "approve" is to "try, test, demonstrate." This passage is similar to Rm 12:2, 18, where we are to "*prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*" By approving excellent things, we prove to others that God's way is excellent—His is the best way, the only way, 1 Pet 2:15. This is the effect of knowledge and judgment: that we may approve excellent things by testing them and may discern the good from the excellent or best. The truths of Christ are excellent; and it is necessary that we approve them and hold them fast, cf. 4:8; 1 Thes 5:21. We only need to try them by experience in

order to approve of them. Test the things that are of real value, so we can discern what is true and genuine.

Thus by abounding in love still more and more with all knowledge and discernment, we are able to demonstrate by our actions that God's way is the excellent and best way.

## **III. PRAY THAT YOU MAY BE SINCERE AND WITHOUT OFFENSE.**

Sincerity (honest upright-heartedness) involves having perfect openness with God and man and having a clear conscience (without hypocrisy). Literally, it is "judged in the sunshine," clear, pure, and out in the open. This is a true Christian, who tells the truth, whose words and motives are pure. Without offense means not to provide occasions for others to stumble, cf. Rm 14:13. This means both that we would not take offense and that we would be careful not to offend, i.e., to live in all good conscience, Ax 23:1; 24:16. A person without offense never wounds others' feelings or gives occasion for hard thoughts; and he lives so that all may see he is blameless and uncorrupted. These virtues are in people who are abounding in love still more and more, in knowledge and all discernment; and approving the things that are excellent by their conduct! See Paul's progression in thought?

Paul's concern was that these virtues will last "till the day of Christ." This is the second time in Philippians that Paul referred to this "day," 1:6. This is the day when Christ comes again, a day of destruction for some, but glory for others, 2 Thes 1:7-11. Jesus will present the church without spot or wrinkle (Eph 5:27), and present believers faultless before the

presence of his glory with exceeding joy, Jude 24.

## **IV. PRAY THAT YOU WILL BE**

**MORE RIGHTEOUS.** We should pray to be what God wants us to be—holy, godly, just, righteous. True righteousness comes only from our righteous God, our Lord Jesus, and the Spirit. We can't get it anywhere else. Consequently, we need a constant connection to Him in order to grow in righteousness. "Lord, help me to be what you want me to be. Not my will but Your will be done in my life and on earth." Martin Luther wrote: "If I neglected prayer but a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith." The fruits (results) of righteousness are possible only "*by Jesus Christ.*" Without Him, we would not know what true love really is, 1 Jn 3:16. Without Him, we would not have the ability to demonstrate what is excellent, Pr 8:6; 22:20; Dan 6:3, or to be sincere and blameless. The fruits of righteousness are to be offered "to the glory and praise of God," cf. Mt 5:16, 1 Pet 2:12, because God, by the gift of His Son, has a) shown us what love really is, b) taught us what is truly excellent in His sight, and c) empowered us to be honest and blameless (without offense) before Him and others—to demonstrate His love and excellence and truth. If righteousness is the tree, then good works are the fruit. Like trees of righteousness planted of the Lord, Is 61:3, we are to be laden with good works, especially just and righteous works. Those who do much good should still do more. The fruits of righteousness, brought forth for the glory of God and edification of his church, should really fill us, and wholly take us up. Whatever we

*continued on p. 3*



Psalm 133:1



### Fill your can-teen in 2013

“May you be filled with all the fullness of God.”

—Ephesians 3:19

**Prayer for Philippi**, from p. 2 do must be done to the glory of God, 1 Cor 10:3; 4:11. God is honored when we not only are good, but do good, and abound in good works. This fruit is the result of 1) abounding in love still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 2) approving what is excellent, 3) being sincere and without offense. Notice again the stair-like progressive parallelism!

Praying like this is easy, but difficult to keep doing. Have you heard any man in assembly praying like this? Are we afraid to pray the Scriptures?

J. Gordon Henry wrote: “It is easier to be a preacher, elder, deacon, Bible school teacher than to pray. Maintaining a daily, consistent prayer time is HARD WORK. The reason is that Satan does not want us to pray, since the only time we are a threat to him and his work is when we pray. Therefore, he puts a high priority on destroying our praying. Without a daily quiet time, it is easy for the cutting edge of the spiritual life to grow blunt and dull. The result is complacency. A believer must plan an encounter with God every day for spiritual LIFE. Regular daily contact with our Source of spiritual life, the Lord Jesus Himself, is absolutely necessary.” AMEN! “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed,” Mk 1:35.

## Discipleship Here At Home

**Chariots to Carry** by Hannah W. Smith “And Elisha prayed, and said, ‘LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.’ Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha,” 2 Kg 6:17. I do not have a shadow of doubt that if all our eyes could be opened today, we should see our

### Philippians Chapter Outline JOYS

Joy in fellowship (participation) in the gospel, 1:4-5; Joy in Christ and in preaching, 1:18, 25-26

One accord, One mind, 2:1-2; Others, service, 2:3-4, 19-30; Obedience, Christ Our example, 2:5-18

Yes, I count all things but loss, 3:1-8, Yearn for Christ’s righteousness, 3:9f, and for His resurrection and high calling (press forward), 3:11-21

Stand fast in the Lord, 4:1; Same mind, 4:2-3; Say rejoice, 4:4-5; Supplication and prayer, 4:6-9; Sufficiency of Christ for Strength, Supply of all needs (in every State, even Suffering), Sweet Smell, acceptable Sacrifice, 4:10-20; Salutations, 4:21-23.

homes, our businesses, and our streets filled with the “chariots of God.” There is no need for any one of us to walk for lack of chariots. That cross family one, who has hitherto made life a burden to you and has been the Juggernaut to crush your soul into the dust, may henceforth be a glorious chariot to carry you to the heights of godly patience and long-suffering. That misunderstanding, that mortification, that unkindness, that disappointment, that loss, that defeat—all are chariots waiting to carry you to the very heights of victory you have so longed for. Mount into them, then, with thankful hearts, and see the shining of His love Who carries you in His arms safely and triumphantly over it all.

### PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Christina Adams’s daughter **Kayla**—kidney infection hospitalization; now home **Berney Charo, Tyler Huelsman**—sick **Delmar Hice, Pat Campbell**’s father—recurring lung infections; home from rehab **Larry Campbell** is there in AR until Wed to help and ask Delmar to move here.

**Mark Campbell**—seizures from meds; Rocky Mtn Brain Injury Svc in CO Springs **Megan Sangellino**’s grandmother, **Norma Trump**—hip surgery, in rehab; depressed **Pat Wilkes**—hyper parathyroidism; day surgery to remove 1 (we all have 4) parathyroid gland in 2 weeks

Remember **Megan Aki** and the girls; the **Andrew Tope** family; the **Reames** family; **Forrest Corray**, Jordan’s brother—addiction

### CHRONIC CONDITIONS

**Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr;**

**Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes**—asthma

**Pearl Chapman**—leg pains; pancreatitis

**Nell Free**—pacemaker, heart; back pain

**Rod Green**—thyroid trouble

**Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy

**Danielle Huelsman**—vertigo, CV syndrome

**Kirk Johnson**—worsening MS; needs help around his house

**Menards**—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;

**Virginia**, worsening rapid macular degeneration; high BP

**Sandra Perry**—neuropathy from diabetes

**Cheryl Reames**—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia

**Judy Sartin**—spinal stenosis; severe arthritis

**Judy Sartin**’s grandson **Tristen**—autism

**Lynda Szymanski**—COPD, lung

Traveling **Patricia Ward** in AZ visiting Stacey. The **Reingrovers** are on vacation, back 10/2. **Gary Boyd** is spending this week camping in CO with his brother.

Job concerns **Megan Aki, Lorenzo Gonzalez, Rod Green, Linda Szymanski**, and **Andrew Tope** are seeking jobs.

Expecting **Liz Kosik**, early April



## Exposing current thoughts & trends

### Florida Man Disciplined for FB Post *by Janna Brock*

Palm Beach County Public Affairs spokesman/staffer John Jamason is being investigated for posting a comment at home on his personal Facebook page about Islam on 9/11, and he could be disciplined or fired at work for making a "critical" statement about Islam. Jamason wrote: "Never forget. There is no such thing as radical Islam. All Islam is radical. There may be Muslims who don't practice their religion, much like others. The Quran is a book that preaches hate." Jamason is correct. All Islam is radical. The Quran preaches hate. This is nothing that anyone truly aware of the nature of Islam has not posted on social media. But his post so incited the Council on American-Islamic Relations Florida, Inc. (CAIR), that it demanded that all Jamason's social media posts be turned over to them for inspection to see if he had taken his beliefs into the workplace because he is a supervisor. They hired an investigator and made a public records (FOIA) request to the county commission for communication sent by Jamason from any county computer within the past 30 days, including anything deemed personal.

Will speaking out cost Jamason his job? If CAIR has its way, yes. Posting about Islam is one exception to the free speech declaration in the Constitution in today's PC world. Palm Beach County Administrator Bob Weisman said that Jamason would have been fired by now had he not been a merit system employee. "If he was an at-will employee, for which I do have more discretion, I would be considering his termination today for the ignorance of his comments and that they are hurtful to part of our community," Weisman told WPTV. CAIR often exerts bullying power on citizens. They requested all the emails Jamason may have received to and from Muslims, Muslim organizations, Islam, and Islamic organizations for the past 60 days. If they can get this information, they can throw their weight around as much as they want. And public officials cower.

"The private rights of employees on social media and for other modes of communication are protected by the U.S. Constitution and relevant law," Weisman said. But his office is still considering termination.

CAIR is Hamas. CAIR's strong ties to the Muslim Brotherhood are also well documented. It is a terrorist organization fronting a group whose message is "fighting stereotypes" and proclaiming civil liberties. CAIR aims to destroy the civil liberties of those who dare speak the truth about Islam. With deep governmental support, taking out dissenters should be easy for it. When it comes to Islam, there is nothing too small or insignificant that cannot be deemed "offensive."



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## Assembly Schedule

### Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

### Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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This morning: "Six Keys to Personal and Church Growth," DeWayne Howell

This afternoon:

### Paul's Prison Epistles Series

Philippians 3-4, Jeff Wilkes

Wednesday night: begin Acts study

Thanks

to the men who are  
teaching and preaching  
in Jim's absence.