

PHILIPPIANS (COUNT IT ALL JOY)
PROGRAM 4 (#912089)
WEEK 1 (#912318)
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SERIES: Philippians (Count It All Joy)

TITLE: Program 4 – Your Love May Abound

THURSDAY

OPEN

Are you ever at a loss, Beloved, about how to pray for someone? You think I know I'm supposed to pray for them, but what do I pray? Well you can go to the Lord and say Lord, what do I pray? Or you can also go to the Word of God and see what others prayed and then pray the same thing. This is what we're going to look at today as we look at Philippians, the epistle of joy, so that in your prayers you can pray with joy.

PART ONE

Book by book, verse by verse: that's the way we're going through the Bible. And O Beloved, how important it is for you and I to know what God has to say. Do you realize that when we open the Bible we're opening God's book, that these are the very words of God? And as Paul sat down to write his epistle to the church at Philippi **"to the saints that are in Philippi including the overseers and the deacons," (Philippians 1:1b)** he wrote

under divine inspiration. He was a holy man who was moved by the Holy Spirit who wrote the very things that God wanted to say and God wanted to preserve for you and me today. So there are mighty, mighty lessons here, lessons for life. These are precepts for life, standards by which you and I can order our lives. And as we continue in Philippians chapter 1, we come to Paul talking about his prayer. Now remember we said that prayer is a word that you always need to mark. Prayer or supplication or intercession, all of those have to do with communicating with God. And so what we want to do is to pick up and just look at verse 4: **“Always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all.”** So offering prayer in joy. Now if you downloaded our study guide from the website, it shows you there how to mark the reference to prayer and I just simply underline it. It’s kind of like a bowl with a lip on it, in purple, and then I color it pink. And any time I’m reading through my Bible and I see that color and that shape I know hey, there’s something there about prayer. So you can go to our website, it’s preceptsforlife.com, and you can download absolutely free our study guide. That’s preceptsforlife.com. And we’re doing this because we want you to know God’s Word for yourself. We want you to study it inductively. We want you to learn how to observe it, to discover what God is saying, how to interpret it, to discover what God means, and then how to apply it, how to live in the light of what you’ve learned or how to change your thinking so that you, your thoughts line up in conformity with God’s. We want you to have a biblical worldview. In other words, we want you to look at everything in this life through the lens, through the glasses of God’s holy Word because this is absolute truth. So you mark prayer there. **“Always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all.” (Philippians 1:4)** So you know that Paul was a man of prayer. You know that he was praying for these people. Now the question is, what did he pray? Because if I can see what he prayed, then I can take what he prayed and I can apply it to my life and I can use it in praying for others. So we come down to verse 8, and this is where I

left off with you. He says, **“For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:8)** Now I just want you to remember that that term, “affection of Christ Jesus,” because we’re going to see the importance of this term as we come to the end of Philippians, chapter 1 and the beginning of Philippians, chapter 2. But what you’re seeing here is Paul’s heart is aligned with God’s heart. And because Paul’s heart is aligned with God’s heart, then Paul has the affection for the Philippians that Christ has for them. In other words he says, **“...I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:8b)** When Christ comes into your life, He sheds His love abroad in your heart, so there is a love for others. There is an affection for others. There is a caring for others, because now you’re part of the family of God. You’re never alone again. And we’re members one of another. When one member rejoices we rejoice. When one member suffers we suffer. Why? Because we’re part of the body of Christ. So he goes on to say, **“And this I pray....”** And you would mark prayer again. **“...That your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment.” (Philippians 1:9)** Now when I come to the word love I mark it also. And if it’s just talking about human love I just draw a red heart. If it’s talking about love for God or love for Christ I draw a red heart and I color the inside yellow. If I come to the word hate I draw a black heart, color it black and then I put a slash through it, which means it’s not loving; it’s hating. All right, so here he says, **“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more....” (Philippians 1:9a)** He says I want your love for God and your love for others to increase. And he talks about this in Thessalonians. And what you and I can learn is this: that as we walk with Christ, that as we mature, that as we grow up, as Ephesians 4 says into the stature of the measure of a man or woman after Jesus Christ, like Jesus Christ, then as we grow then our love abounds. And so he says as I pray for you, **“...I pray, that your love [will] abound...more and more.” (Philippians 1:9b)** You say I need my love to

abound. Well do you know that this tells us how? This tells us how love abounds. And hang on, it's going to surprise you. **"...Love abounds more and more in real knowledge...."** In real knowledge. In other words, if you know the Word of God, if you have a real knowledge of the Word of God, not a second hand knowledge, not a knowledge that you get from others that you're not sure whether they're right or whether they're wrong or you may think they're all right because you see them do miracles or you hear them do wonderful exploits or because they're on a lot of television or a lot of radio, or because they've written a lot of books and so you just follow them blindly. God doesn't want that. God wants you to have real knowledge for yourself. And real knowledge comes through knowing this book, through knowing the Word of God. Let me take you to a cross-reference I think that would be very helpful. And it's in 2 Peter chapter 1. In 2 Peter chapter 1, in verse 2, and Peter starts his letter the same way basically that Paul does, grace and peace. And he says in verse 2: **"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord."** (2 Peter 1:2) Now how is grace multiplied to me so that more and more and more I understand the benefits that I have in Christ and I appropriate them and I live in the light of that grace, that is power, grace that is sufficient for any need, grace that gets me through any situation? Grace is not only unmerited favor, but it's everything that Jesus Christ is and it's been made available to you so that you stand, Romans 5, you stand in the grace of God. And standing in the grace of God you're appropriating that grace. And he's saying that this grace might be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God. In other words the more you understand about God, the more that you understand about Jesus Christ, the greater your knowledge. And knowledge means that you know, and it means that you know truth. The greater that is the greater is going to be your peace, the greater is going to be your grace, because you're going to appropriate that grace and peace is going to come with it. You know I get a lot of letters, and I love hearing from you, and I love your emails, so keep

them coming. Please encourage me in this way. But let me know where you're at and what you're thinking, what your questions are because we're here to minister to you and to help you grow. But as I listen to these letters, many times people will say to me, like this letter here, I found you on radio. From radio I went to television. I found you on television. From television I got started in the Bible studies. Now they're coming to the ministry. And this is what they said, they said, "You know I knew that there had to be more to Christianity than this. I knew that there had to be a way for me to know, listen to the word, for me to know God better, and I found it through Precept Ministries International. I found it because you taught me how to study God's Word for myself and I've been hooked by the inductive method of Bible study forever." And we have all sorts of Bible studies to help you grow from 40-minute Bible studies that require no homework all the way up to our Precept studies. And you can find out all about that by going to our website. Go to preceptsforlife.com, preceptsforlife.com and you can find out more about all the things we have to help you grow to increase your knowledge. But then he says in 2 Peter chapter 1, verse 3: **"Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us...,**" the true knowledge of God who called us, **"...by His own glory and excellence."** (2 Peter 1:3) Let's just stop and think about that for a minute. He says that **"...His divine power has granted to us everything...,**" everything that you and I need in order to live life, everything that you and I need in order to be God-like He has granted to us through the true knowledge of God, through the true knowledge of God. So if he's talking about a true knowledge, then you've got to know that there's a false knowledge, that there's a false teaching about Jesus Christ. And as you read through the epistles, especially Jude, and especially 2 Peter chapter 2, you're going to find false teaching giving out false knowledge, and the only way that you can separate the true from the false is to know the truth. Do you know that

when they teach people to find counterfeit money that they never let them see counterfeit money? They only become so acquainted with real money, so acquainted with it that the minute that something is put before them that is false they can distinguish that it's not true because it is not according to what they have seen and known. And that's what this program is all about. This is what Paul's praying. And we'll talk about it more when we come back after this break.

PART TWO

As Paul is praying for those at Philippi, as he is praying in verse 9 that their **"...love [will] abound still more and more in real knowledge..."** not false knowledge, but **"...in real knowledge and all discernment..."** (**Philippians 1:9**) he tells you why. There's a result there. Why is he praying that their love will abound through knowledge? Because listen, the more that you know God, the more intimate you become with Him the more you fall in love with Him. And the more you fall in love with Him, the more you want to obey Him. And the more you love Him and obey Him, the more that you're going to love others. Because it's a compelling force. Love of God is like a wall on both sides that shuts you up to one purpose, that constrains you. This is what Paul says in 2 Corinthians chapter 5: The love of Christ constrains me. (v.14) In other words, it is shutting me up. I know how much God loves me and because I know that love, then this shuts me up to one purpose. And he's saying I'm praying this **"...that your love [will] abound...more and more in real knowledge and [in] all discernment."** (**Philippians 1:9**) Discernment means you just don't swallow everything that you hear. And if somebody presents themselves to you as a child of God it does not necessarily mean that they are a true child of God. And it does not necessarily mean that they've got a corner on the truth. Watch and go to the Word of God and that will give you discernment. Discernment is learning how to look at something and evaluate it in a correct way. And so

he's saying that the love that God is going to give you, that this love that's going to abound in your life is going to be a discerning love. In Chronicles, when Jehoshaphat returns from battle and his life is spared and Ahab is killed, all of a sudden a prophet is before Jehoshaphat and he says you know God has something against you, and that is should you love those who hate the Lord? Yes, we are to love. And yes, God loves the whole world. But we're not to love in the sense of coming along and helping those that hate the Lord. We're to give them the gospel; we're to love them in that way, but we're not to continue to love them in their evil deeds and just to applaud them and encourage them and say oh that's all right. We're all going to end up the same place. No, we're not; no we're not. There's a heaven and there's a hell. And listen, before a person is cast into the eternal lake of fire there's a great white throne judgment and they're judged according to their deeds. Before a person enters into the glories of heaven and I'm talking about the new kingdom, the new heaven and the new earth there is a judgment seat of Christ. There's a judgment seat of Christ where we are given rewards or where we lose rewards. 2 Corinthians 5:10 says: **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...."** (2 Corinthians 5:10a) Romans 14:10 says that [we must all stand at the judgment seat of God.] (PARAPHRASE Romans 14:10) So there is a time coming when God is going to evaluate our works as Christians and we will be rewarded or we will lose reward. Now we believe that that's what Paul means by the day of Christ. He's mentioned the day of Christ in verse 6. He says, **"I'm confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ...."** (Philippians 1:6) In verse 10 he says, **"so that you may approve...."** He's praying that their love will abound more and more in real knowledge and all discernment so that, purpose clause, **"...you may approve the things that are excellent."** (Philippians 1:10a) In other words, you have knowledge, you have discernment, you have a love that is governing you, and so you look at things and what you do is you approve the

things that are excellent. You put them to the test. Approve is the word dokimos in the Greek, d-o-k-i-m-o-s, and it means to put to the test for the sake of approving, for the sake of finding it, that it meets the qualifications. And so he says, **“so that you may approve the things that are excellent...”** now watch, another purpose clause, **“...in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ.” (Philippians 1:10)** God intends for you and me to live in a way that is blameless so that people can’t look at us and accuse us. Now how do we help others to live that way? We help others to live that way by praying for them, even as Paul is praying. So if you have children pray for them. If you have a husband or a wife pray for that person. Pray for the people in church. Pray for Christendom in general. Pray that their love will abound more and more in real knowledge and all discernment. One of the things that I pray repeatedly is that God would create within our nation a real hunger for the Word of God, a real desire to know truth, because the Word is truth. Jesus prayed, Father, sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy Word is truth. So I’m praying for a hunger for that. All right so he’s praying for this so that they may approve the things that are excellent so that, or in order that they will be sincere. Now what does sincere mean? Well they took the word and they put it into Latin and it was the word “sinecera,” s-i-n-e and then c-e-r-a. And what they would do is when they made a plate, they would take and put on the back “sinecera;” it would be a stamp on the back. And they would put that stamp on the back, which meant it was without wax, because when you take fine china and you fire it, you put it in the oven and you bake it, sometimes it gets a crack. And so in order to cover up the crack and sell it as if it were unblemished, what they would do is they would rub wax into it, into the crack and then they would cover it up with that glaze. What they were doing is they were hiding the crack with the wax. The only way that you could tell that it was there is if you took each piece of china and you held it up to the light. And when you held it up to the light, now I’m talking about fine china, you would see the crack in it.

The light showed the defect. The light showed what had been covered up by the wax. That's why they would put on the back of fine china "sinecera," without wax. In other words you do not need to hold it up to the light because there are no cracks in it. What is Paul's concern? Paul's concern is this, Beloved, that when they stand at the day of Christ they be without wax, they be without faults that they be sincere, "sinecera," that they be blameless at the day of Christ. This is what you need to pray. Christ wants you to be the very best that you can be. Christ does not want you to hang your head in shame when you stand before Him at the judgment seat of Christ. And He's made total provision for you and I to be everything that we should be. He's made total provision through the Word, because the Word gives us real knowledge, and when we have real knowledge then we have discernment. And when we have discernment and real knowledge then we are able to put to the test what is good and what is false. And what he wants here is that you and I might **"...approve the things that are excellent..."(Philippians 1:10a)** so that at the end of our life we'll be without wax so to speak, no cracks that need to be covered up, but we would be sincere and we would be without blame at the day of Christ. That's what God wants. Beloved, here's what Paul prays. He prays it for you. He prays it for me. And you and I are to pray it for one another so that you and I, when we stand on that day of Christ we do not hang our head in shame, but we're filled with the fruit of righteousness that results in glory and praise to God, to whom belongs all honor and glory and praise and power and dominion.