

## Message: Love According to Knowledge. Philippians 1:9

Wednesday, April 18, 2018

- We are studying the wonderful, encouraging book of Philippians.
- It is one of four prison epistles written by Paul who had learned the grace and truth of God.
- Philippians hones us into the pattern of God's love and our responsibility to love according to God's knowledge and God's discernment.
- The world's love is void of a definitive, concrete definition.
- You can love your dog and cat or your wife.
- If you don't tolerate sinful behavior in yourself or others, then you are considered an unloving person.
- If You don't cater to the beck and call of humanity's skewed and confused ethics, then you are labeled a hater.
- Because of the insanity of the world, the world offers an insane view of love.
- However, there is a solid and true definition of love that can be understood and experienced.
- To this, the book of Philippians so powerfully attests.

- In Philippians 1:9, we read the following: <sup>9</sup> ***And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment...***
- The Scriptures make evident that we are not restricted in regard to who we love but in how we love.
- First of all, we are to love according to the knowledge of God.
- God does not want me to simply know that I am to love but to actually love others with the love of God and to correct myself when I am not loving.
- I am taught by God to love in deed and in truth: ***“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth”*** - John 3:18.
- Our Lord Jesus did not love with mere words but in deed and in truth.
- He never approved of sin, but He was loving – He said, ***“I did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance”*** – Mark 2:17.
- In this way, He loved in truth.
- Calling sinners to repent of sin is a very loving and wise deed approved by God: God ***“commands all men everywhere to repent”*** (Acts 17:30) and ***“He who wins souls is wise”*** (Proverbs 11:30).

- To the sinful woman who washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair, Jesus promised, ***“Your sins are forgiven... your faith has saved you. Go in peace”*** – Luke 7:36-50.
- Jesus forgave her sins because of her repentant heart and her faith in Him.
- This is a great illustration of how Christ loved in deed and in truth.
- We should love sinners who need God according to this knowledge.
- Jesus loved the adulterous woman in deed and in truth.
- First of all, he did not condemn her ***“For God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved”*** – John 3:17.
- Instead He showered her with grace and mercy.
- After she called Him LORD, He declared, ***“Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”*** – John 8:1-12.
- Here is a wonderful illustration of loving according to knowledge: loving in deed and in truth.
- He showed her His love by not condemning her; however, He still shared the truth – that adultery is sin, and that she was to go and sin no more; i.e., live a repentant life through faith in her Messiah, Yeshua.

- Loving in deed and in truth go together. We are not to separate the one from the other.
- This is how we are to love according to God’s knowledge: we are to love in deed and in truth.
- It is very important to understand that Jesus never made an excuse for anyone’s failures, yet He was always compassionate and willing to forgive.
- While our Lord sat at Jacob’s well to rest, He lovingly offered His *living water* to the Samaritan woman living in sexual sin.
- He told her, ***“Go call your husband and come here... You have well said that ‘I have no husband’ for you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that you spoke truly”*** – John 4:16-18.
- Jesus knew full well that she was living in sin, yet He showed her grace and offered her His living water – He loved her in deed not with mere words.
- He didn’t scorch her with fire, chastise her with whips, or angrily rebuke her.
- However, He did not simply overlook her sin; instead, He pointed it out in a tender, compassionate way.
- This is one way He loved according to knowledge: in deed and in truth.

- He explained to her that ***“Salvation is of the Jews,”*** and He was straightforward when He communicated, ***“You worship what you do not know.”***
- Because she was ignorant of what true worship actually was and how God defined true worship, He explained that a true worshipper of God must worship God ***“in Spirit and in truth.”***
- While He loved in deed so marvelously, He still told her the truth.
- He shared the truth about Himself and told her that He was the Messiah ***“I, who speak to you, Am He”*** – John 4.
- He loved her according to God’s knowledge: in deed and in truth.
- He was tactful, considerate, truthful, and kind.
- This was Paul’s prayer for the Philippians; it’s Christ’s prayer for us.
- Clearly, God’s love is not a blanket approval of man’s sin nor is it blind to man’s corrupt heart.
- However, His love ***“bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never fails”*** – 1 Corinthians 13.
- Christ’s love is fervent, inviting, and without a doubt unfailing!

- The Bible says, ***“And above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover a multitude of sins”*** – 1 Peter 4:8.
- God’s love motivated Christ to freely and fiercely offer His compassion and kindness to repentant sinners all the while remaining steadfastly loyal and obedient to God’s Holy, written truth.
- This is love according to knowledge. This is how we love in deed and in truth.
- Jesus Christ was not “wishy-washy,” undiscerning, or tolerant of sin; however, He was full of compassion, graciously forgiving, and generously kind toward sick sinners who needed the Great Physician’s healing touch.
- Jesus Christ shared truth, and He loved ferociously.
- Jesus spoke the truth in love!
- Paul wrote, ***“But speaking the truth in love may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ”*** – Ephesians 4:15.
- Let us learn to speak His truth in love.
- Not only are we to speak His truth in love, but His love in us becomes our motivation for speaking His truth.

- God's says that sharing His truth is a result of His love for others working in our hearts: ***"For the love of Christ compels us because we judge thus that if one died for all then were all dead"*** - 2 Corinthians 5:14.
- Paul, the apostle of Christ, was compelled by the love of Christ to preach Christ crucified, so spiritually dead humanity would have the opportunity to receive eternal life by repenting of sin and believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Our Lord Jesus was the ultimate lover of God and others; He is our greatest example of loving according to knowledge – of loving in deed and in truth.
- We love in truth when we do not rejoice in sin, tolerate sin, or make an excuse for sin whether it be our own or another's.
- Love ***"Does not rejoice in iniquity but rejoices in the truth"*** – 1 Corinthians 13:6.
- As we are instructed to love according to God's knowledge in Philippians 1:9, we are also to love according to the *discernment* of God – our love is to have good, biblical common sense in regard to what God says is right and what God says is wrong.
- We are not commanded to love for love's sake as in the hippie generation.

- Their mottos in the 60s and 70s were to “Make love not war” and “if it feels good, then do it” and “free love.”
- That was a movement devoid of God’s holy discernment – this is made plain by that movement’s behavior: a sexual revolution that wasted America’s youth because of drugs and sexual license.
- As we are called to love according to God’s *knowledge*, we are also called to love according to God’s *discernment*.
- Discernment is needed because we live in a world that counterfeits God’s truth.
- When we are able to recognize counterfeit truth (that which closely represents God’s written Word but upon examination is found to be false), then we will be loving with *all discernment* – first, in ourselves and second, in others.