

Thoughtful Love

Scripture Reading — Philippians 1:9-11

This is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best. . . . — Philippians 1:9-10

Paul knew how to pack a lot into a little. In just three verses today we find deep insight. Yes, Paul is thankful for the Philip-pians, but thanksgiving is not his only prayer. He also wants their love to abound. But not in some sentimental, greeting-card kind of way.

For the Christian, love is more than sentiment. It also involves depth of insight, discernment, and the ability to figure out what is best in a given situation. It prompts us to ask, “What will help me be the most transparent to Jesus when I encounter this or that situation?”

We don’t typically associate love with a furrowed brow as we figure out the most fitting way to act. But Christlike love involves exactly that kind of thoughtfulness. The goal is to produce spiritual fruit that reflects Jesus and also points -others in his direction.

When we read in John 3:16 that God “so loved the world,” we know that God’s plan of salvation was behind that divine love. Yes, such love did involve warmth and ardor, but God’s working out of our salvation required a lot of holy discernment too. Do we think it was easy to solve our sin problem? It cost the life of God’s only Son!

As we are called to love, we are also called to the God-like activity of fruitful hard thinking so that in all things we will bring glory to God in Christ.

Prayer

Grant us discerning hearts, dear God, that we may better understand you and how to bring your love to others around us. Amen.

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