



ARE YOU SURE?



A S H A K E T H E N A T I O N S D E V O T I O N A L

“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

I never want to be a hearer of the Word only. I always want to walk out what the Word of God declares. There are times when it feels effortless to walk the path the Lord has set before us. **Other times, it feels like we are walking in quicksand.** I like to think that the Apostle Paul is always speaking to himself first. In his opening comments to the Philippians, his prayer centers around the inner man. There is something very powerful in external expression, **but if it doesn't come from an internal knowledge of the Creator,** we may become performers or whitewashed sarcophagi (coffins) – pretty on the outside, but dead on the inside.

I am captured by the prayer – ‘that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and all discernment.’ **The foundation is love.** The fuel is knowledge and discernment. When we love with the heart of Christ, we enter into the will of God for humanity. The more we press into Jesus and His ways, the more we are able to focus our attention on things the Lord desires. **Jesus desires the things that are excellent.** He desires that we may walk sincerely and without offense. This can be the challenging part.

We may feel that we walk in sincerity, but what about without offense? How often do we hold a grudge or think that we were slighted or undervalued? **As love deepens in our lives, we are able to live with a posture in the Presence of the Lord.** The more we have an awareness of the Holy Spirit being with us, the more we are able to see through the lens of eternity. The more I am centered on the reality of Christ, the more the fruits of righteousness abound and this by Christ alone. “And the seed whose fruit is righteousness (spiritual maturity) is sown in peace by those who make peace [by actively encouraging goodwill between individuals]” James 3:18 (AMP). **The one who is spiritually mature has greater control over the response to offense.** It is not that things do not come our way that may cause offense, but as we walk in the things of God, these offenses do not illicit the same response they may have used to. Proverbs 11:30 shares that, “**the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.**” As the love of God abounds, as we are filled with the fruit of righteousness, we are drawn to declare Jesus Christ to the world – the source of life. When we love with the heart of Christ, we no longer have the option but to win souls. **It is the overflow of the love we have received from such a wonderful Savior.**

I find that as the Lord increases my capacity to love, the less I find myself becoming offended. As I manifest the heart of God, the end result is glory and praise to Jesus Christ. He radiates through us. Keep pressing into the love of God, saints. There lies our freedom!