

Philippians 1:10-11

Life involves making a lot of decisions about right and wrong, and God has given us His Word as a guide in order to help us make those decisions.

If we depend on the world's standard of right and wrong we will make decisions that, in all likelihood, will not align with God's instructions in the Scriptures. Right and wrong changes in society over time, and it usually digresses over time. Even our conscious is a problem because the Scriptures teach, "*the heart [the seat of conscience] is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it*" (**Jeremiah 17:9**) and it doesn't always give accurate readings.

In review we've already found in Paul's prayer list:

- A prayer for our passion – our agape love to overflow its banks
- A prayer request for our development – for our love to be defined, not by what we think love is, or how we want to express love, but love according to knowledge – Biblical knowledge
- Then we saw Paul praying for our practice in life to be guarded and guided by godly discernment
- Passion – Development – and Practice

Examine – Test (Vs. 10)

This verse instructs believers to examine or test that which is excellent. The Greek verb Paul uses for "approve" is *dokimazein* which means to "examine" or "to test" or "scrutinize". It comes from the stem word "to watch" for the purpose of determining reliability, and trustworthiness, (as in tested in battle).

- A test can refer to examining something to determine if it's true or false
- This word can also refer to evaluating the difference between things that are good, things that are better, or best
- The word can also refer to determining the difference between things that matter or things that don't matter
- All of these purposes for examining "all things" are applicable
- **Purpose:** If we practice turning to the Scriptures as the gauge for examining "all things" we will be conditioning ourselves to seek God's word, first and foremost, for answers that will align God's design for our lives and His purposes for our life

Paul is actually praying that we will not assume anything. He even wrote to the Thessalonians, "*Test all things; hold fast to what is good*" (**I Thessalonians 5:21**).

Purity Vs. 10

The word translated as "sincere" is the Greek word "*eilikrinēs*" which literally means "pure". In the text it connotes pure in motives or sincere. It is actually derived from the word light, meaning to be tested by the light for purity.

Fine pottery was fragile both before and after firing and it would often crack in the oven. Dishonest dealers would take a clear wax and fill in the cracks and crevices where it would blend in with the color of the pottery.

But the wax was immediately detectable when the pottery was held up to the light of the sun. Honest merchants would write in the on the bottom of their pottery while it was soft and before it was fired, the words "sine cera" which gives us our word sincere. It literally meant, without wax.

The word in verse 10 for "sincere" carries the connotation of being "completely pure". Combine this with what Paul just said which was we should examine or test everything then choosing the best will always lead you toward purity.

Here in verse 10 Paul is telling the Christians at Philippi that the world should be able to examine our lives in light and see that we are pure.

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Listen to the Scriptures that reflect light in connection to the way we live:

- *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet – a light unto my pathway.” (Psalm 119:105)*
- *“The unfolding of Your word gives light” (Psalm 119:130)*
- Paul refers to the gospel as *“the glorious light of Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:4)*
- *“We’ve been called out of darkness into a marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9)*
- **1 John 1:7**, *“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.”*

There is another aspect to the word “purity” used in Paul’s day. This is especially pointed to the believer to avoid hypocrisy of any form.

Be real – be sincere – be honest – when thinking about the metaphor of a pot that is without cracks we need to keep in mind that the gospel doesn’t pour very well from a Christian whose life is fake. In fact, Paul writes to the Corinthians, *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.” (2 Corinthians 4:7).*

Prudence Vs. 10

Paul’s prayer for purity referred to the inner person and blamelessness refers to the outer behavior. The Greek word for “blameless” is (*aproskopos*) most literal translation means “without stumbling.” Prudence simply means cautious discretion, being careful. Be prudent (cautious discretion) in your behavior.

As we mature in the Lord, the more careful we need to be so as not to spiritually stumble. The battles don’t grow easier with time; they grow more deceptive and dangerous.

Proper Perspective Vs. 10

Paul is trying to elevate our perspective. For Paul the day of Christ wasn’t just some kind of prophetic idea, it was more, it was an actual way of thinking, deciding, and living.

Productivity Vs. 11

Verse 11, *“being filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.”* A good reminder that anything good that we do for Christ is *“Christ working in us to do of His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).*

Jesus said in **John 15:5**, *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”*

Priority to be Glory and Praise to God

The writer of Hebrews picks up the same approach as Paul when he writes, *“Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name” (Hebrews 13:15).*

There is a Rabbinical saying that says, *“In the future time all sacrifices shall cease; but praises shall not cease. They offer the best sacrifice who glorify with hymns the Savior and benefactor, God.”*

To achieve this we should ask ourselves:

What in my life distracts, destroys, inhibits, or draws me away from living daily with purity for Christ?

If someone else imitated me, would it be embarrassing or would I be alarmed?

What in my life demonstrates that my thinking, my behavior, my attitudes, and conduct is influenced by the proper perspective that one day soon Christ will return?

If examined by Christ what words will demonstrate that my Christian walk is producing spiritual fruit?

If any answer is negative, what actions do I need to take?