

JULY/AUGUST 2022

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and the praise of God. (Phil. 1:9-11)

St. Paul writes to the Philippians and declares that in order to love the right things one must have knowledge and discernment. This is because love has an object to which it clings and we need to be able to discern if that thing is good according to God. Love without discernment is dangerous. It will be guided by our corrupt passions and might actually cling to something harmful. For example, I might love driving really, really fast on the freeway but I need to discern that that would be dangerous for my family. So according to sound knowledge, I keep it in check because my love for my family is the better thing.

Christians are to love the things of God. We know what things are good to love according to God's Word. God's Word allows us to love with knowledge and discernment according to His revealed will. For example, we love children - even and especially unborn children who need our help - for they are God's creation and through them we are turned away from ourselves in sacrificial service. We give thanks for the recent Supreme Court ruling doing away with Roe v. Wade that has plagued our country for nearly fifty years. We also love marriage and family which God seeks to protect, building a hedge around it with a couple of Commandments (see the 4th and the 6th). We are able to discern that the LBGTQ and BLM Inc. agendas seek to undermine God's good order of this. We are able to discern that children being exposed to drag queen story hour is not loving them rightly. Christian love doesn't approve of everything but rather seeks what is excellent as St. Paul declares. This means love has to originate from a conscience informed by God. It has to be tempered and have constraints. Love that approves of anything and everything is driving really, really fast on the freeway. It sees not the better thing. It is dangerous.

The love of which Paul speaks that needs to abound more and more is the love for things of Christ who is the very image of the invisible God. To love Christ is to love the Redeemer who says to the disciples, *teach them all that I have instructed you* (Matt. 28:20). Christians love Jesus for He has loved us first and laid down His life and we therefore love His Word. That Word, recorded in the Bible, helps us to discern with knowledge what is excellent and gives us good things of God to love such as children, marriage, and family. It directs our affections to the right object as we live in the world but of the world.

May our Lord Jesus keep us steadfast in a true and right and good confession of the faith, loving Him and the things He loves, so that we would be *pure and blameless for the day of Christ* who will come on the last day and bring us into His love eternal.

In Christ,
Pastor Suggitt



LIFE QUOTES

It's a terrible thing to see any life that is used and abused instead of being protected and cared for. The value of life should not be based on the benefits it can offer. So we pray to the Lord to move all people to value and appreciate all life as God's gift.

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