

PAUL'S PRAYER for the PHILIPPIANS and US

Phil 1:9-11

I. AGAPE APPROVED (LOVE ABOUNDING)

- A. Maturing—deeper, wider
- B. Less empathetic (cf. *Toxic Empathy*, by Allie Beth Stuckey & *Suicidal Empathy* by Gad Saad)
- C. More thoughtful (i.e. prudent & discerning), commitment to well-being
 - 1. Better knowing recipients
 - a. Loving God (c.f. J. I. Packer's *Knowing God*)
 - 1. Creation (Ro 1:19-20)—what He has made (cf. *Let Creation Speak* by Michael Guillen))
 - 2. Scripture (2 Tim 2:15)—“study” what He has said & done; disciplined Bible study
 - 3. Theology (“study of God”)—insights of great scholars, saints, from St Irenaeus on
 - 4. Prayer (listening to, heeding Spirit)—personal promptings
 - b. Loving others, discerning pertinent needs in various areas
 - 1. Male & female
 - 2. Young & old
 - 3. Temperament, personality
 - 2. Knowing best social/political policies
 - a. Homeless—Discovery Institute positions & influence
 - b. Immigrants/strangers—balancing care for both strangers & residents
 - c. Schools (cf. *All Must Have Prizes* by Melanie Phillips)
 - d. Communities

II. EXCELLENCE ENDORSED (cf. *In Search of Excellence*)

- A. Athletics—Paul's testimony re “fought the fight, run the race, finished the course”
 - 1. Johannes Klaebo & Olympic cross-country skiing
 - 2. “Chariots of Fire” & Eric Luddel re running: “God made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure.”
- B. Corporations
 - 1. Mercedes commitments—“The Best or Nothing”
 - 2. Trader Joe's successes—employees' morale
- C. Schools
 - 1. Failures noted—data re California & Colorado schools since 1960: slow decline
 - 2. Successes celebrated—Hillsdale College; many public & private schools
- D. Churches' mission, commitment, programs
 - 1. N.T. clear: order & organization needed to achieve best possible
 - 2. Coordinated ministries effective
 - a. Finance
 - b. Music
 - c. Preaching
 - d. Teaching
 - e. Works of mercy

III. PURITY PRAISED

- A. Transparency—non-hypocritical
- B. Honesty—presidents George Washington & Abraham Lincoln renown
- C. Blameless—R.E. Lee & West Point Record

IV. RIGHTEOUSNESS REQUIRED

- A. God-fearing Gentiles—e.g. centurion's faith in Jesus, Cornelius in Acts
- B. Righteous Gentiles amidst Holocaust—“Shindler's List,” hundreds of forgotten heroes, including French church on Swill border
- C. Athletes (professional football & baseball) refuse to endorse homosexual agenda