

## **Title: The Prayer that Changed a City**

**Text:** Philippians 1:9-11

*“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 praise of God.” (ESV)*

**Target:** The church has always been the hope of the world. Our internal health, our togetherness, will determine our external effectiveness

### **I. Choose Love by cultivating a growing Love:**

- A. **Choose God’s kind of love:** *“that your love may abound more and more...”*
- B. **Choose God’s kind of approach:** *“that your love may abound more and more...”*

### **Key Thought:**

The prayer that changed a city, shows the progression and benefits of a growing love:

- A growing love leads us to understand and experience truth...
- which enables us to live and love with wisdom...
- thus, creating an appetite for excellence...

### **II. Choose what is best by developing excellent character:**

- A. **A desire for excellence is born out of a growing love:** *“with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent...”*
- B. **Excellent character builds a sincere, authentic, unhypocritical reputation:** *“with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless...”*

### **Key Thought:**

- Choosing what is best involves an exhaustive dedication to the things which are essential and align with our purpose

### **III. Live like Jesus by looking forward to seeing Jesus:**

- A. **When we anticipate seeing Jesus we treat each other as citizens of heaven:** *“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 praise of God.”*

- B. When we anticipate seeing Jesus our faith is evidence of the gospel:** “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 praise of God.**”
- C. When we anticipate seeing Jesus, we daily experience the sufficiency of Jesus:** “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 praise of God.**”

### Key Thought:

“The *fruits of righteousness* are the evidences and effects of our sanctification, the duties of holiness springing from a renewed heart, the *root of the matter in us*. These fruits are by *Jesus Christ*, by his strength and grace, for *without him we can do nothing...* We are *strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus* (2 Tim. 2:1) and *strengthened with might by his Spirit* (Eph. 3:16), and they are *unto the glory and praise of God.*”

Matthew Henry (1662-1714), author and pastor

### Recap:

The prayer that changed a city, shows the progression of a growing love:

1. A growing love leads us to know and live truth, while increasing in wisdom.
2. Growing in knowledge and wisdom creates an appetite for excellence.
3. A desire for excellence enables us to live a sincere, authentic and unhypocritical life.
4. **Love leads to knowledge and wisdom leads to excellence leads to an authentic life** that is increasingly demonstrating a fruitfulness that is **loving acts** of kindness and service.