

Philippians 1:9-14

Joseph, the Masai warrior, Edward Kimball, William Carey, Caesar Rodney are all names of One person that made a difference. They probably didn't set out to do that but, being found faithful in the small things, led them to being found faithful in the large things as well. Each man assisted in the advancement of their beliefs. Today, we examine a biblical example of One man who made a difference, the Apostle Paul. We are back in Philippians.

I. Paul Describes Christian Progress 9-11

Notice that Paul prayed for these Philippians believers, that they exhibit character as fully devoted followers of Jesus. He prays for 5 specific areas in a believer's life: _____, excellence, integrity, good works and _____. These traits all build on one another.

Abounding _____. You know that this is the very heart of biblical Christianity. I John 4:8, 16 reminds us that God not only loves but _____. The love Paul prays for us to have only comes from _____, produced by the _____. It's the fruit of the Holy Spirit. This love is not based on physical attraction, it's not sentimental, it's a love that chooses to love. (agape). It is also a _____

of saving faith. I John 3:14, 4:20 informs us that it is impossible to say you love God and hate your brother.

This love, additionally, is characterized by accurate knowledge and careful discernment. In fact, the more we understand God's Word, the more we necessarily love Him and one another.

Excellence A necessary outgrowth of love is our ability to determine something's character or worth. The word, approve, means to study, to investigate, to determine what is best or even crucial. Having this ability allows a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ to live at our highest level of devotion and obedience.

Integrity A life of love, issues forth an ability to discern what is excellent, allowing then a believer to progress toward _____ and _____. Sincerity has two possible meanings: the sifting of grain through a sieve to remove the impurities, so the woman of God is able to separate the true from the false, right from wrong. The second idea is connected to its root meaning, incorporating the sun. Sine Cera (without wax).

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Good Works The natural outgrowth of abounding love, of approving what is excellent, of integrity is good works. Ephesians 2:10

The Glory of God The Westminster Shorter Catechism, a question and answer approach to theology asks: What is the chief end of man? The answer is: The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

Elisabeth Eliot -- "The fact is, as believers, it is not about us. It is not about my happiness, my joy, my wellbeing. It is about the glory of God and the Kingdom of Christ. The only means to joy and contentment is to make His glory the supreme objective of my life."

II. Paul Displays Gospel Progress 12-14

Remember that Paul was in jail as he wrote, having suffered a great deal. His circumstances were dire, shut off from being able to travel. Yet, Paul viewed his circumstances as an _____ to trust God.

He even used the word progress, in jail. You also recall that Paul was chained to a Roman soldier at all

times. This was no mere enlisted man. The soldiers were _____. This imprisonment went on for 2 years.

So, Paul was chained, not able to move about freely, probably guarded by 4-6 men a day, non-stop. How did he handle it?

This ONE man regarding his imprisonment as an opportunity to trust God and to love Jesus supremely while there. Trusting God, loving Jesus supremely led to One man, necessarily loving the guards. What happened? Philippians 4:22

The other man I mentioned as we started was in jail for about 12 years. Being banished to the lower parts of that prison in England surely quieted this man? It may have quieted him vocally but, many people have read some of the 60 books he wrote while in prison, one being *The Pilgrim's Progress*. John Bunyan was ONE man who left a gospel mark on our world.