

Faultfinders Anonymous



And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more. Philippians 1:9

Like many people, when I read a newspaper or magazine I notice the mistakes in grammar and spelling. (You saw that, didn't you!) I'm not trying to find errors; they leap off the page at me! My usual reaction is to criticize the publication and the people who produce it. "Why don't they use 'spell check' or hire a proofreader?"

You may have a similar experience in your area of expertise. It seems that often, the more we know about something, the more judgmental we become over mistakes. It can infect our relationships with people as well.

Yet Philippians 1:9 expresses a different approach. Paul wrote, "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment." God's plan is that the more we know and understand, the more we love. Rather than cultivating a critical spirit and pretending we don't notice or don't care, our understanding should nourish empathy. Criticism is replaced by compassion.

Instead of our being faultfinders, the Lord calls us to be "filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (v. 11).

When the Lord fills our hearts, we can overlook mistakes, hold our criticism, and love others, no matter how much we know about them!

Lord, by Your grace, please replace my critical spirit with Your love and compassion for others.
To err is human; to forgive, divine. Alexander Pope

Insight:

Notice the depth of love Paul has for his fellow believers at Philippi. This is seen in how he speaks to them and what he desires for them. He speaks as one who loves them and longs for them deeply (v. 8). His desires are seen in his prayers—that they will experience a growing yet wise love (v. 9), a discerning yet genuine spirit (v. 10), and a fruitful and Christ-honoring life (v. 11). These are great things we too can pray for in the lives of those we love and in our own lives as well. Bill Crowder

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