

Philippians 1:3-11

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Christian Sincerity

When Rome was at the height of its glory, men competed with each other in the construction of noble palaces made of choice marble. Gifted sculptors were much in demand, and large sums were paid for their skills. Some less skilled artists, upon chipping the valuable marble, or making some obvious flaw, would fill up the error with specially prepared wax to hide the mistakes and deceive prospective buyers. Such deception could only be detected by exposure to the heat and light of the sun, which discoloured and often melted the wax, revealing the falsehood. A term was soon coined in the trade, the highest prices went to those works which were "ειλικρινης" - "judged by the sun."

This same word was used by the apostle Paul writing to the believers at Philippi. Translated into English, He said "I pray that you may be sincere and without offence" (Philippians 1:10). God places great value on the lives of those believers whose conduct is recognized as "ειλικρινης" -- "judged by the Son of God." A Christian's actions and attitudes must be absent from deceit and falsehood.

Whatever believers say or do should be checked by this statement "Would Christ say or do that." To every believer, Paul's testimony stands as a model: "In godly sincerity (as judged by the Son), we have behaved ourselves in the world" (2 Corinthians 1:12). Christianity has had its share of falsehood and deception. Recent investigations into the moral and ethical behaviour of assumed "model denominational leaders" has left a bad taste in the mouths of society for anything related to Christ's gospel. If as a reader you are a professing Christian, a weight of responsibility rests on your shoulders.

Don't shame the name of the Lord, remain in fellowship with the one who bought you with his own blood. Remember the words of Paul: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Be truly sincere, be true to your God.

What is my response:
