

Forerunners for Christ Los Angeles

January 18, 2024 – Praying the Apostolic Prayers – Erlinda Cruz

Excellence Found in God

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge [of God’s heart] and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense [blameless; ESV, NAS, NIV] till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

Philippians 1:9-11

That you may approve the things that are excellent: Spiritual discernment enables us to “see” and rejoice in what God calls excellent—His Son, His Word, His godly ways, and His people (Psalm 16:3). One quality that made David’s life “great” was to intentionally cultivate God’s view of His people.

“As for the saints who are on the earth, ‘They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight.’”

Psalm 16:3

God’s People Are Excellent

Seeing others through the lens of God’s grace enables us to see “excellent things” about them, including their sincere desire to obey—seen in their budding virtues that have not yet matured—instead of defining them by their failures and deficiencies.

“Judge nothing [do not make final evaluations on people] before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels [motives] of the hearts. Then each one’s praise [affirmation] will come from God.”

1 Corinthians 4:5

God’s Commands Are Excellent

God’s commands are debated in the culture and the church. Studies tell us that many today define love, truth, and justice by what they feel is right, without reference to God’s word. We must define love and truth according to His word.

“Therefore... the commandment holy and just and good.”

Romans 7:12

That you may be sincere: We pray for grace to walk out our sincere intentions to love and obey Jesus and sincerely seek to see, feel, and speak about others in a way that is in agreement with God.

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That you may be without offense: We pray for grace not to act or speak outside of God’s will so as to give “offense” to God or to others by not walking in godly virtues and kindness towards people. Also, not to trick, trap, nor injure others—their finances, property, feelings, reputation, position, etc.

“...I always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.”

Acts 24:16

“...whether you eat or drink...do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God...”

1 Corinthians 10:31-32