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## PODCAST START:

[intro music]

Brian: Welcome to the Queer Theology podcast!

Fr. Shay: Where each episode, we take a queer look at the week's lectionary readings. We're the cofounders of QueerTheology.com and the hosts for this podcast. I'm Father Shay Kearns —

B: And I'm Brian G. Murphy.

FS: This week we are taking a look at the lectionary text for December 9<sup>th</sup>. We're going to look at Philippians 1. The whole lectionary is verses 3-11, but we're going to really focus in on 9-11, so I'm going to go ahead and read those verses for us. This is from the Common English Bible.

This is my prayer: that your love might become even more and more rich with knowledge and all kinds of insight. I pray this so that you will be able to decide what really matters and so you will be sincere and blameless on the day of Christ. I pray that you will then be filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes from Jesus Christ, in order to give glory and praise to God. [CEB]

So Brian, what is this bringing up for you?

B: When we were reading through the different passages to decide what to read, this just really stuck out to me. It was like it had a glowing halo and was like [makes angel sound effect] "Ahhh!" This really spoke to me. I think it's because it really, for me, sums up so much of what we do here at QueerTheology.com and what is at the heart of what we do and what we don't do.

You know, I've talked about this before, but as I was trying to figure out my sexuality and my faith and how all of that fit together – and you know, this sort of big question that queer folks are forced to confront, like, 'is it okay to be LGBTQ and Christian' – it was so easy for me to get stuck in, like, well, what does this passage say? What does that passage say? This exegesis, that hermeneutic – this sort of really legalistic way of thinking about Christianity and faith, which is just so terribly, unintentionally ironic. Because growing up, I was always told that

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Christianity was sort of this break from legalism, but the Christianity that I grew up in was very legalistic. It's just so beautiful to see that that's [laughs] not necessarily biblical.

This passage tells us, "I pray this so that you will be able to decide what really matters and so you will be sincere and blameless on the day of Christ." So in order for us to be sincere and blameless on the day of Christ, it's up to us to decide what really matters. The author of this passage puts that impetus onto us. It's not so that you will follow these rules, it's so that *you* will decide what really matters. And in order for you to be *able* to decide what really matters, this is my prayer: that your love become even more and more rich with knowledge and all kind of insights.

I think that this too is important – its love, yes, but it's not this sort of vague, undefined love. Elsewhere in scripture we talk about love in action, and here we talk about love that's rich with knowledge. Knowledge and insight are integral parts of the Christian faith, and we have to let knowledge inform our love, and in doing so, decide on what really matters. And in doing that, that's how we become sincere and blameless on the day of Christ.

And that answers all sorts of questions. Is it okay to be LGBTQ? Of course. Is it okay to be transgender? Of course. That just exists. It puts all these questions into a clear focus on what really matters. So that's me, Shay. What about you?

FS: Yeah, I totally agree with everything that you just said. I think the key for me is really – a lot of times, the thing that's leveraged against LGBTQ Christians, or even liberal Christians, is that we just do what feels right. We pick whatever we want, we disregard scriptural [laughs] insight and whatever. But I think that this isn't about just picking whatever you want or what feels good or anything like that. This is about figuring out what is it that the Bible really says, and how does that relate to what you understand of your own relationship with God, and what you understand of your own faith.

It's about more than just, 'the Bible says this' – or, 'I've been taught that the Bible says this.' You *do* have to be informed. You *do* have to know the historical context. You *do* have to know a little bit about theology. You do have to actually study some stuff, and maybe read some books or learn some things. But your own personal experience and understanding does come into play through this idea of love. All of these things go together, right? We can't compartmentalize our knowledge. We can't compartmentalize our personal understandings.

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All of this together is what informs our faith and helps us to be mature followers. We're not just taking in the things that people have told us to believe or to think. We are doing the work to figure out what we actually believe, and what we actually think God is calling us to do. I think all of that together is really important. This is an important passage in particular for LGBTQ Christians.

B: If you're looking for support in doing that work of figuring it all out, we would love to come alongside you and support you with resources and community inside of Sanctuary Collective. You can learn more about that at [QueerTheology.com/community](http://QueerTheology.com/community). There are a bunch of resources to help you figure this out, and a community of over a hundred LGBTQ Christians and straight, cisgender supporters, sort of doing life together. And if you don't need that support but you enjoy this podcast, as the year is coming to a close, we could really use your support. We put in a time and effort towards this podcast, and if you get something out of this, we would love to have your support. You can go to [Patreon.com/queertheology](http://Patreon.com/queertheology). Thank you so much, and we will talk to you again soon.

[outro music]

B: The Queer Theology podcast is just one of many things that we do at [QueerTheology.com](http://QueerTheology.com), which provides resources, community and inspiration for LGBTQ Christians and straight cisgender supporters.

FS: To dive into more of the action, visit us at [QueerTheology.com](http://QueerTheology.com). You can also connect with us online on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram.

B: We'll see you next week.

**PODCAST END**

Transcript by Taylor Walker