

Philippians 1:9-11

A Reed–Kellogg Sentence Diagram With Notes

Using the NASB 2012 translation:

“⁹And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; ¹¹having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God ”

One long sentence, diagrammed in four panels.

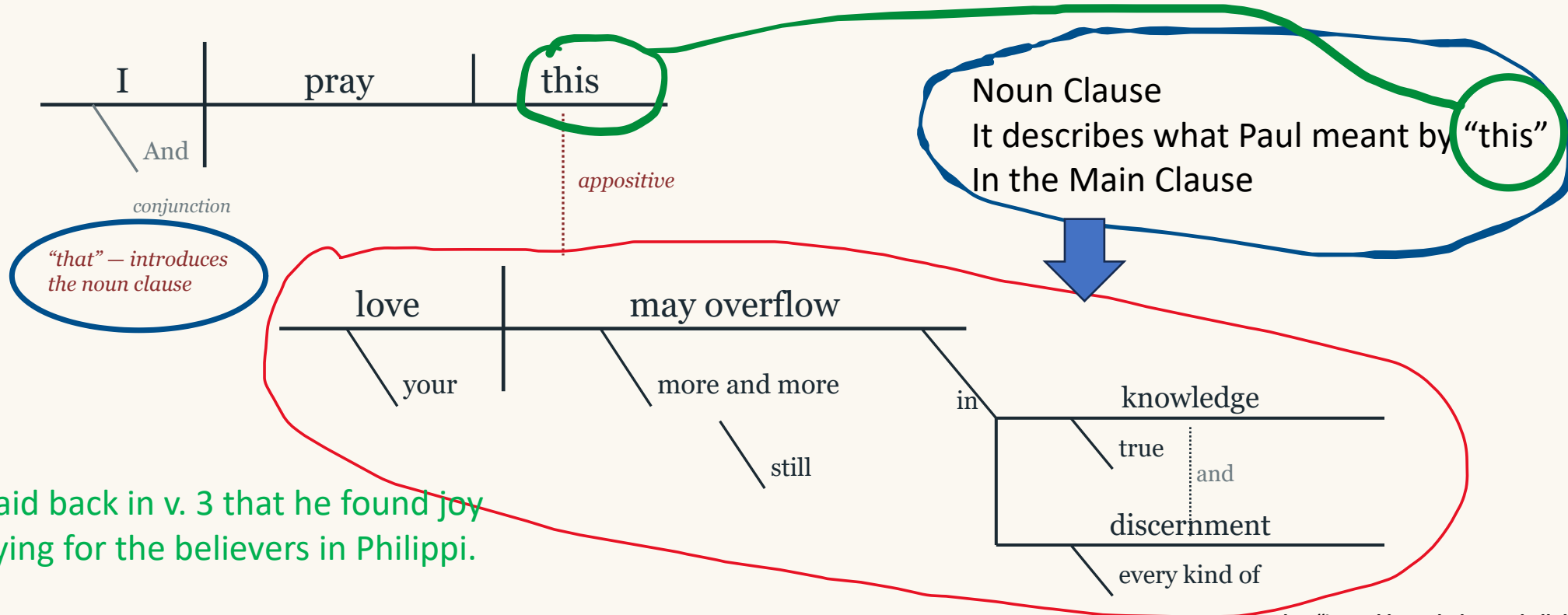
The Sentence

Paul's prayer is a single sentence: one main clause carrying one noun clause, which then grows four dependent branches.

MAIN CLAUSE	And this I pray —
NOUN CLAUSE (appositive to “this”)	That your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and discernment,
PURPOSE CLAUSE	So that you may approve the things that really matter (OR are excellent),
INFINITIVE PHRASE	in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ,
PARTICIPIAL PHRASE	having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Movement 1 – The Main Clause and Its Noun Clause

Verse 9 - “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,”



Paul said back in v. 3 that he found joy in praying for the believers in Philippi.

v. 9a – “That your love may abound still more and more”

1. Paul’s not praying for easier circumstances, but for deeper love.
2. With spiritually healthy Christians, love is never a finished project.
3. Don’t think of having “enough” love, but more and more.

v. 9b – “in real knowledge and all discernment,”

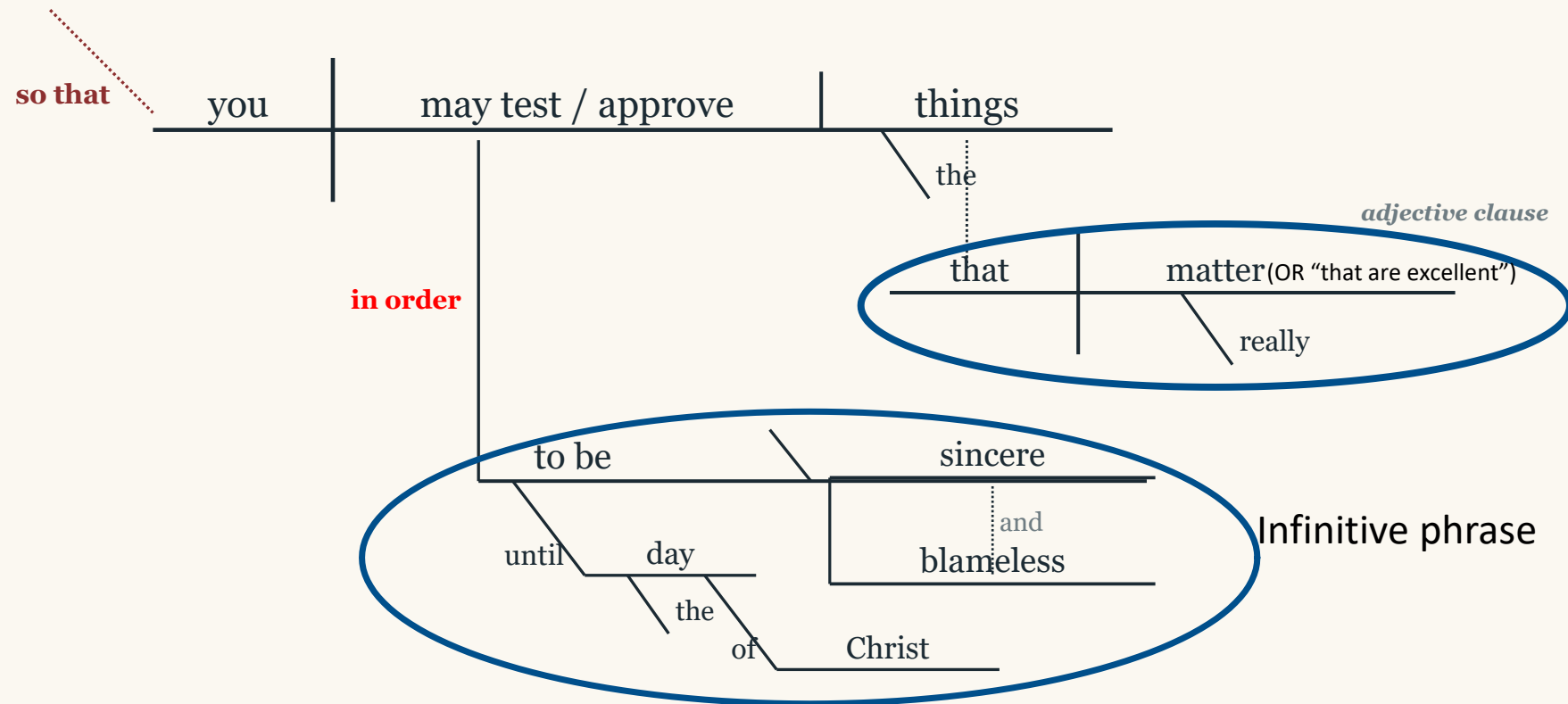
1. Think of “real knowledge” as deeper knowledge (known through and through) that comes only through our walk with God. This is more than just “information.”
2. Discernment is our ability (as Richard said) to differentiate to read the actual situation in front of you and to navigate wisely. Learning to live in this world with priorities.
3. Paul is saying {looking back to the noun in this noun clause} that our love must be anchored to truth and the ability to navigate the multiplicity of situations in which we are subjected or somehow become a part of.

*The whole clause below the dotted line renames “this” — **it is the content of the prayer.***

Movement 2 – Purpose and Aim

Verse 10 – “so that you may approve the things that really matter (OR ‘that are excellent’), in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ.”

attaches to “may overflow” in Movement 1



This is the purpose clause. Why did Paul pray for us to have more and more real knowledge and discernment in Verse 9?

It was SO THAT we may be discerning and choose the things that matter (are excellent).

1. Because discerning love chooses not just good over evil, but goes even further - - it chooses best over good.

2. Sincere is from the Latin word, “sincerus,” meaning pure, clean, whole, unmixed, uninjured, or not a phony. We are to be transparent - - that is, the same person in private as in public.

Reputation = how a person comes off / behaves in public; who you are in public.

Character = how a person behaves in private; who you are on the inside.

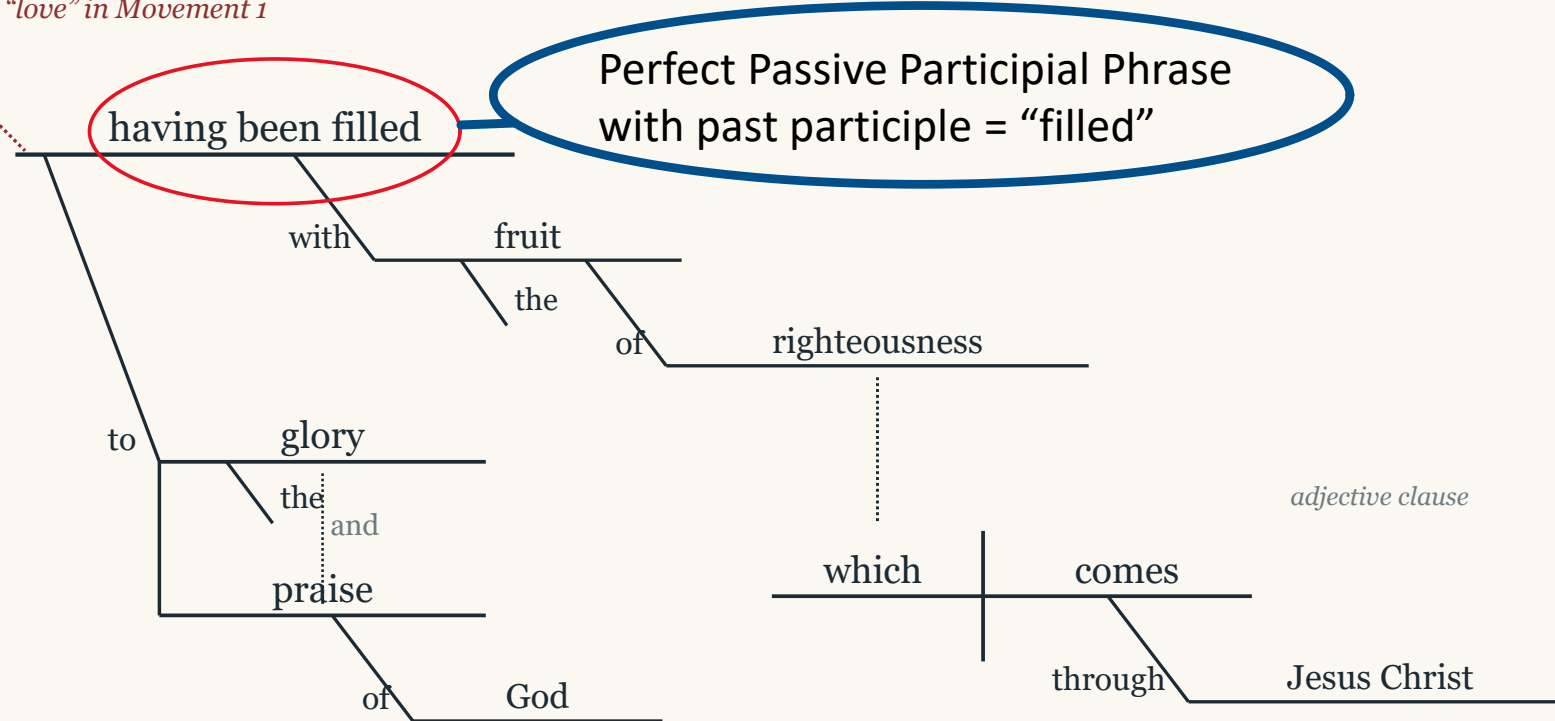
3. Paul reminds us that the horizon is “the day of Christ. We must live each day (for as long as we live) with that in mind

The infinitive phrase rests on a pedestal beneath the verb it modifies.

Movement 3 – The Participial Phrase

Verse 11 - “having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

attaches to “love” in Movement 1



1. The fruit we bear comes through Christ our Lord, and it (NOT personal achievement) is the evidence of His work in our lives

2. The Spirit-filled life is the natural outcome of love that grows (through spiritual nourishment), knows (His will/desire for our life), and chooses well (with godly discernment).

3. Our objective is not our maturity, but God’s glory. He is our all-in-all. To God be the glory -- great things He has done.

The compound object “glory and praise” splits onto parallel lines joined by a dotted conjunction line.

How to Read the Diagram

The Reed–Kellogg conventions used on the preceding slides

Horizontal baseline

Carries the subject and its verb; everything else hangs off it.

Vertical line through the baseline

Separates subject from verb.

A predicate adjective is an adjective that follows a linking verb and describes or modifies the subject.

Short vertical line on the baseline

Marks the direct object; a back-slanting line marks a predicate adjective.

Slanted line beneath a word

Holds a modifier — an article, adjective, or adverb.

Slant plus a horizontal line

A prepositional phrase: the preposition rides the slant, its object rides the line.

Dotted line

Joins a clause to the word it modifies or renames, and links compound elements with their conjunction.

Pedestal (upright stem)

Lifts an infinitive or noun clause into the slot it fills.

Paul's prayer is grammatically one sentence: he prays one thing, that love would overflow — and every other line on these slides is a branch of that single request.