

God Will Supply All Your Needs

Philippians 4:14-23

Philippians 4:14-23: “Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. **15** Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. **16** For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities. **17** Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. **18** Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things *sent* from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. **19** And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. **20** Now to our God and Father *be* glory forever and ever. Amen. **21** Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. **22** All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar’s household. **23** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

Background Notes

One of Paul’s purposes in writing this letter to the church at Philippi was to thank them for the financial gift they had sent him. Paul was under house arrest in Rome, awaiting his trial for the “crimes” of being a Christian and “disturbing the peace” in Jerusalem. A Christian man from Philippi, Epaphroditus, had been entrusted with carrying the gift, and he traveled all the way from Philippi to Rome to bring it to Paul.

Paul thanked the Philippian believers for sharing with him in his time of distress (v14). He reminded them that they had shared with him in earlier days, as no other church had. “*Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only*” (v15).

“In the beginning of the gospel,” refers to the time, about ten years earlier, when Paul had brought the gospel to Philippi on his second missionary journey (Acts 16). After the founding of the church at Philippi, Paul traveled on to Thessalonica, where he stayed two or three weeks (Acts 17). During this time the Philippian believers sent financial help twice to the apostle Paul. “*For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities*” (v16).

2 Corinthians reveals that when Paul moved on to Corinth, the Philippian church supported him there as well. 2

Corinthians 11:9: “*And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied.*” So the Philippian church was a **giving** church.

The conclusion to the letter is in verses 20-23. Verse 20 is a wonderful little doxology, and verses 21-22, are closing salutations. Verse 23 is the benediction.

In his closing salutations Paul wanted to greet **every** saint in Christ Jesus (v21). Paul did not play favorites – he sent his greeting to **all** the believers. Remember the problem of disunity at Philippi? Paul wanted to make sure that he did everything he could to encourage unity.

“The brethren who are with me greet you” (v21). These “brethren” certainly included Timothy and Epaphroditus, and perhaps others as well. *“All the saints greet you but especially those who are of Caesar’s household” (v22).* Most likely the believers of Caesar’s household were civil servants, and may actually have included relatives of Nero, who was Caesar at that time. These believers sent greetings to the Philippian church because Philippi was a Roman colony. It’s possible that some of these believers in Rome had been to Philippi, and may have known the Philippian believers.

How did these believers in Rome hear the gospel? There’s a very good possibility that some of them heard the gospel from the imperial guards who were guarding the apostle Paul. As a Roman prisoner, Paul would have been chained to a Roman guard at all times. Not very pleasant for the apostle Paul, but it meant that those imperial guards had to sit through the Bible studies that Paul taught at his rented house!

When I was in seminary, Mike Ford was one of my fellow students. His father was Gerald Ford, who was then president, so we had Secret Service people in every class. They had to listen to Christian doctrine. They had no choice. They were forced to!

Those Roman guards had to listen to the gospel! Undoubtedly some of them became believers, and through them the gospel spread into Caesar’s household.

Doctrinal Points

1. God is pleased with all the sacrifices of generous Christians.

In verse 18 Paul said he had *“received from Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.”* Notice that the Philippian church’s generosity and giving to the Lord’s work was an act of **worship!** Just as the bringing of sacrifices in the Old Testament was a way of worship, so giving to the Lord’s work today is not just Christian service - it’s an act of worship. And it pleases the Lord! This same thought is brought out in Hebrews 13:16: *“But do not forget to do good and to share, for which such sacrifices God is well pleased.”*

A sacrifice is not a sacrifice if it doesn't cost you anything! If you only give to the Lord out of your surplus, the language of "sacrifice" loses its meaning. We know that the Philippians gave sacrificially. In 2 Corinthians 8:2 Paul used the believers of Macedonia as an example of Christian giving; he said that *they gave out of their **deep poverty***. No wonder God blessed them!

If you give sacrificially God will bless you too, because God is pleased with all the sacrifices of generous Christians. Verse 17 says, "*Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.*" Paul was glad that they sent the gift - not just to meet his needs, but because of the fruit that would be "credited to their account"!

God will bless you and make you a fruitful Christian if you are willing to give sacrificially to the work of the Lord - with your time, with your gifts and abilities, and with your finances. If you're wondering why you're not experiencing blessing and fruit in your Christian life, think about this: how's your giving record? Am I a stingy Christian or a generous Christian? God is pleased with **all** the sacrifices of generous Christians.

2. God will supply all the needs of generous Christians.

Verse 19: "*And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*"

That's a great promise, isn't it? Can you claim it? Yes – but you must claim it ***in its proper context!***

What do I mean, "***in context!***"? Let me illustrate. A few years ago, two of my former students called and told me that God was not keeping His promises. They were now married, and having financial problems. They were claiming the promise of Philippians 4:19 - but God was not keeping His promise to them, and they wanted to know why. I told them, "***You can't claim that promise!***" I could almost hear them gasp over the phone! You see, I knew this couple pretty well. As students they had been very active in Christian service. They were generous with their time, with their talents and abilities, and with their money. But once they married, their giving came to a standstill. In fact, they were only occasionally attending church services. I explained to this young couple that ***the Philippians 4:19 promise was made to believers who were sacrificially giving of themselves to the Lord.*** The promise was ***not*** made to selfish Christians, so believers who are stingy or hoarding or unconcerned or uninvolved cannot claim it. I challenged this young couple to give themselves to the Lord and get involved again.

Malachi 3:10 says, "*Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,*" says the Lord of hosts, "*If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.*" What an amazing promise! Talk about God keeping His promises! Malachi 3:10 is an Old Testament version of Philippians 4:19!

Are you a giving Christian? If you are, then you can be sure that “your well will never run dry.” God **will** supply **all** your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus! Prove the Lord in this area – you’ll find that God will supply all the needs of generous Christians.

Practical Applications

1. Remember the little prepositions of Scripture.

“*And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus*” (v19). Notice that it does not say that God shall supply all your need *out of* His riches. No - it says **according to** His riches. That’s a big difference, and the difference is based on the little Greek preposition that’s used here.

If I was a multimillionaire and I gave you something *out of* my riches, it might be only a dime. But if I gave you something **according to** my riches, you would get a really nice gift!

If you’re a giving Christian, you can be sure that God will bless you - not just *out of* His riches, but **according to** His glorious riches in Christ Jesus! Remember the little prepositions of Scripture!

2. Have you signed up for the **best** pension plan?

As people get older, they start to get concerned about their financial security for their “golden years.” Even Christians become concerned. Well, I’ve got good news for you: **you don’t have to worry** if you sign up for the **best pension plan** available - right now.

What pension are we talking about? The “Philippians 4:19 Plan” - “*My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*” But there’s a prerequisite: **if** you’re a **giving** Christian, you will have the best benefit package available!

When I left secular employment to go into ministry full time, the promise of Philippians 4:19 was very encouraging, because I no longer had a pension plan, or a 401K, or any kind of retirement plan. But then I realized that I was signing onto a far better pension plan – the “**Philippians 4:19 Plan**”!

Have you signed up for the **best pension plan** yet?