

**God Will Supply**  
***Philippians 4:14-23***

Good morning.

In ***1 Kings 17***, there is a narrative about Elijah being hungry and in need, and the Lord instructed ravens to feed him by a brook.

After the brook dried up, the Lord instructed Elijah to go to a widow and ask her for food and drink.

***1 Kings 17:12*** So she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

***1 Kings 17:13*** And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son.

***1 Kings 17:14*** For thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth.'"

***1 Kings 17:15*** So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah and she and he and her household ate for many days.

***1 Kings 17:16*** The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah. NKJV

Times of need can shake our faith, but the empty flour-bin moments within our lives, allow us to see God supplying for our needs in ways we could have never imagined.

Sometimes, times of need teach us to appreciate the Lord's provision within our lives.

Please open your Bibles to *Philippians 4*, as we **finish** the verse-by-verse study of Paul's Epistle to the Church at Philippi.

Last week, Paul instructed us that a godly focus brings peace. When we live the way Paul instructed his readers to live and follow Paul's example, we are promised God's peace.

Then we learned about generosity and contentment.

Paul said that whatever state he was in he had learned how to be *content*. Contentment is not natural for anyone; it is a spiritual thing we will learn with Christian maturity.

Godly contentment is finding joy in what God has given you and the opposite of contentment is **greed**, which will destroy your ability to enjoy what God has already given you.

A positive mindset is a choice. "*Much of the Christian life comes down to the mind.*" (Guzik)

Today, Paul again talks about generosity while affirming the Lord is the One who ultimately supplies for our needs.

## **I. Sharing in the ministry.**

Read *Philippians 4:14-16*

The Apostle Paul had just finished saying, “*Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*”

Then as Paul learned how to be content in every situation, he said, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*”.

Here in *Philippians 4:*, Paul starts with a transition, “*Nevertheless*”.

Paul used this transition as he continued to express his thankfulness to the Philippians for their giving to his ministry.

Notice that he also thanked them for their willingness to share in his *distress (affliction)*.

The word *distress* means *pressing together, tribulation, or pressure*.

Jesus used the same word when He spoke of the last days.

***Mark 13:19 For in those days there will be tribulation (affliction), such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be.***

Ralph Martin said, “*The Philippians, then, by their gifts, may have had a greater honor than just the offer of assistance to their apostle*”;

“*They would be sharing in the apostolic trials which precede and prepare for the end, as by their gifts the gospel is carried to every creature in preparation for that end.*” (Ralph Martin)

Ralph Martin was saying that the Gospel being delivered to the world before the End Times happens, is necessary so as many as will receive Christ, then confess Him, before the end happens.

Not everyone can do vocational or missionary ministry, but as the body of Christ, we all have gifts, talents, and a specific part to play, while giving towards the cost of the ministry.

Ray Boltz has a song titled, “**Thank You**”. Some of the lyrics say, “*I dreamed I went to heaven, and you were there with me.*

*We walked upon the streets of gold, beside the crystal sea; we heard the angels singing.*

*A missionary came to your church and his pictures made you cry, you didn't have much money, but you gave it anyway.*

*Jesus took the gift you gave and that's why I'm here today.*

*Thank you for giving to the Lord, I am a life that was changed”.*

*? If the person from the song **had not** given his little offering, would the other person in the song, still be in heaven?*

**Yes,** God is Sovereign, but He allows His children to be blessed, while playing a part in giving to His work, fulfilling His plans.

I have been on several short-term mission trips, including to Haiti, Africa, Brazil, and Mexico several different times.

When I was a younger Christian, I often wondered if the Lord would call me to be a missionary in a foreign land, but the Lord in His wisdom had other plans for me.

Then notice in vs. 15 “*the beginning of the gospel*”, refers to the beginning of Paul’s missionary efforts in Europe. The Philippian Church gave the money to make that trip possible.

God can provide any way He sees fit, and sometimes He allows us to be a part of the  **blessing**  of spreading the Gospel in other places, without us even leaving our homes.

If you study *Acts 16* you will read all about Paul delivering the Gospel to Europe.

*Acts 16:8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.*

*Acts 16:9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."*

*Acts 16:10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. NKJV*

In *Philippians 4:16*, Paul especially remembered how this church’s gift was so vital during the planting of the Church at Thessalonica.

Adam Clarke said, “*While laboring to plant the church there, he was supported partly by working with his hands, and partly by the contributions sent him from Philippi.*

“*Even the Thessalonians had contributed  **little**  to his maintenance: this is not spoken to their credit.*” (Clarke)

## II. A sweet-smelling aroma.

Read *Philippians 4:17-18*

Paul said he was not as interested in the gift as much as he was interested in the fruit that would abound to their account.

***John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, NKJV***

Paul's joy came from the Philippians growing in maturity and being part of the blessing of serving and giving to the Lord.

We should never think that the Lord cannot complete a ministry without our help, He simply asks us to be **faithful** to His will so we can be blessed by taking part in His ministries.

The only time the Lord said to test Him from a positive outlook:

***Malachi 3:10 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. NKJV***

Again, the Lord promised to supply for Paul so, the means to supply would come, one way or another. The lesson for us is that the Lord is the provider, and we cannot out-give our God.

Re-read *Philippians 4:18*.

In the Old Testament Temple, the priests were given different jobs that were all meant to glorify the Lord.

***Leviticus 1:9 the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD. NKJV***

Paul likens the Philippians' offering to a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, **well-pleasing** to God, similar to the sweet-savor offerings of the Old Testament Temple.

***Hebrews 13:15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.***

***Hebrews 13:16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. NKJV***

Not only were their financial gifts a sweet-smelling aroma, but the **prayers** they offered while supporting Paul's ministry were also a sweet-smelling aroma before the Lord.

***Revelation 8:3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.***

***Revelation 8:4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.***

How God loves to spend time communing with His kids. How He loves to just sit down and spend time with us.

**Revelation 8** shows the prayers of the saints as a bowl of incense and the Lord enjoyed the prayers and worship from His kids.

Our prayers are a sweet-smelling fragrance around the throne of God. In prayer, we confess our need for Him, we worship Him, and we express our **trust** in Him.

***Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. NKJV***

Warren Wiersbe said, “Paul looked on their gift as a spiritual sacrifice, laid on the altar to the glory of God. There are such things as “spiritual sacrifices” in the Christian life.”

***1 Peter 2:4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,***

***1 Peter 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. NKJV***

Jesus, God the Son, was the only One who could provide the eternally pleasing sacrifice, to the Father, on the Cross.

(SO) Our praise, worship, service, and gifts should all be given to the Lord Jesus Christ sacrificially, as a **response** to His great sacrifice for our salvation.

### **III. God deserves the glory.**

Read ***Philippians 4:19-20***



Paul has been communicating to this church how thankful he was for their gifts which included: their prayer, encouragement, and financial support.

Paul begins to close this letter with the conjunction **And (vs. 19)**.

Instead of “*and*” the KJV says, “***But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.***”

John Walvoord said, “*Every act of giving is by its very nature an act of faith.*”

*The Philippians are assured that their act of faith will be rewarded. God will supply all their needs.*”

“*This does not mean necessarily that they would be unduly wealthy, but that there would be manifested in their physical as well as their spiritual lives the evident supply of the Lord.*”

(Walvoord)

Notice the promise is that the Lord will supply all your needs so, the issue is *what are our needs?*

Forbes reported, “*We know very well that the US has both the highest living standards for the rich and also the largest inequality among the large, advanced, nations.*”

*Even if you're stuck in the bottom 5% of the US income distribution your standard of living is about equal to that of the top 5% of Indians.*”

The promise here in *Philippians 4:19* of *all your need*, has a caveat to it, “*According to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*”

The Lord owns everything so if He gives according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus, you can be assured the Lord is more than able to supply.

The Lord does give to His children according to His riches, but the Lord also gives to us according to **His will**.

The Lord may not give us all our desires or even all of what we consider wants, but He will always supply our needs.

Everything we have, every breath, every meal, no matter what **avenue** the Lord uses, the blessings all come from the Lord and we should use it for the Lord’s glory.

***Deuteronomy 10:14 Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it.***

***Deuteronomy 10:15 The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day.***

***Deuteronomy 10:16 Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.***

***Deuteronomy 10:17 For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.***

***Deuteronomy 10:18 He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. NKJV***

Hudson Taylor said, “*When God’s work is done in God’s way for God’s **glory**, it will not lack for God’s supply.*”

Notice the mini doxology in ***Philippians 4:20 Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. NKJV***

Allow me to repeat some things we learned from our very first sermon from the ***Book of Philippians***.

A foundational Christian belief is the belief in the Triune God.

God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity with Jesus and the Holy Spirit being the other two persons within the Trinity.

The word ***God*** in ***Philippians 4:20*** is the Greek word ***Theos*** which means the Godhead, Trinity. (Stong’s G2316)

Stong’s G2316 defines ***Theos*** as, “*God the Father, the first person in the trinity. Christ is the second person of the Trinity and the Holy Spirit is the third person in the Trinity.*”

*??How can the one God we believe in, be revealed in three distinct persons?*

While the word **Trinity** does not appear in the Bible, we do see several times in scripture, where the Father appears along with the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We see all the members of the Trinity together at the Baptism of Jesus, the Resurrection, and even the Transfiguration of Jesus.

All three members of the Trinity are all-powerful, all-knowing, and present everywhere. The Lord is absolutely holy, completely sinless, and no darkness exists within Him.

God is completely just but He is also merciful. He gave humans the gift of free will, by not forcing anyone to follow Him.

The Lord also cares and offers us the opportunity to have eternal life with Him, by receiving Jesus Christ as our Savior.

Within the doxology in *vs. 20*, Paul says that each member of the Trinity, *Theos* (Gk), should be given ***glory forever and ever***.

Walvoord said, *“Though all we give to God necessarily has been given to us by God and we are only stewards of all we possess, It is nevertheless true that God will repay a hundredfold every act of devotion, every gift of sacrifice, and that He will pay accounts in full, not only in this life but in the life to come.”*

This doxology statement from Paul came from his own personal **experience** of the Lord’s supply to him, for life, joy, and peace, which made it possible for him to be content in much or in need.

#### **IV. Salutation.**

Read *Philippians 4:21-23*

In the closing statement, Paul asks the reader to greet the saints and says, all the saints salute you, especially those of Caesar's household. Remember if you are in Christ, you are a saint.

Notice, Paul had some friends who were believers in Rome.

Some of the members of Caesar's household became trophies of grace, who were won for Christ through Paul's faithful witness as a prisoner of Christ, while in Rome.

*Remember the soldiers who were guarding Paul?*

Some of the soldiers who were chained to Paul while he was on death row, heard the Gospel, witnessed his life, and came to **faith** in Christ.

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

The acrostic for **Grace** is *God's riches, at Christ's expense.*

***2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. NKJV***

## **V. Practical Application.**

The ***Book of Philippians*** is often known as the “*Epistle of Joy*” because of the attitude Paul maintained when he wrote this letter, even though he was under house arrest while writing it.

*How can we find joy during the worst kinds of pain and suffering in life? The answer is found in **Philippians**.*

Paul taught his readers to rejoice in every circumstance and to find joy during the trials of life. Paul was a prisoner as a minister of the Gospel yet he still had joy and thankfulness!

The trials of this life will fade away as we think about our loving, powerful Lord, who loves us and gave Himself for us.

Warren Wiersbe asked, “*What was the secret of this joy? The secret is found in another word that is often repeated in Philippians: It is the word mind.*”

*Paul used a total of sixteen references to the mind.*

*In other words, the secret of Christian joy is found in the way the believer thinks—his attitude. After all, outlook determines the outcome.”*

***Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. NKJV***

In this final study of the ***Book of Philippians***, we learned that times of need can shake our faith.

But just like the widow in ***1 Kings***, the empty flour-bin moments allow us to see God supplying our needs in ways we could have never imagined.

Sometimes, times of need teach us to appreciate the Lord’s provision within our lives.

The Lord can and will do amazing things with empty vessels; may we empty ourselves of everything that is not from Him and be filled with His Holy Spirit.

May we realize that the Lord is trustworthy and faithful to provide all we need from His riches in Glory.

John Walvoord, *“As Paul closes the epistle he pronounces the usual benediction: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”*

*Above all else he wanted the grace of God to be experienced by the Philippian church, to be manifested in their lives and testimony, and to cause the fruit of the gospel to abound in them.”*

The Lord owns everything so if He gives according to His riches, you can be assured the Lord is more than able to supply.

The Lord does give to His children according to His riches, but the Lord also gives to us according to His will.

The Lord may not give us all our desires or even what we consider wants, but He will always supply our needs.

Everything we have, every breath, every meal, no matter what **avenue** the Lord uses, the blessings all come from the Lord, and we should use it for the Lord’s glory.

***Deuteronomy 10:14 Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it. NKJV***

Everything we have and everything we need is all from God and all glory to God!