

God and Giving

Text: Philippians 4:18-19

Date: 7-11-21 @ 10:30 AM

Truth: When we give with a humble heart and out of a desire to serve others, we model God and His Son. Because it is God's nature to lovingly provide for us, He has promised to meet all our needs when we act like His Son. Therefore, when we give in this manner the result will bring glory to God.

Paul had received a gift, but he was content even if had not been given one. Why? Because of Christ! Paul wasn't looking for a gift just to be satisfied. No, he saw the gift as a credit to the Philippian's account.

Paul was not a selfish person. He cared for others. He modeled Christ-likeness because that is what Christ did. II Cor. 12:15.

Paul now says that he has all. He has everything that he needs. He wasn't looking for more. See the word **But**.

Explanation/all/abound/full:

- **All** - The word *all* gives us the idea of *received in full*. Paul had his needs supplied. Paul had more than enough. Did he really?
- **Abound** - The word *abound* tells us that Paul had an overabundance and excess. What a gift that had been sent! See Phil. 1:9; 4:12 x2.
- **Full** - The word *full* means *to fill, completely supplied, supply fully*. Paul was saying that he had been fully provided for through the gifts of the Philippians that Epaphroditus had brought. He had all that he needed. Perfect tense here: "I have been filled full and at present am well supplied".¹

The gifts to Paul were seen as from the hand of God. Paul linked everything to the spiritual. Yes, there were material things, but Paul saw them as blessings from God.

The gifts that Epaphroditus brought not only impacted Paul, they had an impact on God!

The gifts were:

- **An odor of sweet smell**
Explanation: They were a sweet-smelling fragrance, an aroma to God. This pictured a wonderful smelling fragrance that was offered to God. The words used here in the Septuagint were of the Levitical sacrifices. This was the sweet smelling incense burnt along with the sacrifices.
- **An acceptable sacrifice**
Explanation: The word here is used of the Jewish sacrifices. II Cor. 2:15-16. The picture here is the Philippians, Gentiles, had given in accord with what the Jews would offer to God. The church had given to Paul had actually given to the Lord's work; therefore, this gift was a sacrifice to God Himself.

¹ Wuest, K. S. (1997). [*Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader*](#) (Vol. 5, p. 116). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

When our giving goes to the work of the Lord, I believe it is an offering suitable to God Himself. His work brings a sweet smell to His nostrils. When we think (Eph. 5:2) of the work on the cross, we find that was a sweet smell to the Lord.

Application: The gift receiver cares more about others than the gift itself. Here Paul is testifying that while His needs were satisfied above and beyond, it is more important that God is pleased. That is worship. Paul's joy was found more in what the gift did for God more than what it did for himself.

- **Well-pleasing to God**

Explanation: This word means *acceptable, well-pleasing*. Outside of Titus 2:9, this word always refers to God (Rom. 12:1-2; 14:18; II Cor. 5:9; Eph. 5:10; Col. 3:20). This is the goal of our lives as Christians. This is what causes God to be pleased.

Application: Was this gift important to Paul? Yes, but the love that was emitted towards God was more important to Paul.

Quote: "A sacrifice (v. 18). 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 (see 1 Peter 2:5). We are to yield our bodies as spiritual sacrifices (Rom. 12:1-2), as well as the praise of our lips (Heb. 13:15). Good works are a sacrifice to the Lord (Heb. 13:16), and so are the lost souls that we are privileged to win to Christ (Rom. 15:16). Here, Paul sees the Philippian believers as priests, giving their offering as a sacrifice to the Lord. In the light of Malachi 1:6-14, we need to present the very finest that we have to the Lord".²

Question: What is our motive behind our giving? The motives behind this gift were to support the Lord's work and His servant. Do we give for personal gain and attention? Paul infers that isn't right; rather, it is for God's glory.

This wasn't just Paul who received joy, but can you imagine when the givers heard these words of v. 19? What joy!! But, there is more!! God was pleased. Now that is joy!!

What ultimately pleases God? Becoming more like His Son!

Transition: The gifts have been delivered. God has been honored. Paul is grateful; even more he is glad that the Philippian church is growing in grace. **The gifts were evidence of the spiritual growth in the Philippian's lives.**

Questions: Do we as Christians lack anything? Are we in need of anything? Are there times where we miss out on God's blessings? What are your needs? Who can meet them? What are your resources?

Verse 19: This verse has become one of the most misinterpreted verses in the entire Bible. We begin with the word, *But*, contrasting and pointing to the fact that Epaphroditus brought a gift which was a sweet-smelling offering to the Lord.

² Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 99). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

How much did Paul trust God? How much had Paul grown in His faith? Of course, we know the Holy Spirit directed Paul in writing this epistle, but I am certain that Paul believed God would provide for his needs and the needs of those who had sent gifts to Paul's prison location.

Principle: When one shares with another in need, God will see to it that the giver will have his needs completely met.

Explanation: We see Paul calls God, *my God*. This emphasis not only shows us that God is personal to Paul, it implies that Paul's God would reward the church who had given to His servant's needs. God would supply the needs of the Philippians because Paul couldn't.

Explanation/shall supply: The words *shall supply* is the same word for *full* in the prior verse.

- **Full/shall supply** - The word full means to fill, completely supplied, supply fully. Paul was saying that he had been fully provided for through the gifts of the Philippians that Epaphroditus had brought. He had all that he needed. Perfect tense here: "I have been filled full and at present am well supplied" (see earlier *ibid*).

Application: What we see here is that God will fill the need that is lacking. Why can God do that? Because He is good, gracious, and merciful. **Those who choose to give will be met by the good hand of God.** Is that a motive to give? It certainly can be. But, the primary motive to give is to glorify and worship God.

Application: How can God continually out give us? Because His storehouse is endlessly stocked. And the wealth that God owns is accessible to those who fear and love Him. Ps. 23:1; 34:10; 84:11; 107:9. Rom. 8:28. **We become richer when we give!**

Illustration: We often think we can't afford to share, but Paul here says we can't afford not to share. The person who refuses to give faces the very distinct reality that God will not bless you. He will withhold what you need. Let that sink in. On one hand, "you can't out give God." On the other hand, "Not giving risks God not giving."

Explanation: This word *supply* means to *also fulfill*. God never fails to *fulfill His Word*. And God never fails in doing that exact thing: **to fulfill in supplying fully! This is His promise!**

Explanation/according to: But there is more here: God always gives out and from the right motive. God gives *according to* (in the measure of) something and ultimately not out of something. He gives according to His riches.

Explanation/riches: The bounty that God gives is perfectly according to His character. His riches are perfect. His giving is perfect. His gift is perfect. And this can be no more clearly seen than in the most precious gift given: His Son.

- God's riches are unending.
- God's riches are completely sufficient.
- God's riches are sourced in the glory of His Son.

Application: What are these glorious riches? See Eph. 1:7 The word *glory here* is attached to the whole sentence here. Glory is the place where grace operates and it will be the source in which all our needs are supplied.

Application: Christ is the Giver and Source of all Spiritual blessings because He is the One who redeemed us.

Application: The truth is not that we will receive that which we want or desire. But, we will be given that which the omniscient God knows we need. That is often different than what we think.

Quote: “God has not promised to supply all our “greeds.” When the child of God is in the will of God, serving for the glory of God, then he will have every need met. Hudson Taylor often said, “When God’s work is done in God’s way for God’s glory, it will not lack for God’s supply”.³

CONCLUSION

1. The person who gives faces the reassuring prospects (truth) that his needs will be supplied.
2. The person that shares knows that God will supply out of His storehouse.
3. You meet one need; God meets all your needs!
4. You gave out of a little; God gives out of His abundant riches.

What is keeping you from giving?

³ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 99). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.