

GOD'S PROMISE TO MEET YOUR NEEDS
How to Enjoy the Rest of Your Life - Part 12 of 12
Philippians 4:14-20
Rick Warren

PHILIPPIANS 4:14-20

"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." v. 19

I. THE PREMISE (vs. 14-18): _____

"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed."
Prov. 11:25

"Give to others, and God will give to you ... The measure you use for others is the one God will use for you." Luke 6:38 (GN)

The Value of Generosity

1. MY GIVING IS _____ (vs. 14-16)

"It was good of you to share in my troubles ... as you Philippians know, in the early days ... not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only, for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need."

Phil. 1:3+5 - "partners in ministry"
2 Cor. 8:1-5 - a great reputation!

2. MY GIVING IS _____ (vs. 17)

"Though I appreciate your gifts, what makes me happiest is the well-earned reward you will have because of your kindness." vs. 17 (LB)

"... I want to see profit added to your account" (GN)

"... Give happily to those in need, and always be ready to share whatever God has given you. By doing this, you will be storing up real treasure for yourselves in heaven -- it is the only safe investment for eternity!" I Tim. 6:18-19 (LB)

3. MY GIVING IS _____ (vs. 18)

"I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, and acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God."

Matt. 25:40

II. THE PROMISE (vs. 19): _____

- The Source: *"And my God will ..."*
- The Scope: *"... will meet all your needs ..."*

This doesn't include

_____ (I Thess. 3:10)

_____ (James 4:3)

It does cover: _____

Matt. 6:25-33, I John 5:14-15

- The Supply: *"according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."*

"Remember this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each one should give whatever he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under pressure, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make ALL grace abound to you, so that in ALL things, at ALL times, having ALL that you need, you will abound in EVERY good work." 2 Cor. 9:6-8

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This is the last message in the series "How to Enjoy the Rest of Your Life". Two things I try to do at this time of year between Christmas and New Years. One is write thank you notes from everybody I got gifts from. The second is get out all of my receipts from the previous year from a box I've thrown them into and try to make some sense out of them for IRS purposes.

That's exactly what the book of Philippians is. The book of Philippians was written for two reasons. It is a thank you letter and it is a receipt for a gift that Paul was given. He wrote the book of Philippians to the Philippians because they had sent him a gift, in fact numerous offerings.

In this last passage of Philippians is probably the greatest promise in the Bible. It is so all encompassing almost any other promise will fit under its umbrella.

God's promise to meet your needs is v. 19 "And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

God says, "I will meet all your needs." Then why do people have needs? A lot of Christians have tremendous needs. Why aren't they being met? Is God a liar? Is His promise not valid?

The answer to the question is that this promise is not for everybody. It is not applied to every person, even every Christian. With every promise there is a premise. There is a condition that God says, "If you do this, I will do that." People want to take the v. 19 promise and apply it to their lives while avoiding the premise of v. 14-18. You cannot claim v. 19 unless you're doing what v. 18 talks about. The context is Paul is talking to a group of Philippians saying "Thank you. You have given sacrificially. And because you have given sacrificially, God is going to take care of your needs."

I. THE PREMISE (vs. 14-18): I must be generous to others.

Proverbs 11:25 "A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." When you're generous to others, God is going to be generous with you.

Luke 6:38 "Give to others, and God will give to you...The measure you use for others is the one God will use for you." You be generous and God will bless you.

The premise of this promise is that we first must be generous with others. Paul tells us that unless I'm obeying God in the matter of giving, God doesn't give any guarantee to meet my needs. God is not obligated to meet my needs if I'm not obeying what He's told me to do. God says we can short circuit the power and the promise in our life. We can block the flow of blessing by being stingy.

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Paul gives us three reasons for being generous:

1) My Giving is an Encouragement to others. (vs. 14-16)

"It was good of you to share in my troubles... as you Philippians know, in the early days not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only, for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need."

The Philippians church was not a wealthy church. Just the opposite. It was poverty stricken church. Yet they were big hearted, generous, giving. Paul said their gift encouraged him. Giving is an encouragement. Both the giver and the givee receives a blessing, an encouragement.

Results of giving:

a) It gives us a wider ministry than we would normally have. In Phil. 1 Paul says they are "partners in ministry". They were supporting him financially. Whatever you support you're partners with. Not all of us can go to the mission field, preach, teach. But whenever I give we become partners in ministry. Giving allows me to be involved in somebody else's ministry.

b) Giving makes us like Christ. The most Christlike thing you can do is give. Because Jesus was a giver. He was sacrificial. The Philippians had a reputation for generosity. 2 Cor. 8, Paul calls them an example for the rest of the world. They gave out of their extreme poverty. They gave more than they could give. The church had such a reputation for giving that 2000 years later we still know about them.

2) My Giving is an Investment in the future. (v. 17)

This is a banking term. "though I appreciate your gifts, what makes me happiest is the well-earned reward you will hve because of your kindness." Giving benefits the giver as well as the receiver. You're going to get a well-earned reward. In the Greek it means "accumulated interest".

God pays interest. Jesus said 100 fold will be returned to him who gives up for the gospel. One hundred fold is 10,000% interest. Paul says I want you to receive the reward for your giving. GN translation : "... I want to see profit added to your account". You have an account in Heaven. God is recording anything and everything that you do. Everytime you give something is recorded in heaven. A cup of cold water given in Jesus' name is written down. Every time you're generous with your family, church, friends, unbelievers -- anytime you give it is recorded and rewarded. It is an investment and the bank of Heaven pays interest.

But you don't get the interest if you don't make the investment. Store up treasure in heaven by giving, by investing in heaven. Invest in people who are going there.

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I Timothy 6:18-19 (LB) "...Give happily to those in need, and always be ready to share whatever God has given you. By doing this, you will be storing up real treasure for yourselves in heaven -- it is the only safe investment for eternity!" God's bank never goes bankrupt. You're going to spend more time on that side of eternity than on this side.

3. My Giving is a Sacrifice to God vs. 18

"I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God."

The most pleasing thing you can do for God is sacrificial giving. It is done in faith and without faith it is impossible to please God. Jesus Christ was a total sacrificial giver. When you are most like Christ, you are sacrificial in your giving, generous, sharing. And it pleases God.

It says it's a "fragrant offering". This refers back to Lev. 7 which talks about a thank offering. In the Old Testament they would lay an offering on the altar, pour it out and it would create steam that the whole community could smell. A sacrificial giver is a beautiful person, you love to be around them. Giving is an act of worship. That's why it's a part of our worship service. It's just as important as singing, praying or teaching.

Paul says the gift the Philippians sent to him is a fragrant offering and acceptable sacrifice to God. The gift they sent to Paul is equivalent to a gift to God. How could he say that? Because Jesus said it. "In as much as you have done unto the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto Me." It's just like doing it to God. Every act of generosity in your life can be done as a sacrifice to God. Anytime you have a spirit of generosity, the spirit of giving, it is an encouragement to others. It is an investment in eternity and it is a sacrifice pleasing to God.

That's why Paul said it's so important to become a giver. There are only two kinds of people in the world: givers and takers. The happy people are the giving people. Philippians is about joy and giving -- the two main themes go together. Misers are miserable.

That's the premise. The premise comes before the promise. You can't claim v. 19 unless you're doing v. 18. I must first be generous to others. Christ said, give to others and God will give to you. Be generous to others and God will be generous with you. When you meet the premise of being generous with others then you can claim the promise of verse 19.

II. THE PROMISE (v. 19) -- "My God will supply all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

The Believer's Insurance Policy. It tells you what warranty God has guaranteed to care for in your life.

The Source: "And my God will ... " God is not a force, He's a person, a personal God. Jesus said when you pray pray like this, Our Father -- He is a Heavenly Father -- intimate. As a result

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He's very aware of all your needs you have -- financial, mental, physical, health, relational. And He's a caring, consistent, capable Father. Our Heavenly Father assumes responsibility for His children's needs. He does it in a perfect way.

The Scope: "...will meet all your needs..." This includes everything. It doesn't say that God might meet your needs, but will meet your needs. It's a guarantee. If you met the premise, count on the promise. If you are a consistent, generous giver you can count on the promise. God is going to take care of your needs.

There are many people who misuse this verse. There are two categories this does not include:

1) This category does not include the consequences of laziness. This is not an invitation to goof off. God expects you to work. This is not an invitation to set around with folded hands and say, "I'm just trusting the Lord to provide." That isn't contentment, it's complacency. There's a big difference. He has not promised to meet your needs if you set around and do nothing.

I Thes. 3:10 -- People who are unwilling (not unable) to work should not be given handouts. "Let him who does not work not eat."

2) This category does not cover all your wants. There's a big difference between needs and wants. In 1890 a sociologist took a study and asked Americans what they thought were the basic needs of life, the bare minimum necessities in order to survive. In 1890 the study revealed that Americans thought there was 16 basic things every one needed in order to survive. The survey was taken less than 100 years later. Now Americans think they have to have 98 things in order to survive. Our wants have a way of being exaggerated into needs. James 4:3 "You ask for something and when you don't get it's because you're asking with the wrong motive. You just want to consume it on your desires." Selfishness. God has not guaranteed you to provide you with all your luxuries.

There are two false ideas about money: One, that God wants everybody to be a millionaire. The other, that God wants everybody to be poor. They're both wrong. God is interested in your having your needs met. Our needs have a way of getting exaggerated. We watch advertisements that say "You need this product." The Bible does not say, My God shall supply all your greeds.

This verse therefore doesn't include consequences of laziness. God doesn't say You go out and waste your money on luxuries then when you don't have enough money to pay for your needs, I'll supply them. God hasn't agreed to do that. He doesn't bankroll foolishness. If I blow all my money in some area and my needs aren't being met and I say, God, Your promise isn't true! That's not God's fault. He's not promised to bankroll foolishness.

What has God promised? What is covered in this verse? All legitimate needs. That covers a lot of material. Do you have a financial need? If you're a faithful giver you have every right to ask God to meet your financial needs. If you're not a faithful giver you have no right, because you're

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not meeting the premise. How about physical needs, health needs, relational needs, emotional needs, any kind of needs? God promises to meet all your needs.

If that's true what does that leave for me to worry about? Nothing. God says "I assume responsibility for My children's needs to be met." If you're a child of God and you're meeting the premise you can count on it.

The Supply: "according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

God's bank will never go bankrupt. He has unlimited resources. He has an inexhaustible supply as exhibited in many of His miracles.

There's a big difference between "according" and "out of". Explanation: Sam Walton, one of the wealthiest men in America is a billionaire. If he wrote you a check for \$1,000 that would be giving to you out of his riches. If he gave you a blank check and said whatever you need that would be giving according to his riches.

God gives you a blank check. Phil. 4:19 is the blank check for the faithful believer. A blank check is worthless if it doesn't have a signature on it. But this check is signed with the name Jesus Christ. His check never bounces.

A parallel passage that says the same exact thing is 2 Cor. 9:6-8. It has the premise and the promise. This is taught all through the New Testament. "Remember this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each one should give whatever he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under pressure, for God loves a cheerful giver." This is the premise part. Then the promise: "And God is able to make ALL grace abound to you, so that in ALL things, at ALL times, having ALL that you need, you will abound in EVERY good work."

If you will let the truth of this passage really grasp you -- if you really grab a hold of it -- it will revolutionize your life. The principle is this: If you become a giver, God will take care of your needs. That is taught all through the Scripture. Giving guarantees God's provision. I have absolutely no worries about the future in terms of financial need. God will meet the promise because I am meeting the premise. I have done what God has said about giving.

What is the spirit of Christmas? It's giving. God gave. The wise men gave. We give. How do you maintain the spirit of Christmas the year around? Become a giver. Become a generous person, helping those in need. See a need, find a need, fill it. Find a hurt, heal it. Share with those around you. In a giving contest guess who wins? You can't outgive God.

It's not by accident that the book of Philippians has two major themes: joy and giving. They go together. The happiest people are the most generous people. The most miserable people are those who are stingy.

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2 Cor. 8 is what Paul said about the Philippians to another group. He compares one church to another church. v. 1 "And now brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian [Philippi] churches. Out of the most severe trial their overflowing joy and in their extreme poverty welled up rich generosity. for I testify today the Philippians gave as much as they were able and even beyond their ability entirely on their own. They urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service of the saints. And they did not do as we expected. They gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. ... But just as you excel in everything, in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us, see that you also excel in this grace of giving. I'm not commanding you but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though He was rich yet for your sakes He became poor so that you, through His poverty, might become rich. ... For if the willingness is there then the gift is acceptable according to what one has not according to what one does not have." Giving is a matter of willingness, not wealth. God couldn't care less about the amount that you give. What He cares about is the attitude of giving. It's the willingness not the wealth.

Some of you haven't learned the joy of giving yet. You give but you don't get any joy out of it. It is fun to give, because you know that you cannot outgive God. He more than blesses us back. I challenge you to practically discover the power and principles of this promise. Become a faithful, generous person with everybody and watch what God does in your life.

This applies to churches as well as persons. The church that gives itself away and is interested in others (missions) God takes care of their needs.