

**MESSAGE TITLE:** God Will Supply

**SCRIPTURE:** Philippians 4:14-23

### **KEY TRUTH**

In our previous text, Paul clearly taught that Jesus was more than enough for him. In this passage, we will see that Jesus is more than enough for you, too.

### **GETTING STARTED**

Paul thanks the Philippians for their gift to him and assures them that God will in turn supply their needs. Think about a time recently when God supplied a need in your life. What need did you experience? How did God meet that need? Did you share with others how God met you at your point of need? We will read today about how God delights to meet the needs of His children.

### **OBSERVATION**

Ask a volunteer to read Philippians 4:14-16.

*If Paul had learned to get along without, why do you think he commended the church in Philippi for sending a gift?*

*What was Paul's motive for thanking the Philippians for their partnership in his ministry (vv.15-16)?*

*Paul reminded the Philippians that they were the only church in the area that shared with him in the financial support of his ministry. The words Paul used for giving and receiving were terms from the world of business and commerce. They described the making or receiving of payments on loans or debts. Paul was saying that the Philippians had entered a relationship with him in the matter of underwriting his ministry.*

Ask a volunteer to read Philippians 4:17-18.

*Paul assured his readers that he was not looking for financial support from the churches. Rather, he was interested in their spiritual development. In this passage, Paul continued using the language of the commercial or business world. He assured the Philippians that their earthly monetary investment in his ministry would produce spiritual dividends for them.*

*Read Matthew 6:19-21. How do Jesus' words help you better understand what Paul meant by the church's "account"?*

*What types of "credits" do you think he was talking about?*

*How would you define treasures on earth? How do they compare with heavenly treasures?*

*Why is it so difficult for us to focus on our heavenly treasures? What is one way your life would look differently if you focused less on the things of this world this week?*

*Why do you think Paul used the language of “sacrifice” to describe the Philippians’ gift to him? Read Leviticus 7:12-15 for insight on the Old Testament “thank offering.”*

*Why do you think God values our sacrifices? What are some of the things (needs, wants, attitudes, etc.) that most often keep you from sacrificial living?*

*Paul characterized the Philippians’ gift as a fragrant offering and a welcome sacrifice. Both phrases were associated with worship. In this way Paul assured the Philippians that their actions were equivalent to serving God, for they were pleasing to God. We should be reminded that, when we help others who are in need, we are doing that which is pleasing to God.*

*Ask a volunteer to read Philippians 4:19-20.*

*Do you ever struggle to trust the truth in verse 19? Why or why not?*

*How does a believer draw on God’s unlimited resources in daily life (v. 19)?*

*How do you know the difference between things you need and things you want?*

*Why is it important for us to know and believe that our sovereign God provides for us?*

*Paul assured his Philippian friends that God is well able to take care of all their needs. Notice that Paul did not say that God would take care of their wants or desires. The New Testament nowhere suggests that all our desires will be met because of our commitment to God in Christ. God will supply all His people’s needs through His own riches in glory. God has an abundant supply and He can take care of our needs in a glorious manner through Jesus Christ.*

## **APPLICATION**

*What need do you have right now that you would like God to meet? Give a voice to that need by sharing it with members of your Bible study group. As a group, commit to praying for each other’s expressed needs this week.*

*The word ‘share’ in verse 14 is also used as the word for ‘fellowship’. We oftentimes enter in fellowship with others by sharing and meeting needs. What keeps you from expressing your needs to God? To others? Pride, doubt, unbelief, not sure what your needs are, etc?*

*God never promised to give us whatever we want; instead he promises to meet our needs. How hard is it for you to distinguish between your needs and your wants?*

*How can a want or desire masquerade as a need? Ask God to help you identify what you need most in your life right now. Then commit to trust Him to provide for you.*

## **PRAYER**

*Spend time praying for the specific needs mentioned in your group. Be specific in your prayers. Praise God for His sovereignty and His provision, and ask Him for the courage and strength to love and live sacrificially this week.*

## **SHARE POINT**

Read and review the application questions. Share with someone in your life how God's Word is changing you into a growing disciple. Encourage that person to do the same. That person could be a family member, a friend, a co-worker or a neighbor.

## **COMMENTARY NOTES**

Sometimes the Lord works through His redeemed people to meet human needs. Contentment did not do away with troubled circumstances for Paul. (v. 14). He knew operating from a Roman jail cell, chained to a Roman soldier, was not operating from a position of power. He was in trouble. The present Epaphroditus brought from Philippi helped him and he greatly appreciated the gesture of kindness and support. Paul wanted the Philippians to know this and to know how commendable he considered their loving action to be. The Philippians' gift was not unexpected. They had supported Paul this way before in the early days of his ministry in Europe (v. 15; see Acts 16:12-40). Paul described their relationship with him at that time in technical accounting terms. No other church entered a financial partnership with him. In a sense, the Philippian letter is Paul's official receipt, acknowledging and giving credit for the church's gift to him. Paul went directly from Philippi to Thessalonica (Acts 16:12-17:1). Though we have no record of them, there the Philippians began sending him gifts (2 Cor. 8:1-9). Thus, Paul acknowledged the depth and length of his relationship with the Philippian church. He also acknowledged that he had a need, even when he learned to be content. Again, the apostle revealed that the motive for his thankfulness of their partnership in his ministry was not to secure another gift (v. 17). His letter was not a fund-raising attempt. He wanted them to realize that their deeds would not go unnoticed. They have a deposit in heaven that will yield rich dividends. (See Jesus' words in Matt. 6:19-21.) Paul finds another way to show he is not writing to ask for another gift (v. 18). He retained his accounting vocabulary. The letter he sent with Epaphroditus was his receipt marked "paid in full" and more. His needs were met through the Philippians' gifts. These good deeds not only satisfied Paul but were a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. Giving to God's servant for God's work is a gift to God, a first-class offering (compare Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:16). Their obedience and generosity would bring God's reward, giving encouragement and expectation to the readers (v. 19). As they met all of Paul's needs (v. 16), so God would meet all their needs. God does this out of the abundance of His treasury, a glorious resource without limits. How does one draw from these unlimited resources? Through Christ Jesus. Only those in Him have access to God's account and can ask Him to meet

their needs. Paul concluded the body of the letter with a doxology praising God (v. 20). The thought of God's providing our needs in Christ naturally led to praise and thanksgiving. The God of glory and honor is not far removed from us, however. He remains our ... Heavenly Father ready to bring love and resources to meet our needs. Thus, glory belongs to Him forever—into the unseen ages. The final three verses of Philippians 4 record greetings from Paul. The exhortation to greet every saint reinforces the personal nature of Paul's communications and shows that the truths of the letter were to be lived out by real people in the real world. Caesar's household could refer not only to the 'royal family' but to anyone connected with the emperor's service, including soldiers, slaves or freedmen. It is likely that some of the latter group had responded positively to Paul's message; there is no evidence the emperor's actual family were believers at this point. The fact that some within Caesar's circles had placed their faith in Christ would have had particular resonance in Roman Philippi.

### **SOURCES CONSULTED**

ESV Study Bible

[www.smallgroup.com](http://www.smallgroup.com)

HCSB Study Bible