

# My God Shall Supply All Your Needs

## Philippians 4:14-23

### Introduction

Stuart Briscoe shares an interesting experience he had in being reminded of God's provision for our needs – even in small matters

'Years ago I joined a book club so that I could get a copy of a new four-version Bible. There was some delay in processing my membership application and when it was finally completed – it turned out to be too late for me to get the book I wanted. I wrote to the club – asking them to try hard to find me a copy of the book; and to my delight – they succeeded. The day after my new Bible arrived so did a good friend of mine. He was heading out to Borneo to do Bible translation work.'

'Something inside me said, "Give Ian your Bible. It will be invaluable to Him in Borneo." Now I knew that it would probably be more valuable to him than to me, but I had worked so hard for that Bible and I just didn't want to part with it. Finally, I told my friend, 'This is my new Bible, it was the last one available, it is a unique edition and I'm so thrilled with it. And I think God has told me to give it to you, and I don't want to.'

'I hoped he would say, 'Oh – really Stuart, I couldn't take that – knowing how much it means to you.'

But – he didn't. He said, 'Thanks – that will be a marvelous help in my translation work.' And off he went to Borneo with my Bible under his arm!

The next day an identical Bible appeared on my desk. A Colleague saw me looking at it and said, 'It's yours'. No – I replied – mine is on the way to Borneo.

'I don't know what you're talking about' – he said – 'but I got 2 copies in the mail yesterday and the Lord told me to give you one.' [Bound for Joy, pp. 176, 177]

**Stuart Briscoe: 'So I had my Bible, Ian had his Bible, Borneo got a translation tool. I had the joy of being obedient and the thrill of sharing (albeit reluctantly), and once again I received because I gave, and I got much more than I shared!'**

Paul reminds us in this passage of God's gracious provision for His children

One of the great Bible promises is found here in the closing section of the book of Philippians: 'My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.'

### **I. Paul's Thank You - vv. 14-18**

Here Paul comes to give thanks to the Philippians for the gift they sent him – that was brought by Epaphroditus

They knew that Paul had needs – and they found a way to get some resources to him

Here Paul says to the Philippians

v. 14 – ‘you have done well to share with me in my affliction.’

Share = fellowship / partnership – κοινωνία

When we give to support a ministry / missionary / relief effort - - - all giving is a kind of solidarity with the person or organization to whom the funds are going

Their gift was more than financial support of Paul – it was a demonstration of solidarity with Paul in his imprisonment / afflictions

In I Kings 18 – during the days of Elijah – Ahab and Jezebel were persecuting the prophets – Ahab is looking for Elijah – because Elijah announced the famine to come on the land - - so Ahab wants to put him to death

Elijah goes to a man named Obadiah – who is a God-fearing Israelite – but who works in the palace of the king

Elijah tells him he wants to see Ahab - - - but Obadiah is afraid Elijah will disappear and then Obadiah will be in trouble

I Kings 18:12-13 - 'And it will come about when I leave you that the Spirit of the Lord will carry you where I do not know; so when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have feared the Lord from my youth. Has it not been told to my master what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord, that I hid a hundred prophets of the Lord by fifties in a cave, and provided them with bread and water?'

We note how Obadiah displayed his faith in God – by providing shelter and provisions for 100 prophets – he showed a solidarity with them in their need – he was giving at the risk of his life

The Philippians are showing a solidarity with Paul – ‘we are with you, Paul’

Paul has just finished telling the Philippians – ‘I can do all things thru Christ who strengthens me.’

He is looking to God to meet his needs / etc.

But still – he wants to express his gratitude to the Philippians for their gift / and showing a solidarity with him in his condition

v. 14 – ‘you have done well to share with me in my affliction.’

Our church received a nice note from Lynda Hopkins – one of our missionaries this week

Dear Sully Community Church: 'I marvel at how your 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration could be such a blessing to others. Yet, that is exactly what you have done. Jason and I were blessed beyond measure. Not only were we blessed again by the members of your church but also by . . . the fantastic food, truly posh accommodations, and the opportunity to visit with other missionaries. As if that wasn't enough – the WCF ladies sent us home with a check! - - - we love you Sully Community Church. You keep us going.'

And I don't think they were alone in that sentiment – ['Well Done']

We see several principles about biblical giving in this passage

- Their gift was fellowship / met the needs of Paul
- Their gift would be rewarded
- Their gift was worship / glorified God

There is a kind of fellowship that takes place thru giving

We recognize the working of the body of Christ - - - one member has a need - - - another member makes up that need

I remember when Christine and I lived in CA - and earthquake – lost most of our dishes / wedding China / decapitated precious moments everywhere [this was the 90's] / my electric guitar was spared

And someone came out to church and dropped some dishes off in the youth office where Christine worked - - - and said - here are some dishes for anyone that needs dishes

There is a fellowship in such a system

We see the idea of giving being rewarded by God – all over the place in the NT

Giving benefits the giver more than the receiver

Acts 20:35 - '. . . remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."'

God is pleased when we share with others in need

Luke 6:38 - 'Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.'

God Himself is a giver

God existed independent of man – and chose to scatter His bounty by creating the world

Everything that exists owes its existence to God

This planet we walk on / the air we breathe / the food we eat

God spoke our world into existence

From that stance – He is the true owner of everything

Psalm 50:10 - 'For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.'

God is a giver in salvation

John 3:16 - 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish but have everlasting life.'  
[kjv]

If God has been good to us / blessed us - - - then we are in turn called to share with those who have needs / etc.

I Timothy 6:17 - 'Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.'

I Timothy 6:18-19 - 'Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.'

Charles Dickens was a popular English writer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – perhaps his most famous character in all his novels was that of Ebenezer Scrooge - a notorious figure for his greed or stinginess - - - shows his change of heart by becoming generous in the end of a Christmas Carol

In the story - the Ghost of Christmas past shows a scene to Scrooge that reveals to the reader that Scrooge - once had a girlfriend - and had dreams of marrying and having a family someday - the young Scrooge was engaged to a young lady named Belle. But - troubled over the cost of the wedding, Scrooge repeatedly made delays - which led Belle eventually to call off the engagement and marry another.

Another image of his misplaced priorities – Scrooge begins to see the error of his ways

Don Whitney: 'There is a very real sense in which our money represents us - how we use it expresses who we are, what our priorities are, and what's in our hearts.'

In the OT - - - David had set up a collection for the temple which would be built by Solomon – a place where God would be worshiped / sacrifices offered

The people gave to that project in abundance – they said: ‘yes – we want a temple to worship God – instead of the tabernacle which was a tent that could be moved – which had been their practice since the time of Moses

David would later pray:

I Chronicles 29:14 - 'But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from Thee, and from Thy hand we have given Thee.'

I Chronicles 29:16 - 'O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build Thee a house for Thy holy name, it is from Thy hand, and all is Thine.'

David sees how God is being honored – and he gives all the praise back to God

The doxology: 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'

God owns everything

He calls us to be good stewards of what He puts in our hands – He calls us to be givers

Our giving is recorded in heaven

Matthew 10:42 - 'And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you he shall not lose his reward.'

Kent Hughes: 'The truth is, the only money that we will see again is that which we give away, and that money will return with compounded interest.'

## II. Jehovah Jireh- vv. 19-23

The Philippians were used of God – to meet his needs at this time

Paul turns things around and reminds the Philippians that God will meet their needs – v. 19

Paul's joy stems to a greater degree from the fact that their gift was an act of worship – and was pleasing to God – and would result in God blessing them in return

**Proverbs 11:25 - 'The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered.'**

Biblical giving never impoverishes us – but makes us more wealthy

Giving becomes an act of faith – a trust in the promises of God

Faith says: 'My God shall supply all my needs' – I trust in Him

When God calls us to give to something – we can be sure He will take care of our needs as well

Paul spoke about giving to the Corinthians

He called for people to give that which God has purposed in their hearts – not under compulsion

**II Corinthians 9:7 - 'Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.'**

That is one of the reasons – this church does not make appeals for money – we let you know about needs – leave it at that

We do not want anyone giving under compulsion – ['You need to give to this or that' - - - It is to be your free choice] - - - we are trusting God to lay it upon your heart what to give and how

**II Cor. 9:8 - 'And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed.'**

Channel 39 has a show - called 'Hoarders'

Hoarders are people with clearly messed up priorities - - - they can't throw anything away - - - and so they end up living in filth and dangerous conditions

On the show - they show the mental anguish some of these people experience watching someone take away some worthless article of clothing - or broken toy / etc. / or cleaning up their dump

In their mind - they feel like they are losing something of value

Clearly - there are some mental issues going on with some of them -- - but they remind us of how important values and priorities are

If we never enter the arena of spiritual giving -- - we are like spiritual hoarders - - we think we are doing something in our own best interest - - - but it is actually hurting us / impeding spiritual growth - - - keeping us from experiencing some of the blessings God has for us

Find spiritual causes you can support – missionaries / relief funds like the Samaritan Purse / Hope Ministries / local church / bible camp / etc.

We try to give opportunity regularly to meet needs of missionaries as they come up

The Zagami – thrift store - - - many of you have donated items

Daniel sees the Swahili – walking around Clarksburg wearing L-S T-shirts

II Corinthians 9:7 - 'Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.'

Jerry Bridges: 'We are not naturally inclined to take from our pockets to meet the needs of others. But God's grace can transform us from selfish graspers to generous sharers, and this transforming grace of God at work in us brings glory to Him.'

*The Daily Bread* carried this story – 'After my first semester in seminary, my family was given airline tickets to fly home for Christmas. The night before our flight, we realized we had less than \$20 for the trip. Parking, transportation and other expenses were certain to cost more than \$20. Disappointed – we resolved to pray about it. Though our children were small [6 and 2], we included them in the prayer time.

As we were praying, we heard footsteps in the hallway of the apartment building, and then 'whisk' – the sound of an envelope sliding under the door. Inside the envelope was an anonymous gift of \$50. The wonder reflected on our 6 year old daughter's face matched the wonder in our own hearts. Here was a mighty God writing His name on a little girl's heart by hearing and answering our prayer in the same instant. And so we, like the Psalmist David, could talk of all His wondrous works.'

We see the progression - need / prayer / giving / praise to God for His goodness!

Philippians 4:10 - 'I rejoiced in the Lord greatly . . .'

Ray Stedman: 'If God has never done anything good for you, then don't give Him a dime. If He has blessed you, then pour out your gifts accordingly.'

Matthew 10:8 - 'Freely you received, freely give.'

The reality: God has blessed the believer with all kinds of spiritual riches

Ephesians 1:3 - 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.'

God has blessed us with salvation / spiritual riches of grace and forgiveness

Stuart Briscoe: 'Sharing is a response of loving obedience motivated by the goodness of God.'

### Conclusion

God is a provider

That is one of His names from the OT – Jehovah Jireh

Interestingly the story from which that comes is found in Genesis 22 – when Abraham is getting ready to sacrifice his son Isaac – and Isaac knowing that a sacrifice is going to take place asks, 'Where is the lamb?'

Abraham said in faith, 'God will provide the lamb'

After the test is over – the angel had kept Abraham from sacrificing his only son – Abraham looked and beheld a ram caught in a thicket – and he went and offered it up an offering in the place of his son

Gen. 22:14 – And Abraham called the name of that place – Jehovah-Jireh – God will provide

Some say you can sort of sum up the OT and the NT this way

The OT says, 'Where is the lamb?'

The NT comes and says, 'Behold the Lamb which taketh away the sin of the world'

God provided the lamb for our forgiveness

### Lord's Table