

Our Unlimited Resources!

For over a month now we have been wrapping ourselves in the 4th chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, called **Philippians**. Before we leave this great chapter, there is one more thought I felt we need to see, so return with me this morning to **Philippians 4**. Remember that Paul, who was in a Roman prison, was thanking the church at Philippi for the care-package (or love offering) sent to him. They were the only church that had faithfully supported Paul financially on his mission trips, & he wanted to say thanks! I will begin reading with 4:13f.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me concerning giving & receiving, but ye only.

For even in Thessalonica ye sent once & again unto my necessity.

Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound **to your account**.

But I have all, & abound:

I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Now unto God & our Father be glory for ever & ever. Amen.

What a great passage! What a great promise! Philippians 4:19, "**But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**" This verse is very familiar to most Christians. We quote it; we write it; & we underline it in our Bibles! But the crucial question today is: **Do we really believe it?**

Many years ago a German peasant named Dobry lived in a village near Warsaw. Because of unforeseen financial problems, he had not been able to pay his rent, & the landlord was threatening to evict him. Dobry pleaded for more time, but the landlord told him that the next day he & his family would be turned out into the snow. Hearing the church bells chime for evening prayer, Dobry & his loved ones knelt to ask the Lord to supply their needs. After prayer they rose to their feet & sang the words of an old hymn: "**Commit thou all thy griefs & ways into His hands.**" As they finished singing, they heard a strange tapping at the window. Dobry opened it & found a **raven** that his grandfather had tamed many years before. **In its beak was a valuable ring!** The ring had been lost that day by the king who was visiting the town. Dobry returned the ring, & the king rewarded him with enough money **to build a house of his own!**

God doesn't always provide in such a dramatic way. But such experiences encourage us! **God is alive!** He knows our needs! He will provide! **You & I worship a God Who is greater than any & all of our problems & our needs! God's provisions are always greater than our needs!**

What a pity that as Christians we so often act as though God's store-house of power & supply is nearly depleted. No Christian ever need beg bread with a promise like this in the Bible! We are unkind to ourselves & dishonoring to God when we plague ourselves with nervous fears & anxiety!

But with this great Bible promise, "My God will meet all your needs.." -- why? Why do Christians still have needs? Is Phil. 4:19 true? Is God a liar? Is this promise no longer valid? My friends, let me assure you, **it is valid! It is true!**

Before we look at this great promise, let's put it into its context! In the passage I have read, you will discover there is both a **premise** & a **promise**. Many people want to claim the promise of verse 19, & apply it to their lives, while ignoring, or avoiding the premise found in verses 14-18! We want to leap-frog over verses 14-18, & land on verse 19. But in order to get to verse 19, we must get there by walking through verses 14-18. What is the **premise** upon which the **promise** is based? In a word, it is **Generosity!** This does not take away from the greatness of the promise; it **adds** to the beauty of the promise.

Having just received a generous gift from the church at Philippi to meet his needs while in prison, Paul is assuring them that because of **their generosity**, God would provide **their needs!** **This is in keeping with the whole Word of God!** The Proverb writer affirms it, stating: "A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed" (Prov. 11:25). Jesus also taught us: "Give, & it will be given to you ... with the measure you use, it will be measured to you" (Luke 6:38). The saying: "**You cannot out give God!**" is in fact true! If we are generous toward others, God will be most generous toward us! **God loves a cheerful giver!**

Let me illustrate this in a simple way. Suppose I were to go to the National Bank in Benson & ask: "How much interest did you pay me last year?" The banker would ask: "Well, what is your account number? Let's see how much do you have deposited with us?" I would have to answer: "Well, I don't have an account here; I have not deposited anything." The banker would smile at me & say: "Sir, we have a rule here at the bank. **You don't make any interest if you don't make a deposit.**"

That same premise is true in the Christian life as well. **How do you store up treasures in Heaven?**

We do so by giving time, talent, along with our tithes & offerings! **Are you giving?** Giving to the needs of others & to the needs of the church? **Are you making deposits into the Bank of Heaven?** If you are, you will discover that God gives a far greater **interest rate** than any earthly bank! But you can short-circuit God's blessing in your life by being stingy! Or, you can give, & to you it will be greatly given!

You see, your generosity is an encouragement to others. Your generosity makes you more like Jesus! Your generosity is an investment in eternity. Your generosity is a sacrifice to God, & that is why Paul says in vr. 18, "(Your gifts) are a

fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God." Now, having understood the **premise**, let's claim the **promise**! Notice with me three very important things about this great promise: --

1. WHAT A SOURCE! -- "God"

Our trust is not in the job market. Our trust is not in the banking institutions. Our trust is not in the U.S. Government. Our trust is not in the stocks, or the bond market! **God is our source!** With Him there are no limited quantities!

No matter how great our need, or how heavily we might have already drawn upon heaven's resources, **the Source will never run dry!** God's love has no limit! God's grace has no measure! God's power has no boundary! In fact, His power is supreme. His wisdom is unbounded. His provisions are inexhaustible! **Oh praise His name forever!**

In writing to the Ephesians, Paul reminded them that God **"is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us"** (3:20). It is impossible for our faith to **overdraw** its account in the Bank of Heaven! **Our poverty never puts a moment's strain on God's provision!**

The story is told that one day a beggar by the roadside asked for alms from **Alexander the Great** as he passed by. The man was poor & wretched, & had no claim upon the ruler, or right even to lift a soliciting hand. Yet the Emperor threw several **gold coins** to a beggar along the road. One of Alexander's messengers was astonished at the generosity, & commented: "Sir, **copper** coins would adequately meet a beggar's need. Why give him **gold**?" Alexander responded in royal fashion: **"Copper coins would suit the beggar's need, but gold coins suit Alexander's giving."** What an illustration this is of God's response toward His children! We ask for **copper**; He gives us **gold!**

2. WHAT A SUPPLY! -- "His riches in glory"

In a letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul prayed for the believers that the Lord would bless them **"according to the riches of His glory"** (3:16). Oh, what **vast resources** are suggested by these words! We need have no fear that the supply will ever be exhausted. Our needs **can** never, nor **will** ever, exhaust God's ample & plentiful supply!

It is our sweet privilege to place **"all our need"** over against **His riches!** Lose sight of the **former** in the presence of the **latter!** Lose sight of your **need** in the presence of His **riches!** Inflation may dwindle our earthly savings. The cost of living may nibble away at our reserves. But heaven's bank has boundless resources! His exhaustless treasury is ours!

There is a Pennsylvania Dutch expression that says: **"There's more in the kitchen when this gets all."** It's just another way of saying: "When what you have is all gone, there's more where that came from!" How much more wonderful this thought is in the **spiritual** realm! We have the assurance that no matter how great our need; no matter how heavily we have already drawn upon Heaven's resources, **there's more "when this gets all!"** The word "supply" means, literally -- "to fill full!"

3. WHAT A CHANNEL -- "Christ Jesus"

When Paul says **"riches in glory"** he puts them **up** high above our reach! But when he adds **"in Christ Jesus"** he brings them **down** amongst us! Jesus is our very best Friend! **Jesus laid down His own life on our behalf!** You & I are poor sinners who stand **spiritually bankrupt** before God! We have nothing to offer Him. Our righteousness is of no value. **Christ, however, is God's beloved Son!** And He is the **Channel** through which we can make our wishes made known to God! The song writer, Annie Johnson Flint, put it like this: **"For out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth, & giveth, & giveth again!"**

Suppose you were bankrupt & afraid to write even the smallest check. You are standing there, check book in hand, not knowing what to do. Then someone of great wealth lays a hand on your shoulder & says: "Go ahead. You can count on me. I am behind you for any amount." My friend, **think of Jesus as providing us with the limitless backing of His grace!** He is saying to us: "Draw on the merits of My life & death. **I'll back you up before My Father for any amount!**"

What we discover here is a **blank check:** the firm is **"My God."** The promise is **"shall supply."** The amount is **"all your need."** The address of the bank is **"in glory"** & the signature is **"Christ Jesus."** **All we need do is to endorse the check & cash it!**

Conclusion: -- What a **Source**, "God"! What a **Supply**, "His riches in glory!" What a **Channel**, "Christ Jesus!" Allow me to give you just a **word of caution.** Sometimes we create our own **need** because of our **wants.** Through credit-card buying, & easy payment plans, we get every thing we want, our hearts desires, & than can't pay for it all. That's not God's fault; don't blame Him! **God will not gratify our whims! God will supply our need!**

The Bible does say: "Delight thyself ... in the Lord; & He shall give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). First, we must delight in Him; in doing so, He may purge many of our desires! The promise of Philippians 4:19, is for the supplying of our **needs**, not our **greed!**

But having said that, think about **this question** for a moment; ask yourself: **"What are my needs?"** Not just a few of them; not just the primary ones. Not even just the spiritual ones; but all of them! Are you encompassed with needs at this very moment? Almost overwhelmed with difficulties, trials & emergencies? Do you ever get the blues? You know, the times when the press of day-to-day life gets you down. Too much to do. Too many problems. Too little of some necessity, but an abundance of

some difficulty? Is your need financial? Physical? Emotional? Or is it spiritual? Problems at home? -- with the kids? -- with your job? -- with other people? Has the doctor given you bad news?

I find that **question is a serious & probing one**, & I realize I don't have the answer to all the problems people bring to me. But I have discovered that **no burden is too heavy for God's almighty arms**. It is interesting, actually, it is awesome, how our spiritual, as well as our material needs, & physical & emotional needs, **can be met by the loving gift of God's grace! God's provisions are always greater than our problems!** Nothing is too small, but that God is still interested. Nothing is too great, too big, beyond God's ability to meet the need!

Today, your strength is zapped; your joy is crushed; & your hope needs to be rejuvenated. These needs are all divinely provided vessels for the Holy Spirit to fill. Your needs are **opportunities** for receiving new blessings & deliverances which only God can fill. Are we looking in the wrong directions for the meeting of our needs? Then, dear friend, **look up to God!** Can you say with the Apostle Paul, "**My God**"? **Do you know Him personally today?** You can, you know! If you are unsaved, then trust Jesus Christ today! Or if you are a Christian, but living like a spiritual pauper, confess your sin, & rededicate your life to God now!

In faith believing, bring all your pressing needs to your Heavenly Father **even this very moment!** He will hear, & He will answer you in His own wonderful way!

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater; He sendeth more strength when labors increase.
To added affliction He addeth His mercy; To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.
When we have exhausted our store of endurance, When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources, Our Father's full giving is only begun.
His love has no limit; His grace has no measure. His pow'r has no boundary known unto men.
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth, & giveth, & giveth again! (Ann Johnson Flint)

Pastor Lyle Pettit -- Calvary Baptist Church -- Benson, AZ
Sunday Morning -- June 8, 2014