

Pray

Reading

Larry began our journey through Philippians on January 1st this year, and today we reach the end: Philippians 4:19-23.

These are the words of God:

19 And my God will supply EVERY need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. 20 To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

21 Greet EVERY saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are WITH me greet you. 22 ALL the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.
(Philippians 4:19–23)

I want to focus on verse 19 in this final sermon, and in doing that, recap what we've seen in Philippians this year.

Verse 19:

My God will supply every need of yours...

Intro

We heard last week about the generosity of the Philippians.

One of the fears I think WE have is maybe what some of them had: if I give generously to others, who will provide for ME? If I give even “beyond my means” - as many of them did - isn't that foolish? Isn't that a failure to budget properly? Isn't that reckless?

Paul says, Philippians 4:19, no. Because

my God will supply EVERY need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:19)

Now when this text says “God will supply EVERY need of yours”, I want to be clear that this is NOT a promise that God will supply everything you FEEL you need.

This past week, as they do every year at about this time, Apple announced a new model of iPhone. (By the way, I know I mentioned Apple last week too, I really don't have shares in them.) But one thing you can say about the brilliance of Apple is that they have clearly poured millions and millions of dollars into creating, not so much phone itself, but creating in people the sense that they really NEED this new iPhone that is basically the same as last year's iPhone.

There was one guy in the last place I worked who still used his iPhone 4 from 2010! Everyone thought it was a cry for help.

It raises the question, what DO we really “need”?

And what exactly ARE these NEEDS God promises to supply?

Here are twelve needs that God supplies, as they are described in Philippians. So we're going for a twelve point sermon this week.

And just a heads up on this, there's about to be a LOT of Scripture references coming your way.

Rather than trying to write down all the references, let me encourage you to get the sermon transcript emailed to you - we send out an email later today with the sermon transcript attached, the guys at the welcome table would be happy to add you to the list...

For now I'd just encourage you to let the Word of God land without the distraction of taking notes.

The Scripture will be up on screen as usual. So let's all be in prayer for the guys at the back trying to operate the slides.

First, God will supply your need for certainty and security, even when everything seems to be going wrong.

Philippians 1:6:

I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

(Philippians 1:6)

Philippians 1:12:

12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel...

(Philippians 1:12)

Philippians 4:22:

22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

(Philippians 4:22)

Why does he mention Caesar's household at the end of the letter?

You remember it's because the Philippians were all panicked about his safety. He's been arrested by the Roman Empire. And Paul knows they're worried about him, so that line at the end is basically Paul sending them a selfie of himself with all the Roman guards, and they're all holding Bibles and smiling and wearing "what would Jesus do" bracelets. He's saying, "All the Roman soldiers say "hi". God's got this."

Second, God will supply your need for a glorious, over-arching purpose in life that isn't rendered futile by death. Philippians 1:21:

21 For to me to live IS Christ, and to die is gain.

(Philippians 1:21)

Philippians 3:13–14:

13 ...one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 *I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

(Philippians 3:13–14)

Third, your need for community and belonging. Philippians 1:27. He fully expects them to be...

27 ...*standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,*

(Philippians 1:27)

Fourth, your need for love. Philippians begins and ends with the assurance of the love of the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So in Philippians 1:2 Paul begins the letter by saying:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Philippians 1:2)

The word “grace” means: steadfast love, compassion, kindness, favor. And he ends the letter in chapter 4 verse 23 by repeating:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. (Philippians 4:23)

Fifth, God supplies your need for a hero to follow in life, a perfect person to emulate. Philippians 2:

5 Have THIS mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing

to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5–8)

Christ is our example to follow in life. He's much more than that, but he's not less than that.

Sixth, your need to know that your best days are ahead of you. That a world is coming in which you will finally be made physically, emotionally and spiritually whole.

Philippians 3:20–21:

20 ...our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:20–21)

Seventh, your need for power and strength to live in the meantime. Philippians chapter 2:

13 ...*it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.* (Philippians 2:13)

Eighth, your need for joy. Philippians 4:4:

4 Rejoice *IN THE LORD* always; again I will say, rejoice. (Philippians 4:4)

Ninth, your need for inner calm and peace. Philippians 4 verse 6:

6 ...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, WILL guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:6–7)

Tenth, your need for comfort and meaning in the face of suffering and death.

Philippians 1:23:

23 My desire is to depart *and be with Christ, for that is far better.*

(Philippians 1:23)

Philippians 1:29:

29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,

(Philippians 1:29)

Or as he puts it elsewhere, your suffering is achieving for you an eternal weight of glory. Philippians 3:10–11:

10 ...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

(Philippians 3:10–11)

But God WILL meet physical and material needs too.

That's our **11th need**. That's what Philippians chapter 4 verse 19 means:

19 ...my God will supply EVERY need of yours...

(Philippians 4:19)

Remember the context of the verse. Paul has been talking about the Philippians' generous financial giving.

So Paul is saying: As YOU have supplied every need of MINE, so "GOD will supply every need of YOURS..."

And that promise of material care is all over Scripture.

Proverbs 11 says:

Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.

(Proverbs 11:25)

Psalms 37 says:

I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread. He is ever lending generously, and his children become a blessing.

(Psalm 37:25-26)

In Matthew chapter 6, Jesus says:

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds THEM. Are you not of more value than they?"

(Matthew 6:25-26)

Like if my little girl comes to me and says, I'm worried that tomorrow I won't have clothes to wear for school, I'm worried I'll have nothing to eat at lunchtime.

I'll say, sweetheart, look at the dog. I feed the dog, don't I? I give the DOG shelter. Am I going to do that for the dog, but not for you?

We don't have a dog, by the way, I'm allergic to them, but nevertheless I stand by the point I'm making.

There's a similar argument in Romans 8:

32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us ALL THINGS?

(Romans 8:32)

It's the same argument isn't it? If God does THIS, then how could he possibly fail to do THAT? If he gave and gave and gave to the point of even giving his own Son to live and die for you so that you could be raised from death and you could enjoy Him forever, why would He hold out on the small stuff in the meantime?

Of course he won't. Philippians chapter 4 verse 19:

God will supply EVERY need of yours

(Philippians 4:19)

This not a guarantee that you will be rich, this is not a guarantee that you will be given the new iPhone - as if THAT were the be all and end all - but it IS a guarantee that God will supply your material needs if you trust and obey Him.

Remember the 23rd Psalm?

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall NOT WANT.

(Psalm 23:1)

Psalm 34:

9 Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints,
for those who fear him have no lack!

(Psalm 34:9)

Psalm 84:

11 No good thing does he withhold
from those who walk uprightly.
(Psalm 84:11)

We worry about promises like that don't we, "do I walk uprightly? Am I good enough to qualify for that?" But that's not what Psalm 84 means. It means no good thing does he withhold from those whose faith is genuine.

And so back to Philippians chapter 4:

God will supply EVERY need of yours
(Philippians 4:19)

Sometimes people will say, well, define "need". I bet my definition of "need" is different to God's definition of "need". I'm sure that's true. But are you in the best position to know what your deepest needs really are?

Health and wealth preachers will tell us that whatever WE feel WE need, God will give us. But the reality is so much better.

Only our kind and tender Father knows us well enough, and loves us well enough, to give us what we truly need.

I love the 18th Century pastor John Newton, I've mentioned him before. He wrote a line which often comes to my mind when things are hard. He wrote: "Everything is NEEDful that God sends. Nothing is NEEDful that he withholds." Do you believe that?

Don't think for a moment that just because YOUR idea of your needs is different to God's idea of your needs that God is somehow short-changing you.

Often, when we think about what WE think would really make us happy, we're short-changing ourSELVES. We are far too easily pleased.

You know that bit in Star Wars where Luke says to Han, if you were to rescue the Princess, the reward would be more wealth than you could IMAGINE. And Han says: "I don't know, I can 'imagine' quite a bit."

Well in Ephesians chapter 3 verse 20, it says that God is able to do for you immeasurably MORE than all you ask or IMAGINE.

I love that. Because God's imagination is much bigger than my imagination.

19 ...my God will supply every need of yours *according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*

(Philippians 4:19)

Riches in glory. If you're still thinking of dollars and cents at this point, you're far too easily pleased.

And who does this promise apply to? End of verse 19: those who are "in Christ Jesus".

What does that mean, to be "in Christ Jesus"? It means you've identified with him and said, "I need you to supply my every need. I trust you..."

In fact, Christ came to supply our deepest NEED. You know what that is? I deliberately left it out earlier. It's the **twelfth** need.

Our need for *righteousness*.

Righteousness means: having the goodness of Jesus Christ credited to us, so that we are fully accepted by God.

And we need that. Without that, we can't enjoy any of the other riches that are in Christ.

Why do we need that so much? Because all of us, by nature, do the inverse of verse 19.

We say, "*I* will supply every need of mine according to my OWN riches. I don't need God. I'll look to other THINGS, other people, other places for my peace, my security, my righteousness..." and in doing that we treat those other things as if they WERE God.

And usually, when we do that, we come to realise that we CAN'T supply every need of ours. The relationship lets us down. The career isn't what we thought it would be. The family doesn't pan out as we hoped.

Our needs are too deep.

So putting my trust in Jesus Christ is simply a question of saying, "I can't do these things for myself, but I believe you can."

"I can't make myself righteous, but I believe you can." And he can. The promise is right there in Philippians 3:9. It's a righteousness....

...which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—
(Philippians 3:9)

He is able to do for you immeasurably more than you ask or imagine.

Final point, very briefly. What is the result of God supplying every need of yours according to his riches in GLORY? Verse 20: More glory! As we give him glory for his kindness towards us.

20 To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Philippians 4:20)

Paul is saying that the right response to everything he's been saying in Philippians is to give glory to God.

Because He is the One who supplies EVERY need. It's ALL from Him. There is not a single breath we draw that hasn't been given to us by Him. And so the only fitting response is to praise him, to give glory to Him.

Sometimes at award ceremonies, if someone has done something particularly special and worthwhile, they receive a standing ovation, don't they?

Apparently the longest standing ovation on record was at the Cannes film festival, and it lasted 22 minutes. That was for a film called Pan's Labyrinth. 22 minutes! For reference, that's the length of an entire episode of Cheers. 22 minutes of giving glory - to the author and director... of a movie.

How much glory is owed to the author and director of life itself? How much glory is owed to the one who supplies our EVERY need? How much glory is owed to the one who gave His own life to rescue his enemies and give them everlasting joy? How long will THAT ovation last?

Verse 19, it will last forever and ever.

The kingdom of heaven must be everlasting in order to accommodate our joyful giving of glory - with the angels - to the author of all that is good, all that is true, all that is beautiful.

The One who will supply your EVERY need. **Let's pray.**