

**Trusting the Most Glorious Giver—Philippians 4:19—4/23/2023**

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Open your Bible to Philippians for our penultimate, or next-to-last, sermon through this letter & let's read Philippians 4:10-20. [READ]

Paul closed with thanks for this church's support of him in prison in Rome where the government did not provide for him.

Paul valued their care & help as they invested in their own spiritual profit & eternal rewards by giving with love & worship to God.

And they did not need to regret their generosity even if they were struggling to meet their needs now.

They did not need to worry if they sacrificed too much in their giving.

This church was greatly generous as verse 16 mentioned them giving to Paul several times soon after they had trusted Christ.

And since Philippi was in Macedonia, their gifts were mentioned as sent with Silas & Timothy to Paul in Corinth in Acts 18:5.

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:7-9 says their gifts fully supplied Paul's needs at Corinth & kept him from needing their support.

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 8:1-5 honored their giving to the Jerusalem church by saying, "*we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their generosity. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.*"

This church gave numerous times out of their poverty, not prosperity—despite their lack, not because they had extra.

They eagerly & gladly gave above & beyond in worship of God.

But here's a question—what if they gave too much & did not have enough left to take care of themselves?

What if they needed their dear leader Epaphroditus & regretted sending him to Paul as he had come near death through that ministry?

Since such questions were possible, Paul had updated them on Epaphroditus & addressed anxiety to help with any regret or worry that wanted some gifts back to help with their expenses.

Then in verse 19, he assured & encouraged them that they could not outgive the God who had supremely sacrificed for them in Christ.

Think of this—do you know what it's like to give until it hurts?

Do you know what it's like to be generous to the point that you feel the financial constraints on your own comforts at a level that you are tempted to wonder if you gave too much?

When we experience anxiety over past giving or current giving, we must preach God's promises to ourselves to purge regret & promote gratitude & persevere in faith.

And to do so, we need promises like Philippians 4:19 to stoke the fires of faith in God's gracious commitment to care for His children.

As we evaluate past giving & plan ongoing giving, we need help to trust God & Philippians 4:19 gives amazing help.

So today we're going to unpack 5 ways to trust God as the most glorious Giver from verse 19 that can free us from anxiety over past, present, or future giving as we sacrifice in following Christ.

From Philippians 4:19, I'll outline 5 ways to trust God as all-sufficient & graciously committed to lavishly care for His own.

The 1<sup>st</sup> is simply to trust His ownership, meaning trust Him personally as the One who has purchased you & owned you in a relationship where you can call Him “my God” like Paul did.

A 1<sup>st</sup> way to trust God we learn today is to trust His ownership.

Paul was not offering vague hope in a distant force or moral influence or therapeutic aid that he had heard about or read about.

No. Paul knew the true God as his Father who had purchased him from slavery to sin at the cost of Jesus’ life & death.

God was personally claimed by Paul in relationship by faith & that faith had been exercised & tested & deepened & anchored.

So after assuring the Philippians he had received their gift, Paul encouraged them that same God who accepted their worshipful giving would provide for them as ‘his’ God always does.

Paul assured them that their gifts would not be unnoticed or unmatched by God because God cares for His own.

Paul knew God’s care through his daily walk with prayers for our daily bread like Jesus said to pray in Matthew 6:11.

He knew we do not go about life as if God does not care or even exist.

We talk with God about our concerns & decisions & we ask for His help & wisdom & provision & He builds our faith as we face trials & needs & blessings & more.

God is involved in our lives personally, not for us to insist on Him doing as we demand, but so we rest in His care because He owns us.

He is my God & I am His servant, His slave, His child.

And since our sins deserve punishment, He does not owe us any good.

By His grace, God has given Christ’s righteous life & Christ’s death for sin & He will count that to save those who trust Him.

By faith in Christ, we are forgiven & He no longer owes us punishment & instead welcomes us as His own.

Of course, we do not deserve His blessings & we must not seek His rewards with a merited payback mentality.

In following up a bit from last week, as we discussed trusting God for spiritual profit & eternal rewards, we must watch our motives.

Over the years, I’ve seen people serve for all kinds of reasons, some even to skip being confronted with preaching or teaching.

So we must first recall that there is spiritual profit in all the spiritual disciplines & we dare not single out serving or giving & forget that gathering for corporate worship brings spiritual profit.

And I’ve known some who will give because giving is easier than biblically counseling & caring for people’s messes.

It can also be tempting to give or serve to get others to notice as if it’s a competition for prominence as Paul mentioned in Philippians 1 with some who were even preaching Christ for their own recognition.

We need those cautions after last week lest you do right things for wrong reasons & lose rewards rather than gaining any.

We must guard against giving or serving to get God to notice, as if we make a deal or put God in debt to owe us.

Many generous servants don’t overemphasize seeking rewards because they know we never deserve anything.

That’s a wise caution to heed after last week & it comes from keeping the perspective that God owns us & He does not owe us anything.

As Jesus said in Luke 17:10 that “*you also, when you do all things which are commanded of you, say, “We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done.”*”

That’s a helpful balance for serving with humble trust in God’s grace as we trust He also rewards by His grace & not by our merits.

The Luke 17:10 mentality that we are happy slaves of the most gracious Master can guard our motives as we serve & give.

I mention that as a follow up from last week & also as we see Paul personally describe God as ‘his God’ in that trusting relationship.

So 1<sup>st</sup> from verse 19, we learn to trust God’s ownership & then 2<sup>nd</sup>ly we learn to trust God’s faithfulness.

The promise in Philippians 4:19 & similar passages reminds us that to trust God, #2, we must trust His faithfulness, meaning trust His faithfulness to His Word, trust His faithfulness to keep His promises.

This promise is often said that we cannot outgive God—we cannot give so much that God is in debt to us or owes us.

We cannot give so much that God cannot keep up with providing for our needs & the opportunities He puts before us.

Look again at what Philippians 4:19 says God will do—He will supply all your needs.

That is future indicative, meaning it will happen & it is not in doubt!

This is a certainty sent from the Spirit of God for the Philippian church & by application for true believers of all times.

The word is literally He will fill or fulfill or make full or complete or amply supply as in verse 18—God will completely supply to the full.

He won’t do it halfway or miserly below what you need.

He will make it full—He will completely abound it up to the top.

That reminds me of the picture Jesus gave in Luke 6:38 about God providing for givers by the standard by which they give.

In Luke 6:38, Jesus said, “Give & it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.”

In other words—God provides for givers—God returns enough for givers to keep on giving as much as He wants them to.

He packs it down & pours it out & provides.

He does so for His glory & we get the fun of being His funnel.

You may have heard me phrase serving & giving as the fun of being a funnel where God is pouring His gifts & provisions into our lives to let those gifts go through us to pour on others.

We get the joyful privilege of spreading His blessings by sharing truth & giving financially & serving in other ways.

It’s the fun of being a funnel as God pours in & through us to others.

He does not need to use us, but what a privilege when He does!

And amazingly Luke 6:38 & Philippians 4:19 are promises that God provides for His people as His people are generous to give.

Of course, such promises are not blank checks expecting God to provide earthly material stuff in return for our giving.

The idea is that God provides what we need to live & keep giving.

Such verses are not prooftexts for the lies of health, wealth & prosperity as if giving can manipulate God or make God owe us earthly blessings if we give to Him as a kind of seed money.

That's wrong & this verse is also not an excuse to irresponsibly throw money away as if God will make up for poor stewardship.

We are accountable to God to evaluate if we are investing in faithful stewardship of God's money as He would want.

That includes appropriate budgeting to make sacrifices by faith rather than by foolishly mismanagement.

So Philippians 4:19 does not excuse unwise stewardship & it does not encourage giving as a way to get materialistic stuff.

But Philippians 4:19 does promise that God provides for His people who sacrificially give to Him as part of faithful stewardship.

That is what the Philippians needed to hear to handle anxiety over their poverty & possible regret over giving too much.

They could trust God's faithfulness to His promises to supply.

And Luke 6:38 & Philippians 4:19 are not the only verses with such promises in the context of giving.

For example, Proverbs 3:9-10 say to "*Honor the LORD from your wealth & from the first of all your produce; so your barns will be filled with plenty & your vats will overflow with new wine.*"

And Proverbs 11:24-25 says "*There is one who scatters, & yet increases all the more, & there is one who withholds what is justly due, & yet it results only in want. The generous man will be prosperous, & he who waters will himself be watered.*"

Proverbs 19:17 adds that "*One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord, & He will repay him for his good deed.*"

And Proverbs 22:9 says, "*He who is generous will be blessed*".

And although the tithes & other offerings for OT Israel were different from NT giving as we said last week, God spoke similarly through Malachi about blessing those who give.

God rebuked Israel for not giving their first & best & tithes & offerings & said to test Him & see His blessings for giving.

Malachi 3:8-12 says, "*Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes & offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, & test Me now in this," says Yahweh of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes," says Yahweh of hosts. All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land," says Yahweh of hosts."*

God's promise for His people in OT Israel through Malachi is similar to the NT promise that God supplies for the giver.

It's similar to what God said through Paul in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9:6-11 in the context of giving that extends through chapters 8-9.

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9:6-7 says this about giving, that "*he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*"

So there is a reaping of the crop of giving that is sown, meaning a return on investment with God as we freely & gladly give.

That choice is motivated by God's promises to provide spiritually & materially as the next verses explain.

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9:8-11 explain that “*God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; as it is written, “He scattered abroad, He gave to the poor, His righteousness endures forever.” Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; you will be enriched in everything for all generosity, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.*”

Do you hear that language of lavish supply like abounding grace & all sufficiency in everything & abundance & multiplying & increasing & enriched in all generosity?

The point is that God promises that you cannot outgive Him, that He will provide as you open-handedly give to Him by faith & you can trust His faithfulness to keep His promises.

That is the God that Philippians 4:19 says will supply all their needs—& by application, all your needs for today’s Christians.

That includes spiritual needs as has been mentioned in verse 13, but verse 19 must also include material, financial needs.

Sometimes God’s good & wise provision includes walking us through earthly trials that stretch our faith as we face needs.

And that’s why it’s helpful to phrase this next point like this—trust God’s knowledge—as a 3<sup>rd</sup> way to trust God as the most glorious Giver, we must #3, trust His knowledge.

In other words, we must trust that God knows our needs—that His knowledge is comprehensively & perfectly balanced & fully wise to assess exactly what we need in any situation.

So we humble ourselves under His mighty hand, as 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:6-7 says, casting all our anxiety on Him, trusting that He cares for us.

As Jesus said in Matthew 6:8, your Father knows what you need before you ask Him & you can be assured that He knows & He cares if you know Him as your Father through faith in Jesus.

As Jesus said in Matthew 7:11, “*If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!*”

So Jesus said in Matthew 6:31-33, “*Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*”

Those are the lessons Paul was passing on to the Philippians here.

Trust that God knows all your needs & pray & seek Him & let Him provide what is good in His time in His measure.

Note those 3 words in verse 19—all & your & needs.

So the promise includes all & it is also individually fit to each person—yours, & it is for your needs not your wants or desires.

Each of those words are important—it’s all, not some—and it’s yours, not what you see someone else has.

And it’s needs, not requests or dreams or expectations or self-defined ideas of needs.

Paul defined those needs physically in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:8 by saying, “*If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.*”

Then he went on to warn against living to get rich in this world.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:9-10 warn that “*those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which*

*plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”*

Such warnings guard us from expanding our sense of needs.

Paul’s definition of needs was narrow as he wrote this letter from prison to a church that was suffering opposition & poverty.

Since God knows those needs for each individual Christian & He knows what & when & how best to meet them, we must trust His knowledge as a 3<sup>rd</sup> way of applying today’s verse.

Yet God is not stingy in how He supplies for the needs of His children as the next phrase in Philippians 4:19 describes.

Note that next phrase—how does God promise to supply all your needs?—according to His riches in glory.

The preposition is not ‘out of’ His riches, as if He reaches into His endless supply & gives out of that wealth.

No. It is according to that wealth—in keeping with the character of His riches & the lavish nature of His grace.

So we can note this as a 4<sup>th</sup> point to trust His generosity.

Trust God’s ownership, His faithfulness, His knowledge, & 4<sup>th</sup>ly, trust His generosity since He is the most glorious Giver.

Trust His character & grace & endless supply.

The God who created everything & owns it all & sustains it all will not merely give a drop out of His eternal fountain, but He will give you according to His limitless lavish wealth.

This is not a smidgen squeezed from Him, but a provision in proportion with His infinite glory.

And remember, God does not need anyone to give to Him.

As He said in Psalm 50, He did not need sacrificed animals because He owns the cattle on a thousand hills & all the beasts of the earth.

If God were able to be hungry, Psalm 50 says He would not say it because He owns all & does not need anything.

The nations are like a drop in a bucket to Him as Isaiah 40:15 says.

Yet it is according to that all-inclusive ownership of His that He gives to meet the needs of His people.

He gives according to His visibly created riches & His invisibly infinite spiritual riches.

The phrase “*in glory*” points to the source of these riches.

These are not earthly riches that can be uncertain.

Even His earthly provisions are from His glorious storehouse of undiminshable deity.

Some translate it as glorious riches since that’s what kind of riches they are—they are belonging to & sourced from glory.

They are transcendent & not mired in earthly economics.

They gloriously surpass all such conceptions & categories.

That is how God supplies all the needs of Christians.

As Psalm 37:25 says, “*I have been young and now I am old, Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread.*”

As Jesus said in Matthew 6, God cares for the birds of the air & the flowers of the field & you are much more valuable to Him.

So God is not stingy with His people—He is not sitting in heaven rolling His eyes at our requests or bored with having to take care of us.

He delights in His people & loves to provide far more than the most loving earthly father gladly does for His children.

We can trust this God who is so gracious & glad to give.

As we give sacrificially to God in worship, we can trust Him to supply for all our needs according to His riches in glory!

We can trust (#1) His ownership, (#2) His faithfulness, (#3) His knowledge, (#4) His generosity, & 5<sup>th</sup>ly & finally, we can trust His security.

The 5<sup>th</sup> way we learn from Philippians 4:19 to trust God as the most glorious Giver is to trust His security.

The last words of verse 19—in *Christ Jesus*—matters most of all.

*In Christ Jesus* is where this promise is applied as your security that can never be stolen or shaken.

Ephesians 1:3, 7, 8, & 18 say that in Christ, we have every spiritual blessing & we have the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us & we have the riches of his glorious inheritance.

We gain this gloriously rich access through the work of Christ, & we are placed in Christ Jesus, in Him as united & secure.

In Christ Jesus is the sphere of our existence now because He is counted as Our righteousness & redemption & resurrection.

As 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 8:9 says, Jesus "*was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich*"—meaning He gave Himself so that we have all He is.

And please understand this certainty in God's endless & perfect supply is not guaranteed to every person.

God has been kind in His common grace to bring sunshine & rain on the righteous & the unrighteous as Matthew 5:45 says.

Acts 14:17 says "*He did not leave Himself without a witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.*"

It's easy to assume that God owes everyone such blessings.

But God does not owe such provisions of His goodness to anyone.

He is the Potter & we are just clay vessels to whom He has chosen to show His glory in creation & He did not have to be as generous with beauty & pleasure as He has been.

That's why it is only right to give Him thanks for every blessing & experience of good that we enjoy in this life.

It is all grace from Him, not to be taken lightly nor expected as an entitlement or as owed or deserved.

And one day God will withdraw His goodness from all who do not turn from sin to faith in Christ.

He will pull away the riches of His grace & kindness that He has given for a time to lead us to repentance.

And when that final day comes—whether it's when Christ returns or when you die—then that will be the end of all His goodness for you.

If you are outside of Christ Jesus—if you are not in Christ Jesus as Paul ended today's verse—then that end will come on you & your eternity will be tragic torment forever & ever.

You will be away from every measure of God's goodness forever.

So please listen everyone—you want to be IN Christ Jesus—and He has graciously allowed you to hear His Good News.

So please come to Jesus Christ & surrender your life to His gracious care & faithful love & wondrous mercy & wise Lordship.

As Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd Jones said, *“This promise is only made to those who, having seen their desperate plight and condition and lost estate, have run to Christ and given themselves to him, and are being incorporated into him, and are members of his body. It is made to no one else; the promise is confined to Christians, to those who are in Christ Jesus in this relationship, who are connected to the channel, who are recipients of the grace of God in salvation. So there is a very definite limit to the promise in and of itself; it is illimitable, but it is confined to the channel of Christ, what he has done in his life and death and resurrection. He is calling his people unto himself and it is for them, and for them alone.”* [237-8]

So come to Christ today & know that *“my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”*

Know that you cannot outgive Him when you give Him your soul & your trust & hope & security now & forever.

You cannot outgive Him in Christ when you give Him your budget & finances & stewardship & time & service & priorities.

God will always give endlessly more forever in Christ.

Romans 5 says we know we can trust Him because He has already given Christ to reconcile us & so He will surely do far lesser for us.

As Romans 8:32 says, *“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?”*

And that means all things we truly need to live for His glory.

He has given the greatest gift in giving Himself in Christ & so we can be sure that He will supply all our needs in Christ Jesus.

There is no amount of our time & lives & money through faith in Christ that He will not gladly reward & fully recompense & supply with all that we need now & forever.

When we know the character & promises of this gracious God, we should never be stingy or tight-fisted or resentful or regretful of anything we sacrifice to Him.

We need never be anxious or begrudging or grumbling when we know our God as the most glorious Giver that He is.

And we can encourage one another with these words.

We can remind each other of His character & how we can trust His ownership & faithfulness & knowledge & generosity & security.

We can testify of this God as MY God as we walk with Him & experience His grace & share His goodness together.

I pray these truths encourage you & help you to encourage each other.

May we grow in gladly knowing that we cannot outgive God.

And may Philippians 4:19 be precious & powerful in us as we do so.

Pray with me as we close.