

**Subject: Thanks to the Saints**  
**Scripture: Philippians 4:14-19**

As we come to the end of Paul's letter to the Philippians, we realize it was a thank you letter for their gifts of support. The Bible has a lot to say about Christian giving. We are to give regularly and systematically to our church.

**1 Corinthians 16:2** *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

The Bible also teaches that we are to give directly to people in need as we have the opportunity and ability.

**Galatians 6:10** *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

Whether we give to the church or a person in need, it should be given in the right spirit.

**2 Corinthians 9:7** *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

Some parents were trying to teach their child about giving to the Lord so they gave their son a quarter and a dollar, and told him to put one of them in the offering plate. After the service they asked him which one he gave. He said, "I gave the quarter because the preacher said, *God loves a cheerful giver*, and I figured I could give it more cheerfully than the dollar."

The Bible teaches the law of sowing and reaping.

**2 Corinthians 9:6** *But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*

**Luke 6:38** *Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*

## **1. GRATITUDE FOR THE CHURCH'S GIVING (vs. 14-18)**

The Philippians had shared gifts with Paul when he was in distress (desperate need). Giving can be the difference between life and death. Paul had already mentioned their giving revived and was flourishing again like a fruitful tree (4:10). Then he comes back to their giving in verses 14-18. He commends their giving for five reasons:

A. Their giving was special (vs. 14-15)

Paul had established the church about 10 years before this letter. He remembered those first days, “the beginning of the gospel” (1:3-5). Paul also remembered that no other church supported him like the Philippians. The word “shared” (*sunkeinoneo*) is an intensified form of the word for fellowship.

- B. Their giving was repeated (vs. 16) – They sent aid to Paul many times to help meet his needs.
- C. Their giving was eternally significant (vs. 17) – Paul was thankful for two reasons: their gifts met his needs and their gifts were laying up treasures in heaven. Their gifts were like deposits that would pay eternal dividends.

**Matthew 6:20** *Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.*

Their gifts blessed Paul not only because of their material and financial benefit to him, but even more so because of their spiritual benefit to them.

- D. Their giving was generous (vs. 18) – The gifts they sent by Epaphroditus were plenty to meet Paul’s needs.
- E. Their giving was pleasing to God (vs. 19) – Most important, their gifts were like a sweet-smelling fragrance and sacrifice to God. Their gifts were a spiritual act of worship that pleased God. The words “well pleasing” are also found in...

**Hebrews 13:16** *But to do good and to communicate (share) forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

**Romans 12:1** *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable (well pleasing) unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

**2 Corinthians 5:9** *Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted (well pleasing) of him.*

Jesus said it more blessed to give than receive. When we give to others we bless them and we please God. What could be better than blessing others and pleasing God?

## **2. CONFIDENCE IN GOD’S GIVING (vs. 19)**

Paul was confident that their giving would be replenished by God. He would continue to supply the financial and material needs of the Philippians.

- A. God’s giving is personal – “my God”

This reminds us of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want*. God takes care of His people.

B. God's giving is faithful – "shall supply"

There is no doubt about it. God always takes care of His people.

***Psalms 84:11*** *For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*

C. God's giving is sufficient – "all your need"

What encouraging words! These dear brothers and sisters had met Paul's needs and now Paul assures them that God will meet all their needs. We are needy people. Everybody has needs—physical, financial, emotional, spiritual, family...you name it. God doesn't promise to meet all our wants, but He will meet all our needs.

***Psalms 37:25*** *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*

D. God's giving is unlimited – "according to his riches in glory"

Who can measure that? The Bible speaks of "the riches of God's goodness" (Romans 2:4); "the riches of His wisdom" (Romans 11:33); "the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7); and "the riches of His glory" (Eph. 1:18).

Notice that God's giving is not just "out of his riches in glory," but "according to his riches in glory" or in proportion to His riches. Here is an illustration. Last week in the news it was reported that the CEO of Amazon, Jeff Bezos, was stepping down from day to day operations. His net worth is reported to be \$200 billion. If someone asked him for a donation, he could give \$100 or \$100 thousand. A gift of \$100 would be giving out of his riches, but a gift of \$100 thousand would be giving according to (in proportion to) his riches. Paul is simply reminding them what we all know...you can't out-give God.

E. God's giving is specific – "by Christ Jesus"

The preposition is "in Christ Jesus." God gives to us because we are His children through faith in Jesus. We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Every blessing from God comes to us in and through Jesus Christ. If we go back through this letter to the Philippians we find that in Christ we have life, encouragement, joy, righteousness, hope, peace, strength, and infinite resources.