

Philippians 4:18–20

“Fruit That Abounds to the Account of Generous Saints”

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What was that fruit that the apostle was so happy to know that it abounded to the "account" of the Philippians? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. Philippians 4:18–20 prepares us for the evening exhortation on the coming Lord's Day. In these three verses, the Holy Spirit teaches us that true Christian generosity bears the fruit of plenty for God's saints, praise unto God, pleasing God, provision from God for the giver, and parental and perpetual glory unto God.

Friday, August 20, 2021 • Read Philippians 4:18–20

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the apostle have (v18)? What is his condition? What has he received from whom? What does he call those things? About Whom does the apostle speak in v19? What will He do? According to what? In what? By Whom? What does the apostle call God in v20? What doxology does he pronounce? For how long? With what affirmation?

The apostle has just stated that his desire is for fruit to abound to the Philippians' account. What does that fruit look like?

First, it is the **praising of God**, v18. For Paul, it was some provision that could be carried in the hand of Epaphroditus. But the language he uses reminds us of other sacrifices, like that of Noah in Gen 8:21. In both cases, the one who has already received God's salvation offers up a sweet-smelling sacrifice. But ultimately, all sacrificial giving looks toward and comes from Christ's own giving "Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma" (Eph 5:2).

It is therefore, secondly, the **pleasing of God**, v18. We needn't wonder why God is so pleased, if in our sacrificial giving He sees His beloved Son, with Whom He is everlastingly and infinitely well-pleased (cf. Eph 5:2). The Philippians have been imitators of God as dear adopted children (cf. Eph 5:1) in whom He sees the character of His only-begotten Son.

This is exactly why, thirdly, it is the **provision of God**, v19. God has given them sacrificial hearts "according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." He Who provides spiritually will provide materially as well. They may be entering into some distress of their own in Paul's behalf (v14b), but they have not ultimately put themselves at risk. They are displaying God's rich provision in both things spiritual and things material.

Finally, it is the **parental and perpetual glory of God**, v20. To God belongs the glory forever and ever. And one of the ways that He is magnifying that glory is by making believers like the Philippians to reflect that glory. So the apostle adds "and Father" in v20 to this statement of His perpetual glory. Like a good son—indeed like the original and eternal Good Son—it is a greater delight to them that their Father be glorified in and by whatever they receive from Him.

When we see what the apostle sees in the Philippians' gift to him, we're not at all surprised that he treasures these things far above whatever material gain he got from their giving to him.

Through whose kindness do you have opportunity to praise God's grace and glory in them? Through what opportunities for generosity might you have the honor of bringing praise to God's grace and glory?

Sample prayer: Father, we praise You for the indescribable gift of Your Son, and for His own giving Himself as an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. Forgive us for when we have been so focused on material things that we haven't seen the spiritual glories of others' Christian generosity or displayed them in our own generosity. Glorify Christ in us by providing us all that we need according to Your riches in glory by Christ Jesus, so that in His glory You also will be glorified, our God and Father, forever and ever, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP23 "The Lord's My Shepherd" or TPH538 "Take My Life and Let it Be"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Philippians 4, verses 18 through 20. These are God's words, indeed, I have all and abound. I am full having received from the path readitus. The things that from you a sweet smelling, aroma and acceptable sacrifice well, pleasing to God. And my God fell supply all your need according to his riches and glory by Christ.

Jesus now to our God and Father, the glory forever than ever on that my amenity. So at the end of verse 17, he had said, not that. I seek the gift but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. And there's lots of fruit actually that he describes in versus 18 through 20 that abound to their account.

One of these fruits is plenty. He says, indeed I have all and abound, I am full. Okay, so he's emphasizing that he's not needy anymore. He was needy and now he's not God, has supplied all his needs, and we give

praise to God when he's supplies all our needs.

So God is glorified. And the apostle is provided for, these are fruits that are bounding to the Philippians, to the Philippians account. And there's no spiritual bonus points to be gained, but by talking about how you're still needing. When God has supplied plenty, it's good to praise him for the plenty.

When he's used someone else to do it, it's good to tell them, God has made given me all that. I need God has made me a bound. God has made me full, He says to them. So one of the fruits is the plenty second fruit is praise in particular in the form of a sacrifice.

Again reading in verse 18. He says indeed I have all and abound I am full having received from the paforiditis that's things sent from you. He doesn't say what the things are but he does tell us what they are, like a sweet, smelling aroma and acceptable sacrifice. Well, the first time we have in the Bible, this language of a sweet smelling, a rumah for its sacrifice, that's in Genesis chapter 8.

Would Noah gets off the ark and God has just saved him, right? It's not a sacrifice asking for salvation, it's a sacrifice responding to salvation the sacrifice of praise unto God. And you can imagine how thankful, how full of thankfulness. No. His heart was when he was back on the dry ground and his family has been spared, and even in the destruction of the whole earth and how this was an indicator to him of sin, that is forgiven, and, and everlasting salvation, that you will receive.

And how that is pictured. In the killing on the shedding of blood and the burning of the animals that we deserve, but that God does to another instead of us. And so no off full of praise unto God and gratitude for being saved offers the, the sacrifice into God.

Well, it would be long for us, wouldn't it to slaughter animals and burn them? Because those sacrifices looked forward to the sacrifice of Jesus. And you can see that if you just turn a few pages back to a season chapter five and he's giving the Ephesians instruction for imitating Christ.

He says be imitators of God as dear children and walk in love as Christ, also has loved us and given himself for us and offering into sacrifice to God for a sweet, smelling aroma. And so the sweet smelling aroma was because God sees perceives receives in this sacrifice his son and the sacrifice that his son would offer when the Lord Jesus loved us and gave himself gave himself for us.

That that is the sweetness of all of the sacrifices that have ever been properly offered. And now he says there's something else that is a sweet smelling aroma. And that is when believers walk in love, Ephesians 5:1 and now in our verse today in Philippians chapter 4 and he says, generosity from believers out of love.

For one another in response to Christ as praise because we have been saved that too is as verse 18 says, a sweet smelling aroma and acceptable sacrifice and so you and I are so thankful to God for as ever lasting salvation and he gives us here. One of the ways to praise him for it by loving one.

Another and in particular by being generous to what another in that love. So if you see someone who is in need in the church, and remember that the the part of the church that God has given you, most of all to serve, is this family in this house, that you would be generous one another, and that you would walk in love.

We think about walking in love and we think about how often we speak shortly and corruptly with one another and maybe even use unkind or even profane words, we're one another. We are grieved because we're missing opportunities to get praised unto God to offer, the way that we love what another, as a sweet smelling aroma, so it's not just plenty for Paul and praise unto God.

But even the pleasure of God, that is no wonder that he says, at the end of verse 18. Well, pleaseing to God, when we realize that, the reason that it's a sweet smelling aroma is because in it is the imitation of Jesus, right? All of the sacrifices were sweet smelling because they looked forward to Jesus sacrificing himself on the cross.

Our walking in love is a sweet smelling aroma because it imitates Jesus loving us and giving himself for us on the cross. And so when we walk and love towards one, another that didn't come from us that came from the Holy Spirit, working in us the character of the Lord Jesus.

And so God sees in you, his son of whom. He said this is my beloved son with him. I am well, please, nothing should please us to see in ourselves more than to see the character of Christ being reflected in us and nothing. Please. Is God more in you than seeing the character of Christ reflected in you.

So there's the plenty for fall. The praising of God by the sacrifice, the pleasure of God in seeing his son. And then the provision of God, it's already been implied. That all of this is God's providing for Paul, which increases his thankfulness to them, but he turns around and he says, and my God, shall supply, all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

A Christian is someone who cannot impoverish himself by being generous to others, or by being jealous to other Christians. You can be foolish, folly is not generosity. Generosity takes into account, those to whom you have a primary duty of generosity again. There's in your own household. The apostle will set tell that to Timothy that those who are not generous with the their own household have denied the faith and worse or worse than an unbeliever.

But as long as we're being wise and giving helpfully, there are many people to him giving to them reinforces laziness reinforces and gratitude, that's not generous, you must care. First. Spiritually about someone's soul, not first about their body. Although caring for their body is part of caring for them.

So there are wisdom and folly issues. But with true generosity a Christian cannot impoverish himself. They had the apostle said earlier, verse 14, they had shared in his distress, He was in distress and now they shared in that distress but taking some of what they needed and sending it to him.

But he said you haven't lost the supply for what you need, because the supply for what you need was not in your money bag or in your pocket or for us in your bank account or your investment account. The supply for what you need is in the riches of the glory of God in Christ Jesus.

So it says to him to them in verse 19 and my God, shall supply, all your need, according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus. So God's provision for Paul has been glorified through their giving to him and God's provision for them is about to be glorified by how he supplies them, what they gave up to send a ball.

They haven't made themselves poor. They have given another opportunity for the glorifying of God's provision to them. See how the way believers for him. Christ is everything and where imitating him and walking in love towards one another for for his glory. You think very differently about money and neediness and contentment and generosity my God to supply all your needs according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus.

And then finally, there's not just the provisional glory of God. There's the parental and perpetual glory of God parental, because when we give this way, we're imitating. Both our Savior. Like we heard in Ephesians 5 we're walking in love, but not just like, Jesus, loved us and gave himself for us.

But we're also imitating, our father, aren't we imitating? God as beloved children bearing? The family resemblance. And so he recognizes that as he says in verse 20 now to our God and father be glory forever and ever, there's reflection of God's character it in what the Philippians have sent to Paul that is going to glorify God as their spiritual father from whom that generosity has come in Christ and God's glory is going to be not just parental but perpetual the glorifying of God is something that has value forever and ever and that will continue forever and ever.

So now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever on that. So what are the fruit or what are some aspects of the fruit bounds to the Philippians account for their generosity? And that would abound to our account for generosity towards others or others accounts for their generosity towards us.

Plenty, indeed. I have all and abound, I am full having received from aphrodisificant from you. Praise unto God for his salvation. A sweet smelling, a woman and acceptable, sacrifice the pleasure of God, and what he sees in our character. Well, pleasing to God, the glorifying of the provision of God.

Both to the one who received and as God, resupplies the giver, and my God, shall supply, all your need, according to his riches, and glory by Christ Jesus. And in the last place the parental and perpetual glory of God as the one whose fatherly character is resembled in his adopted children forever.

Now to our God and Father the glory forever and ever amen. Indeed, the Lord help us to be generous to one another so that all of these fruit can abound to Arachne, let's pray.

Father, we thank you for giving us the opportunity to turn aside from all other things and interact with you in your word. Thank you for this particular portion of your word and which you show us all of the benefits of walking in love. And especially, in that particular part of walking in love that is generosity towards one.

Another help us Lord to be generous, people, particularly with the needs of your saints, particularly with the needs of this saints, who preach the gospel. And we pray that you would be glorified you would be glorified by producing in us that fruit of plenty and praise and your pleasure and your provision and your parental and perpetual glory and pray that you would help us to meditate upon this.

Help me. I pray as we get ready to hear it on the Lord's day afternoon that by then I might understand the text even more and that your spirit would go ahead of us. Preparing hearts. The your work would be done in your people unto your glory which we ask in Jesus name, amen.