

Paul's Joyful Letter to the *Philippians*

CHAPTER 4: THE SECURE MIND

God's Peace (4:1-9)

Right Praying (4:6-7)

Right Thinking (4:8)

Right Living (4:9)

God's Power (4:10-13)

The Overruling Providence of God (4:10)

4:10 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. Paul's Christian relationships involved passion ("rejoice greatly"). He knew the Philippian (and Corinthian ^{2 Corinthians 11:9}) church cared about him, but he had not received a gift from them ^{v.16} for quite a while, because God was directing his needs and supply.

The Unfailing Power of God (4:11-13)

4:11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. While Paul was thankful for the gifts he received, he recognized his dependence was not upon them, because God supplied what he needed ^{1 Timothy 6:17}, which helped him to be content ^{1 Timothy 6:6-8, Hebrews 13:5}.

4:12 I know what it is to be (in need) ¹⁰, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. [¹⁰*tapeinoo*: humble] Please note this verse does not say Paul was always content, but that he understood the "secret" of joy, peace & contentment, which is that these physical and spiritual emotions are not rooted in wealth (or health, happiness, ease-of-life, etc), but can only be obtained from God ^{2 Corinthians 12:7-11}.

4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength. In this verse, "everything" means what it says, because God is omnipotent. However, in reality, God will only accomplish what is within His will, but this includes everything from the very simple to the miraculous. When He decides to achieve something, the Lord provides strength to those who need it ^{Ephesians 3:16}, especially for His faithful followers ^{1 Timothy 1:12}.

God's Provision (4:14-23)

The Unchanging Promise of God (4:14-20)

4:14 Yet it was good of you to share ¹¹ in my troubles. [¹¹*sugkoinoneo*: to participate in something with someone (lit)] Sharing in ministry ^{Philippians 1:7} means also experiencing their circumstances ^{Hebrews 10:32-37}.

Living Grace produces Giving Grace

Biblical text taken from the NIV1984

4:15-16 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church¹² shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need.

[¹²*ekklesia*: the called people] The “early days” is a reference to Paul’s 2nd missionary journey^{Acts 15:39-18:22}, and Paul was specifically referring to their travels from Macedonia to Thessalonica^{Acts 16:11-17:9}, where they faced “toil and hardship” to preach the gospel^{1 Thessalonians 2:8-9}. Along the way, the Macedonian church desired to help, but “their extreme poverty” kept them from helping^{2 Corinthians 8:1-5}, and Paul emphasized that it was the Philippians who were incredibly generous in providing multiple sacrificial gifts of aid to him.

4:17-18 Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account.

I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing¹³ to God.

[¹³*euarestos*: well pleasing (lit)] The congregation in Philippi gave generously from their hearts, but instead of asking for more, Paul wanted them to know the heavenly dividends they would receive for their Godly unselfish work^{Proverbs 19:17, Matthew 6:19-21, Luke 6:38, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7}. The “fragrant offering”^{2 Corinthians 2:14-16}

Paul mentioned refers to a Christian’s wholehearted sacrificial gift of worship and praise to God^{Romans 12:1}.

4:19 And my God will meet¹⁴ all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. [¹⁴*pleroo*: to fill, supply] “And my God” emphasizes the very personal relationship God has with all His genuine followers, and they will “not want” (have everything they “need”), because the Lord Jesus is their Shepherd^{Psalms 23:1}.

A few of the “riches” God supplies are “grace”^{Ephesians 1:7}, “kindness, tolerance and patience”^{Romans 2:4}, “wisdom and knowledge”^{Romans 11:33} and “strength and power”^{Ephesians 3:16}. However, the greatest of God’s riches that He takes great pleasure in pouring out is the “mystery” of Christ^{Colossians 1:27, 2:2}.

4:20 To our God and Father be glory (for ever and ever)¹⁵. Amen. [¹⁵*aion*: always being (lit)] To be emphatic, Paul sometimes used the seemingly redundant phrase “God and Father”^{Galatians 1:4, 1 Thessalonians 1:3, 3:11, 13}. He expressed this doxology^{Romans 11:36} in response to the wonderful truth of God’s goodness in verse 19.

The Closing and Benediction (4:21-23)

4:21-22 Greet all the saints¹⁶ in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send greetings. All the saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar’s household. [¹⁶*haglos*: a sanctified or consecrated person] This is Paul’s closing greeting to “all” the believers (“saints”)^{Galatians 1:2} in Philippi.

“The brothers” include Timothy^{Philippians 2:19} and Epaphroditus^{Philippians 2:25}; possibly Tychicus, Aristarchus, Onesimus and Jesus Justus^{Colossians 4:7-11}; and even slaves and palace guards who Paul had saved.

“Saint” refers to a genuine believer in both the OT^{1 Samuel 2:9, 2 Chronicles 6:41, Psalm 16:3, 31:23, 85:8, Daniel 7:18, 27} and the NT^{Romans 1:7, 15:31, 1 Corinthians 14:33, Ephesians 1:18, Colossians 1:9-14, Philippians 1:4-5, Revelation 14:12}.

4:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. A typical benediction^{Romans 16:20, Galatians 6:18} that Paul directed at the believer’s spirit (who is the Christian’s proof of salvation and connection to God).

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