

1: Philippians 4: Bible Study With Questions

Philippians New Living Translation (NLT) Paul's Thanks for Their Gifts. 10 How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. 11 Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. 12 I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything.

And my God will liberally supply fill to the full your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Amplified Bible - Lockman Lightfoot: And I am confident that God on my behalf will recompense you and supply all your wants with the wealth which he only can command, in the kingdom of his glory, in Christ Jesus. And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. My God will supply all that you need from his glorious resources in Christ Jesus. But my God shall satisfy to the full your every need in accordance with His wealth in glory in Christ Jesus. Nelson D This verse is often yanked out of context as a blank check from God and is emblazoned on everything from T-Shirts to coffee mugs. However verse 19 is not a blank check. It is not a promise of prosperity. Here is what many people miss when they take Php 4: Yes, it is a trustworthy promise from God, BUT taken in context, it is a conditional promise. In effect, God says "If you honor me with your finances like the church at Philippi had done , then I will meet all of your needs. Such amazing generosity does not allow for foolish and frivolous spending on our part while at the same time we consider God is responsible for necessities! Rather, because the Philippians had been so generous in their Christian giving, God would meet their needs as well. Commenting on the phrase "my God" Eadie writes that my God, so honoured and so pleased with your gift to me, will supply all your need. I who receive your contribution can only thank you, but my God Who accepts the sacrifice will nobly reward you. You have supplied one element of my need, but my God will supply every need of yours. The apostle uses the simple future tense , as if he pledged himself for God; for he felt most assured, that God as his God would act as he promised in His name. Vine writes that "the possessive pronoun my here suggests that while he could not do all that he would like to do for these, who had ministered on his behalf, his God would see to it. Paul could not repay the Philippians, but God could and would. J M Boice asks the important application question: On the other hand, if you do believe in Him and wish to obey Him, you will find Him strong in your need. You met one need that I have, but my God will meet all of your needs. You gave out of your poverty, but God will supply your needs out of His riches in glory! Note that some translations suggest this verse is a prayer eg, the Contemporary English Version has "I pray that God will take care of all your needs " but most versions do not hold to that view. Note that Paul says the promise is to meet needs not their "greeds" and all of their wishes, wants, or whims. Men have physical needs, mental needs, social needs, economic needs. These needs are temporal, but spiritual and eternal because all men need perpetual pardon, perpetual peace, and perpetual power. All would be supplied to the saints at Philippi! Chreia - 49x in the NT - Matt. The NAS renders chreia as necessary 1 , need 40 , needed 1 , needs 6 , task 1. Jesus reminds busy Martha and all of us that only a few things are necessary chreia , really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her. We can, too, if we dedicate all we have to Him. To claim the fulfillment of the promise without giving obedience to God is presumptuous. It shows a lack of faith. The Philippians were obedient. The Joy of Living: A Study of Philippians Solomon exhorts us to "Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce, so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine. The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered. Thus God tells Israel to "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. It involves the reciprocity of sufficiency. These Philippians had undoubtedly given from their meager resources. They were not wealthy people. He will supply all your needs. Since you supplied my needs, God will supply yours. He does not say a Christian may not go through some hard times and have to skip a meal now and then. Wants and needs deal with motivations. Also it should be noted that while God always meets our needs, He often goes beyond those

needs to lavishly meet our wants because He is a faithful, loving, concerned God Prov. Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first-fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine. One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. These verses do not guarantee God will make every Christian, who gives liberally, rich, but they do indicate blessing for the faithful giver to the Lord. So, if you want, give! The promise God will meet every need must be put into the context of Philippians 4: Because the Philippians had been generous, had given liberally and even sacrificed greatly, Paul assured them God would meet every financial need they had. The promise to meet all needs is conditioned on obedience to faithful giving 2 Cor. Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Sometimes the best illustrations are those we have experienced ourselves. I have now been a Christian over 35 years and have seen God meet my needs or the needs of my family in hundreds of ways. I would like to pick out several cases for which I have no human explanation except God meets needs supernaturally. The first case is when I went to seminary. I was a new Christian. My parents had rejected my Christianity and were antagonistic to me. My father said he would support me if I went and received a doctorate in Physical Education but if I went to seminary he would not give me a dime. He is a man true to his word. I trusted God to meet my needs and went to seminary by faith. God has indicated to me that you are one of these young men. The second case is when I was in seminary. Carol and I had two children and one week we ran completely out of money. We needed milk for the babies and gas to go to a church where I was teaching Sunday school. I went to my mailbox at the seminary just after it closed on Saturday sure God would supply my needs but there was no money. Sunday morning I got up and asked God to get me to this church for I knew we had no gas. I made it to the church which was about ten miles away on fumes. For some reason, I was about a half an hour early and this church was about two blocks from the seminary. I decided to walk and pray and God seemed to impress me that I was to go to my mailbox at seminary. I argued with God because I had been there just after the mailroom closed on Saturday and there was nothing in it. I went to my mailbox and in it were two one dollar bills. I took one dollar and bought gas to get home and took the other dollar and bought milk for the kids. What a fantastic need God met and such wonderful timing. To me this event is just as significant as having my way paid thought seminary. Joy in Giving Barnes has a practical comment noting God supplying all their needs "does not mean that the Philippians would now be justified in becoming lazy. To be sure, God was taking care of Paul, but one of the ways in which he was doing so was exemplified by the gift from Philippi. Nor does he promise them merely a reward in the future life, but even in respect of the necessities of the present life: F B Meyer cautions that "we must distinguish between our needs and our desires. It is possible to want a good many things which we do not need. We often want things which it would injure us greatly to have. Paul wanted to be delivered from his thorn, but his real need was for more grace. We want a great many things which it is not possible for our Heavenly Father to give us, except to the great detriment of our best life. There is no promise that God shall supply all our desires or wishes, there is a certainty that He will fulfill all our need. Some may read these words whose needs are clamant crying, beseeching , the need for guidance, for help against temptation, for the quickening of languishing devotional life, the need for daily bread or employment. Let all such take this to their heart for their comfort that God will supply all their need. Commentary on Philippians KJV Commentary has an excellent summation of this section writing "We see first of all in this verse a great need. God promises to meet all of their need, not all of their wishes, wants, or whims. Men have not only temporal needs, but spiritual and eternal needs. Men need perpetual pardon, perpetual peace, and perpetual power. Secondly, we see in this verse a great helper. Paul says But my God. Paul does not say my God can supply all your needs, but my God shall supply all your needs. We see next a great Supplier.

2: Giving Thanks Sermon by Rodney Johnson, Philippians - www.enganchecubano.com

What does Philippians mean? [â†“ See verse text â†“] Paul clarifies his thanks for their gifts in this verse. The focus of his gratitude was not merely the money itself, but rather the blessings upon the Philippians for their generosity.

Pulpit Commentaries Verses Now, that we might continue to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, let us turn to Philippians 1: Paul the apostle was arrested in Jerusalem, held in prison in Caesarea for two years until he appealed to Caesar and was brought as a prisoner to Caesar in Rome, in order that he might appear before Caesar and appeal his case. While Paul was in Rome for two years awaiting his appearance before Caesar, he was under house arrest. He was able to rent his own quarters, however, twenty-four hours a day he was chained to one of the Roman guards. There were in Rome some ten thousand elite soldiers who had been appointed as the imperial guard and whose chief duty was the protection of the emperor in Rome. One of these men were chained to Paul on shifts, twenty-four hours a day, for two years. Paul saw that as a tremendous opportunity to witness. They can't get away, and as the result of Paul's witnessing to these men, many of them of Caesar's household were brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Quite a revival there in Rome while Paul was there awaiting his appearance before Caesar. The church in Philippi took up an offering for him and sent him a very generous offering. It was brought to him by Epaphroditus, who on the way became extremely ill and almost died, but he brought to Paul this gift from the hearts of those in Philippi, and basically this letter that Paul writes to them from the prison in Rome is a letter of thanksgiving and gratitude for the money that they had sent to him by Epaphroditus. And so, that really was the occasion of Paul's writing this epistle. It is written not as from an apostle to the church as are most of Paul epistles, but it is written as a letter from friend to friend. There is a very warm, friendly feeling through the whole epistle; it is interesting that the tone of the epistle is one of extreme joy and rejoicing. Interesting in the fact that during the time that Paul was doing all of this rejoicing, he was chained to a Roman guard in a Roman prison. Some of you perhaps visit Rome on occasion and were led into the Mamertin prison where tradition says Paul was held. It isn't a very attractive place; it is sort of under ground, the light comes in from a window up above, but yet, Paul always had the light within him, and thus, as he declares, "I have learned in whatever state I am in to therewith be content. I know how to abound. I know how to be abased. I'm content because my contentment does not lie in my circumstances. My contentment lies in my relationship with Jesus Christ and that cannot change. My circumstances may change, I may be in tough physical circumstances, but my contentment isn't in that. My contentment is in Jesus. So, Paul opens this epistle, and along with the little letter to Philemon and 1 Thessalonians, it's the only epistle where he does not begin by the affirmation of his apostleship. Usually, it is, "Paul an apostle by the will of God. Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ Philippians 1: Now, there was a phrase concerning the bondslaves of Jesus Christ and that phrase went, "To serve Him is to reign as king. Now, the word doulos, bondsman is more than just a servant. A servant was a person who was hired who had the freedom if he didn't like his job to quit and find a job someplace else. Not so with a bondsman. Like it or not, you were the property of your owner. The servant could come and go as he pleased, not the bondsman. Bond slavery was something that was for life. Paul the apostle, the bondsman, Paul and Timothy bondsmen, to all the saints in Christ Jesus Philippians 1: We've lost the sort of meaning of the word; the word comes from the Greek word hagios, which means holy, and so really, he is writing to those who are consecrated. A lot of times you read, "Unto the saints," and you say, "Oh, this don't apply to me; I'm surely no saint. And so the literal meaning of the word saint, holy or consecrated. I go to the Greek word themselves to translate them so that we get the. But they were the overseers within the local church, and the deacons were the workers. Those workers within the church. You remember Philippi was the first place Paul came to when he brought the gospel to Europe. He was in Troas. He received the vision of a man of Macedonia saying, "Come over and help us," and Paul immediately went down, caught a ship to Macedonia. They came to Philippi, and there Paul found a group of women who were worshipping on Saturday out by the river. Now, this means that there was not a large Jewish community in Philippi. For where in a community they have ten adult Jewish males, they had the obligation to build a synagogue, but if there wasn't ten adult Jewish males,

then they usually met in an outdoor area, usually by a river or a place of beauty and all. And so, the indication is that there were not many Jews in Philippi, and thus, meeting by the river. Paul went out and met with the women that were there, and he shared Christ and many of them received. He started a work there in Philippi. He wasn't able to minister very long because the Jews who found out that the women were converted began to stir up trouble. They had Paul arrested. He was thrown into the dungeon where he and Silas at the midnight hour were singing and praising the Lord, when suddenly, the prison was shaken by an earthquake and the doors were opened and they were freed. And the jailer, realizing that awakening from his sleep and seeing what had happened, took his sword and was ready to kill himself, and Paul said, "Do yourself no harm. We are all here. So, better to commit suicide, really, than to face the wrath of the Roman justice, having lost the prisoners that were entrusted to you. And so the man came in to Paul trembling, and he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Paul shared with the family, and they all received Jesus Christ and were all baptized. That was the beginning of the church of Philippi. Now the magistrates of the city, those who had arrested Paul were responsible for that, they came and said, "Let him go. We don't really have charges, so just let him go. I am a Roman citizen and I have been beaten without any charges being filed. There has been an injustice here. It was supposed to have been a model of Roman justice, and so he said, "They think they are just going to send me away. Let them come down; let the mayor come down himself and pardon me, you know, and let me go. And so, he came down and said, "Please would you get out of town. Just go, you know we are sorry, just go. The church had grown to the place where they had to have overseers; they had deacons and administrators. The work of God had expanded, and they had taken up a generous offering for Paul and sent it to him. And so, from that early beginning God began a good work, and he did really perform a very, really special work there in Philippi. So to the overseers and the worker, Grace be unto you, and peace Philippians 1: Again, I would like to emphasize, and I don't think we can too much, the fact that the Lord is not His name; it is His title. And we should not consider it or think of it as a name. We are talking of relationship when we say the Lord. Jesus is His name. As we were singing, "His name is Jesus, Jesus, sad hearts weep no more. But Lord is His title, and if we use the title of Lord, then that does signify that we take the position with Paul as a bondsman. It's talking of relationship from our Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you Philippians 1: John in writing his epistle said, "I have no greater joy than to know that my children are walking in truth" 3 John 1: I think that that can be said of the heart of every minister. The greatest joy that can come to any minister is to know that those who are really the children in the faith as the result of their ministry continue to walk in the truth. Being in the ministry has tremendous rewards, and it is just thrilling to see the work that God does in various areas. This morning, as I was at the back door greeting the people as they were departing, there was a lady with her husband there, and their daughter, and her husband. As they approached me, I could see tears just welling up in their eyes. As they shook my hand, they said, "We are from New York and we listen to your radio program. And we have started a Bible study in our home, and we listen to your tapes and God is just blessing tremendously. We have so many people that are coming and being blessed through the word of God, and what a thrill for us to meet you and to be here today. And I tell you, you don't think that's not rewarding, to just see the fruit of the ministry. How you thank God for the work that He is doing. How you thank God for the privilege of being His instrument through which He might work. And so Paul, God's instrument, is now giving thanks unto God for the report that comes from Philippi of their continuance in the walk and in the faith. Every time he remembered them, he would say, "Oh, thank God. Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy Philippians 1: And he is thanking God for your fellowship in the gospel, from the first day until now. Now that fellowship, ideal fellowship, the koinonia, is that oneness in the gospel, and no doubt also in this case refers to the support that they had given to Paul through the years. As he was writing to the Galatians, he said that they who are taught in the word ought to communicate unto them that teach in all good things. So, that the church in Philippi had been faithfully supporting Paul through the years, and so there was that oneness, the sharing, and you remember in the early church, if anyone had anything, they sold it and they brought it and laid it at the apostles feet, and they had all things in koinonia. This is the same Greek word here. There was just that sharing together of the welfare of their resources with Paul.

3: Philippian Generosity Should Be Our Guide

Thanksgiving for the Philippians' Gift and a Final Greeting (Philippians) I. Translation as It Appears in the NET Bible I have great joy in the Lord because now at last you have again expressed your concern for me (now I know you were concerned before but had no opportunity to do anything).

The book of Philippians was written while Paul was in prison in Rome awaiting trial. He wrote this letter to the church at Philippi to thank them for their support of his ministry. The Philippian church was established while Paul was on his second missionary journey. This church was the first Christian congregation in Europe. The support that the Philippian church gave to Paul was evidenced through prayer, money and goods. As seen in chapter 4 Paul thanked them for the people who visited him with the gifts which were donated by the Philippians for the furtherance of the Gospel. The book of Philippians is commonly believed to be written in the year 61 or 62 AD. This was still several years before his death in Chapter 4 of Philippians has several short themes. The chapter starts with an admonition to two of the church members to work out some differences. Paul then talks about joyfulness and prayerfulness. He thanks them for their financial assistance in his ministry and finally uses the chapter to send his greetings. Euodias and Syntyche – Verses Apparently there was a squabble between these two church members. Paul does not elaborate as to what the problem was between them. It was apparently not a doctrinal issue or Paul would have told them specifically what they should believe. He simply admonishes them to be of the same mind. Resolving an argument does not require both people to change their mind. What is needed is for one to come to the same position as the other. If they both change to the other position, then nothing is solved. It only takes you acquiescing to the position of the other person to completely stop a disagreement. You cannot control them, but you can control your own position in an argument. Obviously you should not back down when the other person is doctrinally incorrect, but the reality is that most disagreements in the church have nothing to do with doctrine. Paul said that they should put away their petty arguments so that they could be a help and encouragement to others in the church. They should be examples to others who are looking to them for leadership. Joyfulness and Prayerfulness – Verses Paul tells the Philippian believers and by application, us today that they should be full of joy. We are to rejoice in the Lord with the understanding that He has all things in His control. Paul was in prison when he wrote these words. He had already said that he rejoiced in the way God had brought him through hardships so that the Gospel could be preached in places where it would never have been heard otherwise 1: Beyond rejoicing personally, our rejoicing is a testimony which is seen by others so that they can know the Lord is near v. He then teaches to not be full of care and worry; rather, by prayer for yourselves and others, take everything to the Lord. The result of which is the peace of God. Without prayer, you have no peace. Without peace, you have no reason to rejoice. The peace of God will produce a calm heart and mind. This peace of mind will be further enhanced when there is a focus on holy and righteous things. Fill your mind with true, righteous, holy and virtuous things v. These will bring joy and peace through prayer. Gratefulness for Physical Assistance – Verses Though Paul was giving instruction in the first part of the chapter, he starts off in verse 10 saying that they have done a good job in solving problems, rejoicing in the Lord, praying and learning from godly teaching. He says in verses 10 and 14 that the Philippians have done well in these things. They have continued to give the help and support they should give to the work of God. They have supported the missionary efforts of Paul and the worldwide spread of the Gospel. He acknowledges that he really does not need other Christians to take care of him. He knows that God will supply everything needed for the work of the ministry vs. However, the Philippians have allowed God to supply for the needs of Paul through them. For that, he is thankful. Paul was confident that God could supply through anyone He chose. It was the willingness of the Philippians to be used of God that Paul was grateful for. He thanked them for communicating with him. Specifically he says this is manifested in their giving finances to his ministry. They also sent Epaphroditus to help in the ministry and carry their gift to him. There are two results that Paul mentions which come from their care of him. First, they would receive fruit to their account with God. Again, Paul is not thanking them because he wants more money, help and physical goods from them. Paul is

encouraging them to stay involved in the ministry because the fruit that comes from his work will be added to their account in heaven v. After Paul thanks them for their involvement in the missionary effort, he turns around and says that as they have supplied his needs, God will supply their needs v. If you read this verse as it is presented in Philippians 4 you will see that it is conditional on the church people being involved in the ministry of others. He sent not only his greetings to their church, but he said that the believers around himâ€”even the Roman Christians who were saved as a result of his imprisonmentâ€”sent their greetings to the Philippians whom they had never met. The Christians around Paul benefited directly from the gifts of the Christians in Philippi. Discussion Questions If you are studying this chapter for a Sunday School lesson or group Bible study, here are a few questions you can use for discussion. Can you give some examples of issues that should never be compromised on? In verse 6, what is the difference between prayer and supplication? Thinking about our daily entertainment TV, music, books, movies, etc. If God supplied your needs based on the way you supply the needs of those in ministry, how well would you be cared for? Paul closed the book by saying that the people he led to the Lord greeted those to whom he was writing. When you support the missionary effort around the world and locally, you benefit from the work they are doing.

4: Lesson Faithful Giving, Faithful God (Philippians) | www.enganchecubano.com

Epaphroditus carried a money gift from Philippi to Rome (about 1, miles) where Paul was in jail (). Now Paul expressed his gratitude for the generous gift from the Philippians. This is a "thank you" note from a missionary to a supporting church.

And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. How can our experience of Christ and his Spirit v. How do verses help us to understand the nature of humility? In verses Paul says you are to "work out your salvation" because God "works in you. Who might you be tempted to impress during the next few days? What act of humble service could you do for this person instead? But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me. Is it possible to have a good self-image and still be humble? Can a person want to be the best without being conceited? What is the difference between humility and a poor self-image? Chapter 3 Philippians 3: It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: How does rejoicing in the Lord v. How have his reasons for confidence changed? But one thing I do: And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Their mind is set on earthly things. In verses Paul compares himself to an athlete who is running a race. Why is this such an appropriate description of the Christian life? Stand Firm in the Lord Closing Appeal for Steadfastness and Unity 1 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

5: A Study Guide for the Book of Philippians

In Philippians Paul is actually penning what we would call a "thank you" note, a letter of appreciation. The Church in Philippi has send a gift to Paul. And he, being in a Roman prison, had untold needs no doubt!

How did Paul view himself and Timothy? As the bondservants of the Lord Jesus Christ. To whom was Paul writing? To the saints in Christ in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons. What two Divine blessings did the Apostle Paul confer on the saints and on the overseers and deacons? Grace and peace from the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace is the favor and blessing of God given to an individual so that his whole life is touched with Divine righteousness, holiness, protection, provision, fullness of joy, goodness, and mercy. In the ultimate sense, grace is the Presence of God through Christ. Peace is the absence of fighting and fear and the presence of Divine assurance and comfort, green pastures, and quiet waters. For what does Paul thank God? For his memories of the Macedonian saints—memories filled with affection and confidence. Epaphroditus had become sick in Rome. When he recovered, Paul sent him back to Philippi with this letter. Paul and Timothy had founded the Philippian church in northern Greece about A. Why did Paul experience such joy as he prayed for the saints in Philippi? Because of their fellowship in the Gospel from the first day that they heard it. They were supporting Paul with material goods. Apparently the saints in Philippi were sound in doctrine and in practice. We do not see in this epistle the warnings and rebukes that are found in Galatians, First Corinthians, and Romans for example. Of what was Paul persuaded and confident? That God who had begun a good work of redemption in them would complete and perfect that work until the Day of Christ. Why did Paul feel justified in believing that God would complete the work of redemption in the saints in Philippi? They were supporting Paul and associating themselves with him in his imprisonment, and also in the defense and confirmation of the Gospel. They were sharing the Divine grace that had been given to him. Of what was God a witness? Of the love of Christ in Paul that was directed toward the saints in Philippi. Only someone who has been poured out in love for other people can understand what Paul was saying in verse eight. Most Christians have many opportunities throughout their lifetimes to bear witness of Christ. It appears that to some Christians there is given a missionary love for a specific race, nation, or group of people. It is the love of Christ that is being expressed toward the particular group of people. Missionary love is one of the most powerful forces that can dwell in the human heart. The Christian who is blessed with the love of Christ for other people is more than willing to lay down his or her life for the people toward whom he is directed. He is ready to be broken to pieces and sown in their hearts so that the consuming love of Christ may find full expression and perform its transforming work. That their love would abound in knowledge and in all discernment and understanding; that they would be able to recognize and approve the things are excellent; that they would be pure and blameless until the Day of Christ; that they would be filled with the fruit of righteous behavior attained through Christ, such righteousness bringing glory and praise to God the Father. The fruit of righteousness is produced in every true Christian. The new, born-again inner man, being filled with the Virtue of Christ, loves God and loves his fellow creatures. He behaves righteously because he is of Christ and dwells in Christ. We Christians do not always show in our conduct the new nature that has been born within us. This is why Paul was praying for the saints and elders in Philippi. A tree does not bear fruit the day it is planted. After we have been a Christian for a period of time, the new creation that is being formed in us begins to govern the way we act, speak, and think. People notice the change in us. When men see our good works they will glorify the Father who is in Heaven. He had been moved from his own hired house in Rome, where he had been chained to a soldier, into the barracks of the Praetorian Guard which was attached to the palace of Caesar in Rome. Paul had been in custody for two years A. The spreading of the Gospel. This is true of all our experiences in Christ. If we will allow the Lord to direct our paths, committing our way to Him and acknowledging Him, all the things that happen to us will result in the building of the Kingdom of God. Truly, God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who have been called according to His purpose. It seems that all of Rome had become aware of Paul and his message. The history of the Christian church reveals that when a Christian worker, such as a missionary, is tortured and killed, a

number of other believers who may not have been as fervent or who had been unmoved previously will now "come to life" and move forward to take the place of the one who has been invited to suffer for Christ and the Gospel. What motives were behind this increase in the preaching of Christ? Some were preaching from envy and strife, others were preaching from good will, from love for Paul, that he was in prison in Rome because of his defense of the Gospel. What was the attitude of those who were preaching from good will? They loved Paul and were supporting him, knowing that Christ had chosen Paul to defend the Gospel. What was the attitude of those who were preaching Christ from envy and strife? Apparently they hated Paul and were attempting to harm him. They were contentious, preaching the Gospel from a wrong motive. Their hope was that the officials would do away with this man whose message could be regarded as detrimental to the government. It is easy for the Christian disciple to understand that the tribulation falling on the Apostle Paul would inspire and embolden other saints to pick up the banner of Christ and march forward with renewed courage. It is difficult for us to conceive of men seizing this opportunity to outdo Paul as a successful teacher, or, worse yet, announcing the Gospel of Christ so that Paul would be persecuted by the Romans. Yet it is true that such wickedness always has surrounded the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—and does to this day. We Christians, however, while we recognize these facts of life, are to remain as free from malice and bitterness as little children. We are not to fret ourselves in any manner because of those who are practicing evil or harming us in any manner—intentionally or not. We are to keep our gaze fixed on the Lord Jesus, worshiping Him and giving thanks to God continually. Paul kept on rejoicing because Christ was being preached. Why did Paul keep on rejoicing even though some were proclaiming Christ from unrighteous motives? Because he knew that the proclaiming of the Gospel of Christ would result in his salvation, as the Philippian saints kept on praying for him and the Spirit of Christ was being supplied to him. The prayers of the saints in Philippi, and the abundant supply of the Spirit of Christ, would insure that all that happened would turn out for good in the Kingdom of God, and that Paul would be delivered from harm and finally stand in Glory before the Son of Man. Paul was striving to win the crown of righteousness. Later on in this epistle we find that he was determined to know Christ completely, experiencing the power of His resurrection and sharing in His sufferings, thus attaining to the out-resurrection from among the dead. Paul earnestly expected and hoped that he would not be put to shame in any matter but that he would be able to continue boldly magnifying Christ in his physical body. This reminds us of the fact that the Father was dwelling in the personality of Christ. The saint stands in relation to Christ as Christ stands in relation to the Father. The Father sent Christ into the world. Christ came down from Heaven, not to do His own will but to perform the will of the Father. The Father was dwelling in Christ. The words and deeds of Jesus were the words and deeds of the Father. Christ has sent the saints into the world. We continue in that love of the Father and the Son. We are not to seek our own will but are to perform the will of Christ. The Lord Jesus is dwelling in the disciples. As we are willing to be changed into the death of Christ it will begin to be true of us to an ever-increasing extent that our words and deeds are not our own but proceed from Him who has sent us into the world. How did Paul view physical death? To every cross-carrying disciple physical death is gain. It is only the unsaved individual or the fleshly Christian that clings to life in the world. The true saint endures with patience the tribulations that come upon him in the world, so he may attain to a better resurrection. He looks forward to physical death as his release from the pain of the present life and as promotion into joy and glory that he can behold only dimly at the present time. As we have stated, Paul had been moved from his own rented quarters Acts This was not a pleasant environment for the Apostle. All he saw and heard throughout the day was the crude behavior of the Roman soldiers. At one time in his life Paul had been caught up to the third Heaven, up into Paradise. But now he was living in the midst of military men. No doubt there was much profanity, much filthy behavior taking place. To a man of prayer and holiness such surroundings indeed would be a cross to bear, especially for someone raised as an orthodox Jew. The spirit realm is a place of delight and joy according to the saints who have had visions of Heaven. The marvel of Christianity is that we believers do not have a greater longing to go to be at home with Jesus. It is true for each diligent disciple that to die is gain. In some cases the Lord Jesus must make our circumstances very painful before we begin to desire to be absent from the body and at home with Jesus.

6: Philippians Commentary | Precept Austin

This page is designed to help make commentaries, monographs and articles on the Letter to the Philippians available to those without easy access to a theological library.

Christians are those who say thank you. They do not take gifts, service or ministry for granted—they say thank you, they express thanks, they write thank yous. It is one of the character qualities of the redeemed heart and one of the clear indicators of genuine salvation. Remember when the Lord healed the ten lepers, but only one returned. What did He say? And he was a Samaritan. But the nine—where are they? The church in Philippi had sent Paul another gift through Epaphroditus. And Paul under house arrest in Rome writes them a thank you note in verses 10 to 20 of Philippians 4. Open your Bibles to Philippians 4 in verses Paul has been experiencing a cold, dark winter season. But now the Philippians sent him a generous gift and it is like spring has bloomed. So giving thanks is what Paul does in these verses. And giving generously is what the Philippians did for Paul. And both giving thanks and giving generously is who Christ is and what Christians do. Two major application questions arise from this text. Are you a thankful believer? And are you a generous Christian? Are you thankful or ungrateful—are you appreciative or apprehensive? Other than your family, do you daily serve others? If not daily, then weekly? Do you faithfully give to the work of Christ? Are you a generous or a meager giver? Does Christ receive the first of your paycheck, or the last? There are many here who give nothing of their finances and others very little. Jesus said it like this in Luke 6: They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return. In verses 14 to 17, Paul says thank you for being so generous. The opposite is also true. Paul has to clarify what he just said in verses 10 to 13 or the Philippians will misunderstand. Picture yourself so poor you can barely feed your family. But then this same man, Paul the apostle, writes you in verses 10 to 13 and says this. I know how to get along without your gifts. I trust in PCP, a providential, caring and powerful God. I can live above my circumstances. On the contrary, he indicates he was super pleased with it. This is an attractive good deed. Noble or well is something which shows off Christ—it points to Him. And it was a. Paul began this letter celebrating their partnership. And in the very next verse, Paul said in chapter 4: It comes from two words—fellowship and with. By giving, the Philippian church was fellowshiping or partnering with Paul. Paul looks at their financial gift as if it were the entire church who came with Epaphroditus to visit him while he is chained to a guard under house arrest. With their gift, they are there bearing the burden of his difficult situation as a prisoner on behalf of the Gospel. You are now participating in what I am doing for Christ. You continue to be a partner with me as I serve Christ in Rome. For Paul, it is very. Your gift was not to an organization or an event, but to a man they know—Paul. They personally came to his apartment and gave their gift to him personally. Their giving is very personal, and it is very. It describes oppression, tribulation, anguish, trouble, and distress. Have you ever been at the bottom of the barrel, where you feel finished? Or at a place where you felt life had actually stepped on you and you felt squashed? This word affliction originally meant squashed. Paul wanted his readers to understand, giving to support his ministry was taking up fellowship with him as a partner in his present tribulations. And Christian, your giving is an encouragement to others. And beyond encouragement—giving to the mission and ministry of others is a biblical indicator of spiritual health. I apply this literally. The question is, what does God see when He looks in your heart? The Philippians had nothing to fear. Give to the person materially where you will be blessed spiritually. Give to the person involved in an ongoing ministry. At the same time, he could not refuse the gifts sent to him by the Philippian church without insulting or offending them. Paul never requested or expected even an occasional gift, since his true wealth was actually his contentment and his contentment came from trusting in a providential, caring and powerful God. In verses 15 and 16, Paul gratefully acknowledges their present gift delivered by Epaphroditus was the continuation of a series of gifts. But do you sense a tone? Paul almost seems harsh—no church partnered with me except you. Giving and receiving are Greek words, which genuinely reflect business terminology. Paul was a careful steward of his resources and kept accounts of receipts and expenditures. But in this letter, in Greco-Roman culture, these

words are seasoned with friendship. We know this because Paul recalls their mutual ministry by taking his readers back ten years to his first preaching of the Gospel in Philippi in verse 15—see it? And when Paul left the region of Macedonia, Philippi remained the only church to support him. Even as Paul went to wealthy Corinth, Paul would not accept money since the proud Corinthians were prone to assume bad motives. So even in Corinth, it was the Philippians from Macedonia who helped him, as Paul explained to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians They gave from the heart. Their Gospel partnership was marked by astounding generosity. They were, in fact, extremely poor. They were a poverty-stricken church. Therefore they were committed to being generous. Nothing would stop them from giving—it was not an option. Their giving is an example, a model to pursue and a pattern for us to follow. Giving thanks and giving generously is who Christ is and what Christians do. What does generous giving do? He was miles away. They were partners because they supported him. The Philippians impacted Thessalonica and Corinth with their financial support of Paul. Not all of you can go to the mission field. Your giving allows you to be involved in the ministry of this church around the world. You are partners in what God is doing in us and through us. When you give, you point to Christ who gave. The Philippians also had a reputation for generosity pointing to Christ. They were an example to the rest of the world as they gave out of their extreme poverty, giving more than they could give. Two thousand years later, you and I still know about their giving. Will FBC have a reputation that will last years, if the Lord tarries? If so, what will we be known for? I hope one of the qualities we will be remembered for is to be known as a generous church because it encourages others and points to Christ. Paul says in verses 15 and 16 that you gave to me when nobody else did and it encouraged me.

7: Letter to the Philippians - Encyclopedia of The Bible - Bible Gateway

Thank God for men and women who said, "We need a church building, and we need a fellowship hall, and we need a parsonage" and who sacrificed to make those buildings possible. During the 60s, people did all kinds of unfortunate things.

A letter written by Paul to the church in the city of Philippi, the first Christian church in the province of Macedonia; the eleventh book in the NT canon. They began the mission in the province of Macedonia with the assurance that God had specially summoned them to work there Acts Commencing work on European soil, the missionaries were conscious that they were bringing the Gospel to a new province of the Rom. The number of converts initially made is not certain, but apparently it was not very large. The first and the third of these involved a number of others two households. That Clement as well as Euodia and Syntyche Phil 4: The membership was apparently heterogeneous in character and predominantly Gentile in origin. Philippi did not have enough Jews to form a synagogue. The prominence of women in the Philippian church from the first is consistent with conditions that prevailed in Macedonia generally. That strong ties were forged between Paul and his converts is evident from their monetary gifts to him while he was working at Thessalonica and Corinth 4: Upon termination of his work at Ephesus on the third journey, Paul again visited Philippi before going down to Corinth for the winter Acts The following spring he made an unexpected visit to Philippi, spending the Passover season there Acts His contacts with the Philippians were not confined to these occasional visits. Communications were maintained through messengers to and from them Acts Authorship and authenticity A. He begins at once with the sing. The plurals that occur most naturally relate to Christians generally and are not to be restricted to Paul and Timothy only. Clearly, Philippians is a personal letter from Paul himself. Its biographical references are distinctly Pauline and its entire contents bear the stamp of Pauline authorship. The authenticity of this letter was never questioned until the middle of the 19th cent. The traditional view was first assailed in by F. The arguments used are superficial and are no longer taken seriously. The artless contents of the epistle offer no obvious motive for a forgery. Modern scholars unhesitatingly accept Philippians as an authentic letter from Paul. The external evidence for it is early and clear. The first external confirmation comes from the letter of Polycarp to the Philippians. Writing about a half cent. Irenaeus in his work Against Heresies c. Unity Since the beginning of the 19th cent. Such attempts find no support from the textual history of the epistle, which has uniformly been transmitted as a complete whole. Views contesting the unity of Philippians spring mainly from the abrupt change of tone and contents at the beginning of ch. This change is asserted to be so harsh that only the view of two separate compositions can explain it. The preparation for a serene epistolary conclusion in 3: This sharp warning must have arisen out of a situation distinct from the remainder of the epistle. Advocates of unity point out that those who postulate an interpolation beginning at 3: Lake , or 4: The change in tone is surprising, but Paul elsewhere shows such swift changes in thought Rom Nor is this warning wholly devoid of connections with what has gone before. The invective against opponents is prepared for by the warning in 1: The sharp warning enabled Paul to resume in 3: Instead of assuming an interpolation, a more plausible explanation is that Paul was interrupted in dictating the letter so Lightfoot. That Paul often was interrupted in his letter writing is highly probable. The sudden warning against these opponents may have been due to further news reaching him of their activities at Philippi or elsewhere. At any rate, it is psychologically more credible that Paul in writing an informal letter would make such a sudden transition, than that a later editor would fuse two separate writings at such an improbable juncture. It is quite like Paul that this turbulent outburst leads gradually to a calm conclusion. Beare regards the present epistle as a composite of three elements: The view that 4: Such a further partition is unnecessary if he had already sent his thanks to the Philippians see section V below. If not, why should he not be allowed to express his gratitude in connection with the loosely connected epistolary conclusion? Is it probable that a later editor would have delayed the insertion of such an earlier letter of thanks until the end? Many leading scholars hold that the evidence offers no valid proof for any partition theory and strongly maintain the unity of the epistle. That Paul actually wrote more than one letter to the Philippians is in itself altogether probable. This would be in

harmony with his remarks in 3: If so, these other letters have not survived. Place and date of origin A. Since Paul writes as a prisoner 1: It seems to have been of considerable duration. Evidently, a preliminary defense before the judicial authorities with favorable results already had been made 1: Acts speaks of only two possible imprisonments, at Caesarea Acts Three views concerning the place of origin are advocated. The traditional view, as old as the Marcionite prologue of the 2nd cent. Only since , has this view been brought into question. It continues, however, to receive the strong support of many scholars today. The implied situation of the imprisoned apostle agrees with that of Acts He has liberty to receive companions, carry on correspondence with his churches, and arrange for the travels of assistants. Above all it explains the decisive character of the verdict being awaited. Having appealed his case to Caesar, no further appeal was possible. Lightfoot sought to place Philippians early in the Rom. Such arguments from literary relations are indecisive. Advocates of the Rom. It is demanded by the fact that the verdict is impending. If it is argued that Philippians reveals a stricter custody than that indicated in Acts This, however, is not certain. Certain difficulties are urged against acceptance of this time-honored view. From Rome Paul planned on going to Spain Rom The reply is that the plan to visit Spain was announced before his arrest, but after nearly four years of imprisonment the former plan was postponed or abandoned. In view of the great distance between Rome and Philippi, it is difficult to conceive of all the travels between the two cities that would be required. The proponents reply that by placing Philippians near the end of the two year imprisonment there is ample time for these communications. Timothy was to be sent to Philippi as soon as he learned of the verdict of the court, yet Paul expected him to come back with news from Philippi 2: If he expected him to return to Rome, this would be a serious difficulty, but Paul does not say where he expected to meet Timothy with his cheering news. The polemic against the Judaizers in ch. The similarity is admitted, but that does not prove that it would not be timely when Paul was in Rome. Touches of it are seen in the pastorals 1 Tim 1: Paul, however, had requested that the Philippians participate in the relief offering raised during his third journey 2 Cor 8: The Caesarean provenance of Philippians was first propounded by H. Paulus in , and subsequently received the support of a number of scholars. Today it has few advocates among them Lohmeyer and L. The plan to revisit Philippi thus blends smoothly with the plans to visit Spain. The sharp controversy in ch. The exact identity of the opponents in ch. The view offers serious difficulties. Under Felix, he could not have expected release without a bribe. This alternative, first suggested by H. Lisco in , has received the support of a good number of scholars and has enjoyed increasing popularity. Opponents raise serious objections to this view. Acts mentions no imprisonment at Ephesus and rather implies a continuous ministry there; any imprisonment suffered there must have been of brief duration, quite inadequate for the developments that Philippians suggests. He would not need an offering from the Philippians while surrounded by many friends at Ephesus, and to have accepted an offering from them at the time he desired them to participate in the relief offering would have exposed him to a charge of covetousness. The final nature of the verdict being expected tells heavily against the Ephesian hypothesis. If he faced death at Ephesus, why did he not extricate himself by appealing to Caesar?

8: A Canonized Thank You Note – Financial Partnership Development

Paul isn't merely seeking the gifts of the Philippian church as he writes the Philippians his thanks. His worldview is given away here, showing us Paul's true motivation - and it's not money.

He absolutely refused financial help from the Corinthians, but readily accepted it from the Philippians! He is not interested in what they possess! And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man! But even at the end of his powerful and fruitful life, a unique ministry for sure, he still had not accepted anything from the one Church, but plenty from the other! Probably because of some things that had been said at Corinth. It appears that he might have been accused of financial dishonesty! Not by the spiritual folks at Corinth, in that Church. But by his enemies, false apostles who followed him nearly everywhere, stirring up trouble and slinging insinuations against the Man of God. Here are some of their "slurs" against Paul. Did Titus make a gain of you? In fact, the opposite was true. Paul was receiving a collection for the poor folks in Jerusalem, suffering saints there! It would have been tainted. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. Conversely, thank God for the Philippians! No such slander there, not in that loving Church! They gave and Paul received, gratefully! This "support" came as soon as Paul left those generous Philippians! But there he apparently did not have to make tents in order to pay the bills! Financial help arrived, more than once, from Philippi! That Church had some rather affluent members apparently, Lydia the "seller of purple" being one of them! The verb "send" is rather strong too! They insisted Paul receive their help! And Paul was only in Thessalonica two or three weeks! The word "necessity" is powerful as well! Paul is here acknowledging their gifts and thanking them appropriately, out of a grateful heart! After all, he is the one who wrote, "In every thing give thanks. Amen, let it be so! This is not a direct quote, but close to it. He suggested that to the same degree a Church experiences real Revival in their midst, they will give accordingly to the Men of God! That theory has cyclical implications. Stingy people seldom have real Revivals! Yet still, when a genuine stirring from God does come, the love offering will be amazingly generous! Personally I think that dear Preacher was right! Paul wrote it in his great "Thank You" note to the Philippian Church. He never mailed a prayer letter, at least in the sense of enumerating different needs and wants his ministry might have been experiencing! The verb "desire" is a translation of "epizeteo" in Greek. It means "to seek, to wish, to crave" something, intensely so! Paul was content even before that dear Philippian delegation arrived with their precious cargo! The noun "gift" is "dōma," a derivative of the verb "didomi," to give. Our word, found only four times in the Bible, is three times used of either the Holy Spirit Himself or of some specific spiritual gift bestowed upon us by the risen Christ! Only in Paul and only here do we find a material expression assigned to the word. And even so Paul transfers it into a spiritual symbol! Yet while Paul did not long for material goods, he did hunger to see fruit in the lives of his converts. Again our Verse, "Not because I desire a gift: Paul literally "craved" spiritual growth, maturity, in his spiritual children. The noun "fruit" is "karpos," and means "produce or grain" literally but also "harvest and reward and gain" metaphorically. Paul got excited when folks gave him things, ironically, because they would be rewarded by the Lord for such unselfish action! Eternal rewards some day And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. And such giving does bear fruit! And the verb "provoke" is "to incite! And "good works," in Greek "kalos ergon," also will not go unnoticed! In Philippians Paul tempts his converts to remain unselfish! In Hebrews, to lovingly pursue good works! Both acts bring crowns in Glory, rewards for faithfulness! At the Judgment Seat of Christ! In any "Thank You" letter the item or items received should be mentioned, either directly or indirectly. Paul the Apostle does this in a unique way in his great letter of appreciation, Philippians 4: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. We now know who brought the gift or gifts. He was saved out of a heathen background, his name even meaning "belonging to Aphrodite," the Roman goddess Venus. The name of the goddess itself however suggests "loveliness. Based on Philippians 2: Thank God for him! However, the verb itself, "apecho," means in a grammatical sense, "to hold off, to hold away" or even "to hold back" from something! Paul might also be

saying that he appreciates the gift and is going to use it sparingly, making it last a long time! Not getting used to such luxury! Still living a disciplined hard lifestyle! The accompanying verb "abound" is "perisseuo" and means "to have an abundance, to be overflowing! The gifts are everywhere! The Philippians have done well! Then Paul says, "I am full. Paul has been blessed by others, the Philippians. Long after the money, or whatever, has been spent The verb "received" also is interesting. No false modesty here! Paul was glad to accept these things! Now Paul is going to "list" the gifts, but he does so symbolically. Either that, or the Philippians sent him a bottle of fragrance! Paul uses this analogy, that of fragrance, several times in His Epistles. Furthermore, the things received are a "sacrifice" unto the Lord! The adjective "acceptable" is spelled "dektos," something "approved" of God. Related to "dechomai," it means "favorably regarded! They are that valuable! And pure and clean! Paul occasionally spiritualizes sacrifices this way. For example, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. A deliberate attempt to show oneself "approved" unto God and His Preacher! This is one beautiful Verse. It contains a wealth of information on "how to say thank you" when someone has been kind! A bunch of gifts apparently! Maybe a whole basket full! For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

9: What does Philippians mean?

Philippians states that the saints in Philippi sent money on more than one occasion to Paul while he was preaching in Thessalonica. Because of the persecution, the saints in Thessalonica sent Paul and Silas on to Berea (Acts).

The Bible speaks very plainly about money because our hearts and our wallets are tightly bound up together, and God is after our hearts. Jesus talked often about money: In the Gospels, one out of ten verses in all deal directly with money. The Bible offers verses on prayer, verses on faith, but more than 2, verses on money and possessions Howard L. I also want you to know that I do not know how much or how little anyone in this church gives. In it he gives us one of the most comforting promises in the Bible: So what is faithful giving? There are many more principles than the ones found here, but these four we all must learn: The principles for faithful giving: Faithful giving should be one of the first things we establish in our Christian walk. Paul commends the Philippian church by reminding them of how, at the first preaching of the gospel, after he departed from their region Macedonia , they shared with him in the matter of giving and receiving 4: At that point, they were the only church that took the initiative to send support to Paul. Even when he was still in Macedonia, at Thessalonica, more than once they sent gifts to him. Apparently those gifts were not enough to provide full support, because he reminds the Thessalonians how he worked with his hands to provide for his needs when he was with them 2 Thess. But right from the start of their Christian experience, the Philippians had given. Paul taught that it is proper for a man who labors in the gospel to receive his support from the gospel 1 Cor. But for the sake of avoiding the charge that he was preaching for the money, Paul chose not to receive support from a new church where he was ministering while he was there. Instead, he supported himself by making tents. But if the funds came from another church outside the area, he would stop making tents and devote himself full time to the work of the ministry compare Acts As I mentioned last week, Paul never seemed to make his needs known, even as prayer requests, but trusted in the sovereign God to provide. When funds ran low, he would go back to work until God met the need. But Paul must have taught the Philippians early on the importance of faithful giving to support those in Christian ministry, because soon after he left town, they sent gifts after him. They would have been just a few months old in the Lord, but they were already practicing faithful giving. Jesus taught the same principle in Luke So financial faithfulness, which includes giving, but also how we manage all the material goods God has entrusted to us earning, spending, saving , should be one of the first lessons we learn in our Christian walk. One of the first lessons on giving should be that we learn to take the initiative in looking for faithful Christian workers who are focused on the glory of God and the work of the gospel as Paul was and support them without being pressured to give. Like the Philippian church with Paul, take the initiative to support them. Keep in contact and direct some of the resources God has entrusted to you to help support them in His work. Faithful giving should be focused on the furtherance of the gospel. He had given each church where he worked an example of his hard work and his freedom from greed Acts There are those who claim to be serving the Lord, but they are lazy and greedy. Look at his lifestyle. The Scriptures warn us about men who are in ministry for the money 1 Tim. The famous British preacher, C. Spurgeon, once received a request from a wealthy man to come to their town and help them raise funds for a new church building. He told Spurgeon he could stay in his country home there. Spurgeon wrote back and told him to sell the home and give the money to the project. Give to those who emphasize ministry, not money. While he genuinely appreciated the gift from the Philippians, he was more excited about what it signified about their heart for God, that it represented fruit accruing in their account in heaven 4: As for himself, Paul lived by faith and was content with whatever God provided. But he never made strong appeals for funds for himself. Paul did, by the way, make a strong appeal for funds for others. He was always scrupulous not to take advantage of anyone in financial matters, but to keep his focus on ministry 2 Cor. So look for faithful servants or ministries who are focused on the furtherance of the gospel and give faithfully to them. Faithful giving is investing in eternity. These terms were common accounting words. If you have any money invested in stocks or mutual funds, you realize that the more risky the investment, the greater the chance that you can make high returns, but also the greater the chance that you can lose a lot. Since he

knew that his time was short, he made friends for himself in high places, so that in the future they would welcome him. Then, when we step into heaven, they will welcome us. Faithful giving should be motivated by worship. These terms come out of the Old Testament where they describe the sacrifices that worshipers offered to God. You are giving to God Himself. If Jesus Christ bodily walked into this church, if He was the usher handing you the plate, and you saw the nail scars on His hands that were pierced for you, and if they money was going to Him personally for His support, would you give any differently than you do now? Many Christian ministries cater to the flesh when they put up plaques or memorial books with the names of donors. If we do, God promises something: The promise from our faithful god: What a magnificent promise! The source of the promise is our God with whom we are in union in Christ Jesus. It is none other than the God who spoke the universe into existence who promises to supply your needs when you give faithfully. The sufficiency of the promise is the riches of God for all my needs. What a staggering promise! The God who owns the whole earth says that He will meet our needs if we give faithfully, and it is a blessed thing to know this in your experience as you watch Him do it. The American pastor Wilbur Chapman had a family tragedy occur that made it necessary for him to travel to the West Coast. A banker who attended his church visited with him just before he left. Chapman looked at it and saw that it was a blank check made out to him, signed by the banker. But how do we know the check is good? The certainty of the promise depends on God Himself. Blank checks are no good if the person who signs them is destitute or a crook. If we meet the condition by giving faithfully, the promise is certain--our God and Father will meet all our needs. You can count on it! Do you give only grudgingly and under pressure? Are you hit and miss about your giving, doing it once in a while, but not systematically? Are you stingy and tight with your giving? Then your love for the Lord is probably cold and sterile. Do you religiously give ten percent and take pride in it? The reason your giving is a pretty good gauge of your spiritual life is that your heart is bound up with your treasure. If you want your heart to be in this evil world, put your money in the things of the world. He was seized by the natives who carried him to their village and set him on a crude throne. They treated him as royalty. Soon he learned that their custom was once each year to make a man king, king for a year. He thought this was a pretty good deal until he started wondering what happened to all the former kings after their year was up. He found out that after the year, the king was banished to a deserted island where he starved to death. That worried him, but he was a smart king, so he put his carpenters to work making boats and his gardeners to work transplanting fruit trees and other crops to the island where he would be banished. His carpenters built a nice home there. So when his year was over, he was banished, not to a barren island, but to an island of abundance. Giving generously also takes faith because you have to trust that when you give away your money, God is going to make up for it by providing for your immediate needs. What if I give and then some unexpected emergency comes up? What if I give and lose my job? I heard of a fellow who was struggling with the idea of giving ten percent of his income to his church. I believe ten percent should be the base, not the ceiling. Will you trust the living God who gave His Son for you by giving generously and systematically, out of a heart of gratitude, love, and worship? If you do, He promises to meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. In light of all the needs, how can we know where to give and how much to give? Is it a lack of faith for Christians to have savings and investments? Should we give everything and trust God for the future? Is tithing the standard of giving for those in Christ? If not, how do we know how much to give? Copyright , Steven J. Cole, All Rights Reserved.

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