

PHILIPPIANS

Philippians 4:14-19: Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction. 15 You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. 18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. 19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. NASU

Paul commends the Philippians for their generosity (*you have done well to share with me in my affliction*). This was not the first time the Philippians had given to Paul; they were regular supports of Paul, those whom he could count on to provide needed assistance (Acts 16-17). God has established that those who preach the Gospel are to make their living or have their substance provided by and through those who are taught. God holds that those who teach the Gospel should be supported and cared for by those to whom they teach and minister. ***Romans 15:27; 1 Corinthians 9:9-11, 14; Galatians 6:6-7; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; Hebrews 13:16***

Those who resist or condemn appeals for support are revealing an idolatrous spirit within themselves. Likewise, those who by pretense attempt to extract financial support from through lies and deceit (i.e., false teachers who tickle ears and do not give out the word of God but rather are teaching doctrines of demons) have the same spirit within themselves. God says that greed and selfishness are idolatry, which He condemns. If you look at the end of Romans, Chapter 1, God identifies these attitudes and actions as belonging to those who have rejected God. Believers are called to support those who teach but they need to ensure that they verify the teachings and the teacher before foolishly “supporting” false teachers. ***Luke 12:13-15; Romans 1:28-32; Ephesians 5:3-5; Colossians 3:5-7; 1 Thessalonians 2:5; 1 Peter 5:2; 2 Peter 2:2-3, 14; 2 John 7-11***

The past and regular generosity of the Philippians, although beneficial to Paul, additionally benefitted the Philippians. Their support made them active participants in Paul’s work of bringing the Gospel to the lost. Likewise, they would be active participants in the Lord’s rewards in the future and in the present; the Philippians who supported Paul in his endeavors for the Gospel are reaping a spiritual reward today, every time the letter to them is read. ***Proverbs 19:17; Matthew 10:40-42; Romans 15:26-27; Hebrews 6:10; 3 John 5-8***

Paul emphasizes the blessings the Philippians have from the Lord for their unselfish, sacrificial giving. Paul’s thankfulness reflects the Lord’s pleasure; his thankfulness relates to the blessings the Philippians have received (*the profit which increases to your account*). Paul goes back again to his contentment and recognizes the working of the Lord in the hearts of the Philippians believers, as evidenced by their sacrificial giving. ***Proverbs 11:24; Hebrews 10:34-39, 13:16***

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Paul's assurance to the Philippians that God would meet their every need was a consequence of their unselfish giving of themselves and their resources. Paul is also giving the believers a word of encouragement for the believers who had given sacrificially of themselves financially to support Paul and may be wondering if they had overdone their support; if they had given as the Lord had led them, Paul could confidently say to them, "*God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*" God's supply would come in the same manner that Paul can do all things, *in Christ*. Paul uses the same Greek word "*en*" – the promise is to those who are *in Christ*, and do things in His ways, with His motives, for His purposes, in His time. The meeting of needs is God's responsibility. ***Matthew 6:25-34; 2 Corinthians 8:3-5, 9:8-13; 1 Timothy 6:17-19***

Philippians 4:20-23: Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen. 21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Paul concludes this epistle as he began it — on a personal, warm, and friendly basis of Christian love and fellowship.