

Supplying Our Needs

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[0 : 00] Nice to be with you. I'm sure most of us, if not all of us, are aware this morning that the Apostle Paul wrote a number of letters when he was in prison in Rome.

These letters are known as the prison epistles. The interesting thing is that the Apostle Paul didn't just see himself in that prison in Rome as a prisoner for the Lord.

But he saw himself as a prisoner of the Lord. And there's a world of a difference. And it was because of that relationship with the Lord, his joy, even in prison, even in lockdown, knew no bounds.

He knew what it was to be sorrowful and yet always rejoicing. And joy is the recurring note that struck in this letter that he wrote to the church in Philippi.

The Apostle Paul, he didn't take anything for granted. He didn't take God's people in Philippi for granted. He writes to thank them for their partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

[1 : 25] That's how he puts it. He never took them for granted. They never took him for granted. Wherever he went, they supported him in whatever way they could, as we've just been hearing.

He's been hearing. Sending him gifts. And on this occasion, Paul writes to thank them for a gift he's just received from them. How does he see this gift?

He refers to the gift as being a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, something that's pleasing to God.

And if I can paraphrase his words, he said in reply to that, Under God, you have supplied my need. And now I want you to know that my God shall supply all your need. The actual words he used form the text I want to share with you this morning.

[2 : 33] Verse 19, And my God will supply all your need according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

There's the text. As the Puritans would say in the 17th century, Let the text do the talking. You haven't come here this morning to listen to me.

We've all come here this morning to listen to what God has to say to us. I understand there are 31,102 verses in the Bible. I haven't counted them.

Somebody else obviously has. What I want us to do this morning is just to focus on this one text. What a text it really is.

And my God will supply all your need according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

[3 : 44] Do you know when Spurgeon was having an orphanage built towards the end of the 19th century in London, He ordered the stonemasons to place upon the stone columns at the orphanage entrance these wonderful words in this text.

He had the mention of the stone upon the right and left hand columns of that great archway into the orphanage that was being built.

And this is what Spurgeon said, and I quote, As long as God lives, we shall never need to remove them. I bring these words to all of us today as a promise from the word of God.

And I do it in the hope that we'll be reminded perhaps of something of old. And yet perhaps we'll be spoken to with regards to something new.

But what comes will come with freshness. As if we're hearing it for the very first time and for the last time.

[5 : 17] And my God will supply all you need according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Now that word and is a conjunction. Don't miss it right at the beginning of the text. It's tying this promise into what God has just said before through the Apostle Paul.

It's virtually saying to us, listen, brothers and sisters in Philippi. You seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And God will meet all you need.

You put Jesus first. Others second. And yourself last. J-O-Y. And you will discover that you cannot out-give God.

Just three words. I trained in the faith mission. So we have to preach with three points. But each of these points a word.

[6 : 29] The first is this. I want you to notice that there's confidence in this text, in this promise. This text breathes out confidence.

Confidence in God. My God. My God. Will meet all your needs.

I was reminded just last week that when Paul wrote to Timothy and he was reminding him that all scripture was inspired by God. the word in the Greek for inspired is theopneustos.

All scripture is God breathed. So here from this text is breathing out confidence.

confidence. This is more than a promise to these Christians that they'll receive some help, some support now and again to meet some of their needs.

[7 : 35] This, if I read it correctly, is a promise written by Paul, but don't forget this, underwritten by the Spirit of God, guaranteeing the meeting of all their needs.

every day in every situation that you can imagine. Who can begin? Who can begin to calculate or measure what's involved in the meeting or supplying of all of one single person's individual needs? Of course, as has often been said and I need to repeat it, it's all of our need. It's not all of our greed. It's all of our needs, not all of our wants.

And of course, it's not going to happen in our way or in our time. It's going to happen in His way and in His time. But it's with reference to everything that we will ever need for our spiritual and physical well-being in accordance with His will for our lives.

Individually, yes, and corporately for as long as we shall live. Am I expounding this text correctly?

[8 : 59] Is that what the text is saying? This is in line with the keeping of body and soul together on this journey from here to eternity. The temporal needs of one solitary individual alone are considerable.

Food, clothes, a roof over our heads, health, home, family, education, the cost of living on a day-by-day basis and so it goes on. And yet, those needs, those needs are so small and so trivial in comparison to a person's spiritual needs, the needs of a soul, your soul as you serve the Lord in today's world, in this secular, ever-increasing secular society in which we find ourselves.

The need to feed your own soul in order to have the wherewithal to feed the souls of others. The need for wisdom to be in the right place at the right time and doing the right thing.

The need to persevere in times of trial and tribulation. The need to overcome in terms of personal discouragement and fierce temptation. The need to be totally protected, inwardly strengthened and continually encouraged in your weakest moments and especially when the years are piling on.

The need to have a vision for the work God's calling you to do whatever age and stage you may be at in life. The need to have a vision for the work that God's calling you to do in and through His church and to be moved by compassion not just by duty in the pursuit of that vision.

[10 : 37] Listen to the words of Paul the Apostle addressed, I say, not just to individuals but to the whole church. My God, He will supply all your need according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

My God, whose God is this? This is the God of the Apostle Paul. What's He like? He's the only true and living God, isn't He?

He's the God who gave us the whole Bible. He's the God of creation. This is who we're talking about. He's the God of the church. He's the God of the prophets in the Old Testament, all of them. He's the God of the apostles in the New Testament. He's the God of the covenant. He's the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel. He's the God of Joseph. He's the God of Moses and all that happened.

Think of it at the Exodus. He's the God of Joshua and all that happened in the conquest of the promised land. He's the God of David and the writing of all those Psalms. He's the God of Daniel and his friends, whether it's in the lion's den or in the fiery furnace.

[11 : 51] He's a great God. He's the God of heaven and earth, the God of geography, the God of history, the God of time, the God of eternity, the God of mercy, love, and grace, the God of redemption.

Oh, when we were lost, not looking for him, he came looking for us, the God of redemption, the God of providence, the God of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, the God who gave us his son, the God who didn't spare him so that he could spare us.

Oh, you read in the scriptures that God didn't spare the world of Noah's day and we can understand why. In their hearts, only evil continually. Read those chapters in Genesis.

He didn't spare Sodom and Gomorrah and we can understand why. He didn't spare the angels that sinned, rebellion in the very courts of heaven and we can understand why he didn't spare them.

He's the God who didn't spare his own son in dealing with your sin and my sin and we'll be asking the question why for as long as we live, not just in time but throughout all eternity.

[13:10] if he's given us Jesus, does he not tell us in the book of Romans he'll give us all things?

My God, he will supply all your needs. Oh, to grasp the confidence in those words will, shall. In this, one of the many exceeding great and precious promises that we find in the Bible.

It's not saying he could or he might. It's saying he will and he shall.

Breathing out confidence, confidence in God. This is not presumption. This is a promise. This is the promise of God and his reputation is at stake.

In giving it. Brothers and sisters, I hope something comes through the scriptures today to encourage you but also to challenge you. Listen, don't just believe this.

[14:23] We do believe that we're evangelicals. Prove it. There's a challenge. I take it to myself. Prove it. Here's the second thing.

There's not just confidence in this promise. There's abundance in this promise. My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches.

let the text do the talking. we're thinking of God who can fill us to the full by meeting all our needs, all your needs, all my needs.

A God who can more than match the enormity of our needs with the sufficiency of his grace.

Forgive me for referring to Spurgeon again but I'm reading his two volumes.

The Early Years and the Full Harvest. I've just finished volume one. I've just started volume two.

When he was preaching on this text, Spurgeon, the great Spurgeon, and he had reached this thought in the text.

[15:31] He said, and I quote, the preacher may sit down now for he cannot compass this part of the text. He cannot fully explain it.

He cannot fully expound it. What does this mean? My God will supply all your needs according to his glorious riches.

What does that mean? I'm sure we're all familiar with the story of the wee widow woman in the Old Testament whose children were about to be sold by her creditor to pay off the debts of her late husband who had been a prophet of the Lord.

He must have been living on a pittance from day to day but there were debts when he died and she had nothing to call her own. You may remember except a small jar of oil that was in her home.

The prophet Elisha comes along and he asks her to bring the little jar, the cruise of oil. It was all she had. And she did so and then he said to her, go among your neighbors, borrow empty vessels, don't ask for just a few, then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons and pour oil into all the jars and as each is filled put it to the one side.

[16:58] You know the story. They kept on bringing the jars. She kept on pouring the oil into the jars until all the jars were filled.

And it was only when there were no more jars left that the oil stopped to flow and she went and sold the oil and paid her debts and all her needs were met. What is that? That is a picture of the way God works and how God gives.

He's got a bigger shovel than you and I will ever have. We cannot out give him. Prove it. Prove it.

This promise to meet all their needs. This is not a license to encourage laziness in our part.

Christians mustn't be spongers or scroungers living off the backs of gullible people.

We are to play our part. Give God the equivalent of those empty jars in your house. Give him the equivalent of that tiny crews of oil. In other words give him what we've got and he'll give us what we haven't got.

[18:08] And we'll find that he always gives in abundance. The picture here is not of scraping the bottom of the barrel. The picture here is of cups full and running over. We by his grace must do what we can do and give what we can give and let him do what only he can do and give what only he can give.

But you have noticed before haven't you? I'm sure many a preacher has pointed it out to you. For God to give out of his glorious riches is quite different from God to give according to his glorious

riches.

when God gives it's not only out of his wealth it's on a scale as befits his wealth.

It's in proportion to his infinite resources. Illustrate John will you? Okay very simple illustration if a millionaire were to give you out of his wealth he might not give you any more than a paltry trifling five pound note and keep the rest for himself.

But if he were to give according to his wealth would he give you a fiver? No he might give you fifty five hundred five thousand even more.

[19 : 30] We all need to be reminded of the fact that the God of omnipotence has his servants everywhere. How he surprises us sometimes. He owns the cart in a thousand hills and the wealth in every mine.

And it's as the old hymn puts it he giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater he sendeth more strength when the labours increase to added affliction he addeth his mercy to multiplied trials his multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our stores of endurance when our strength has failed ere the day is half done when we reach the end of our hoarded resources our father's full giving has only begun.

And then the chorus oh don't forget the chorus his love has no limit. It never had a beginning and it will never have an end his love has no limit his grace has no measure his power has no boundary known unto men for out of his infinite riches in Jesus he giveth and giveth and giveth again.

True or false? We know it's true but let's prove it. You know when each and every one of us reaches the end of the journey of life and we finish the race God has marked out for us.

[21 : 02] I have no doubt that if the question is put to any of us as Jesus put it to his disciples of long ago the answer will surely want to be the same as theirs.

Luke 22 verse 35 what did Jesus ask his disciples? He said when I sent you without purse bag or sandals did you like anything? Did you?

Did you like anything? Anything? Nothing. That's our God.

What is this text doing? It's breathing out confidence. Confidence in God. It's breathing out abundance. And here's the thing it took me a while to get to this.

relevance. There's relevance in this text. It's breathing out relevance. Listen to it again. My God will meet all your needs according to his riches his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

[22 : 15] Now in some translations it's the word by that's there. By Christ Jesus. If it's by Christ Jesus that's suggesting that Jesus is the channel through which all this supplying of our needs is going to come.

It comes by him. It comes through him. And there's truth in that. There's much truth in that. But some scholars would assure us that the word in is also a good enough translation here.

In Christ Jesus. The Lord Jesus in other words is the source. He's not just the channel of this supply. Everything we shall ever need is found in him.

It's not just to be received from him or through him or by him. It's to be found in him. And that's why you know after 30 years or so on the road as someone who knew him as his great God and saviour. The apostle Paul cried out and he mentions it in this very letter. Oh that I might know him. You read that and you feel like you've known him for 30 years Paul.

[23 : 30] You probably know him better than anybody else on the planet. Oh yes that may or may not be true. Oh that I might know him.

This promise was made over 2,000 years ago but it's not out of date. It's so relevant. And I'll tell you why it would have become obsolete long ago if it had been written in any other name other than the name of Jesus.

The reason for saying that is simple. All our Lord's contemporaries have died. they are no more as far as this world is concerned only Jesus remains.

The Herods where are they? They've gone. The Romans where are they? They've gone. The apostles where are they? gone.

Everybody comes and goes. None of us are here to stay. We're all here to go. John Calvin the genius of Geneva he's gone.

[24 : 42] John Wesley that fire brand of Methodism he's gone. John Owen the great John Owen he's gone. John Nelson Darby if you come from a brethren background JND he's gone.

Only Jesus remains. Only his name endures. Only the name of Jesus opens the bank of heaven to the check book of faith.

Or is it now the debit card of faith? All the others no matter how great they were and we thank God for them in their day. They've had their day.

And they can do nothing for us. Today in this sense they've all gone to another place and the place that knew them here knows them no more. Even the greatest of the saints have gone.

Dare I say this it is absolute nonsense never mind heresy to think that we living today can somehow tap into some reservoir of grace to be found in the saints in heaven.

[25 : 49] only the Roman church at her worst could have thought up such a heresy. Works of supererogation the saints in glory they've enough grace not just for themselves to be there but for other people to be helped to get there.

They can help you pray to them. no you don't. It's all in Jesus. Don't misunderstand me.

In the words of Alistair McGrath in his beautiful little book called The Journey we can hitch a ride with some of these saints from the past. Travel the road ahead of us and be greatly blessed by them in that sense.

Think of it from time to time. It can be our privilege to hitch a ride with Martin Luther, the great Augustine, Jonathan Edwards, John Bunyan.

We can learn a lot about the living of the Christian life as we travel in their company by way of their biographies or autobiographies but not because they're up there with more grace than they need.

Only the risen Lord Jesus remains and is therefore relevant and more than sufficient for his people and their needs.

[27 : 11] I'm almost finished. In him and by faith in him are all the resources of God put at your disposal and mine. It's a wonderful text.

It's full of confidence. It breathes it. It's full of abundance. It breathes out abundance. It's full of relevance. Written by the apostle Paul 2,000 years ago but underwritten by the spirit of God.

No eye has seen. No ear has heard. No mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him. No matter how far we've come, the best is still ahead of us.

I was thinking of the Queen of Sheba going up with all her questions to Solomon and coming away saying, the half was never told me. There's a greater than Solomon here.

All the fullness of the God heads in him. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in him.

[28 : 28] Yes. All the spiritual blessings are in him. Yes. Prove it.

I'll leave you the text. And I hope it will do the talking when my voice is long silent. God gave it to me during lockdown.

Struggling. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it. Prove it.