

# Philippians 4:10-23

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, shall we pray? Lord, we love you and we give thanks to you. We honor you as the living God, our great God and Savior.

Blessed be your name and thank you for the people of God assembled today. In your word that's before us, may the words of my mouth and meditation of my heart be pleasing, acceptable and offering unto you this morning, my strength and my Redeemer.

Blessed be your name. Amen. Nine more days. That's how long I have to wait till my wife gets home.

In South Africa. But we are here and we're here today in Jesus name. I'm so glad that you have gathered with us to worship as well as to hear God's word.

Today's sermon, today's message is the last in the book of Philippians. And what a journey this book has been for us.

[ 1 : 14 ] And I trust that along the way there have been some deposits made in your life, in your living, in your thinking that will eventually and perhaps even now are beginning to bear fruit.

That is our pastoral prayer for you. Deposits that will help us to live as citizens of heaven in the cities of the world.

And particularly for you and me on the streets of Chicago. If there's anything that this city needs, it's for those of us who are heaven's representatives to live our faith distinctively, clearly, here in the city of Chicago.

The letter has winded down. And in that process, Paul returns to something that he actually began the letter with.

A matter of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving for gospel partnership. Take a look. Chapter 1. Verses 3 through 5.

[ 2 : 32 ] I thank my God in all my remembrance of you. Always. In every prayer of mine for you all.

Making my prayer with joy because of your partnership in the gospel. Here it is. From the first day until now.

He's back. He's back in a way to where he started. Thanksgiving as it relates to gospel partnership with the saints in Philippi.

He's addressed other matters and that needed his attention. And he returns to one of the main reasons for writing. He wants to say thanks. Thanks for your partnership in the gospel.

Three things, at least, will come to our attention in this text. Gratitude. The gratitude of Paul. Paul. The generosity of the Philippians and the grace of God in his giving to supplying all things for the welfare for the good of his people.

[ 3 : 54 ] What about the gratitude of Paul? Take a look in chapter 4 verses 10 through 13. When Epaphroditus arrived from Philippi to Rome he did not come empty handed.

He had a care package in his hand. And it had Paul's name on it. Anybody here other than me know anything about a care package? Been away to school or been away for a season?

And a care package came to me. I remember when I was in the army one of the things that we waited for were care packages from home. I remember my mother's oatmeal cookies and my friend Arthur Marquis someone sent him pineapple brownies.

Care packages. I'm sure there'll be a few care packages shared over the holidays. But when Epaphroditus arrived he arrived with a care package with Paul's name on it.

Huh? For some unstated reason there had been a suspension a delay in help coming from this partner church.

[ 5 : 10 ] While the delay were not exactly told you look in chapter 4 verse 1 rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length or at last after a passage of time you have revived your concern you have

turned your thoughts again toward me.

Huh? You were indeed concerned for me but you had no opportunity. Wow here it was the word revived it has the idea of it's like a fresh blossoming that's coming forth.

it's like a bush or a tree putting out fresh shoots of flowers in the springtime. That's what he's describing. Your support for me is flourishing it's sprouting again.

Huh? Paul's care package from Philippi had arrived and he was glad. and is not the joyful generous giving to God's people a cause for rejoicing and Paul here was his response that was his response joyful praise for their gift for their package if you will the delay had not been explained but what we do though it was not because of a lack of desire it was not that they were not mindful of him as if out of sight was out of mind that was not the case they were thoughtful they were concerned about him but the opportunity had just not presented itself for the gift or for the packages to come forth thanksgiving in verse 10 but then we in verses 11 through 13 we come to Paul's testimony and we've heard

Paul's testimony at several junctures in this particular letter remember in chapter 1 verse 21 for to me to live for is Christ and to die is gain remember in chapter 3 verse 8 indeed I count everything is lost because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord his was a passionate heartbeat a very electric testimony for Christ and here the testimony is one whose ultimate contentment did not rest in the quality of his life circumstances basically he's saying this I'm glad that your support has been revived I'm grateful for your gifts but you need to know that my true well-being is not based on what is in my hands or in my life situation whether I have some things or don't have some things there's really something that is more deep than my life situation not that [ 8 : 23 ] I'm speaking of being in need for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content listen to his testimony his ultimate contentment is not in the life situation but ultimately in the giver of life and the one who gives him strength for life just what did Paul learn what was the basis for the confidence that really emanates from this particular text it exudes with confidence based on his testimony that he's given the secret of being okay with the circumstances was that the circumstances were not his main concern they were not central to his ultimate well-being we get a sense of that don't we I know how to be brought low and I know how to abound in any and every circumstance I've learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger abundance and need

Paul know about some very rough days in his experience you don't have to turn to it but listen to just a little bit of his apostolic kind of being blown and tossed about as a servant of Christ far more imprisonments he writes with countless beatings and often near death five times I received of the hands of the Jews forty lashes less one three times I was beaten with rods once I was stoned three times I was shipwrecked and night and a day I was adrift at sea you ready to check out yet he wasn't on frequent journeys and dangers from rivers dangers from robbers dangers from our own people danger in the city danger in the sea danger from false brothers in toil and hardship through many a sleepless night in hunger and thirst often without food cold and exposure ready to check out yet he was still in because in all of that he found the sufficiency of life though life swung from one and it seems like it was weighted on one end for him as far as the hardships that he faced as an apostle for Christ and advancing the gospel in that day huh whether it meant little or much or full or empty stomach abundance or need

Paul was able to navigate life's ups and downs its highs and lows what about you huh whether life is kind or cruel poverty or plenty because he found strength in the Lord I remember David Earl Gray Kansas City Kansas pastor of the Pleasant Green Baptist Church every Sunday morning on the radio and he would lead his congregation in Philippians 4 and 13 he would say I can do and they would come back to it I can do all things all things through Christ who strengthens me all this great verse the sense of which is with the strength that God provides Paul could function in any and all circumstances with Christ he could handle life with its varied pendulum kind of effects huh know anyone you feel has been dealt more of life's pain life's ugliness than it seems bearable surely in me that person was Mary

Jordan Mary Jordan was the wife of our pastor in Kansas City we were thousands of miles away a long time ago 1969 when we got the word that she had suffered a crippling stroke that left her paralyzed on one side of her body I'd been in the army for about a year and this was the second storm that we called her mother Jordan had experienced a dear son she had two sons and the younger of whom was who was more of a dear son had passed away it was that two as if two bullets had been fired from a a six bullet revolver and guess what there would be four more to follow

huh in spite of less mobility due to her stroke this godly woman continued to press on in life and in God's service without the full use of her body her trust was in the Lord and she expressed it in a simple song I've come a long way leaning on the Lord God I've come a long way trusting in his word the devil is on my back feel that way trying hard to turn me back I've come a long way leaning on the Lord I remember mother Jordan brace on her leg would make her way down thou coming in serving God and hey folks my Pentecostal church we just were not a Sunday only congregation Monday night youth night Tuesday night healing and consecration Wednesday night prayer and so forth and so on and I could go on she was there huh roughly 11 years after her first stroke she suffered a second stroke and it was fatal but not before four more bullets would be fired from the gun if you will a second son would die at the hand of his wife two grandsons died in gun violence a granddaughter would turn to prostitution but through it all

[ 15 : 07 ] Mary Jordan lived and died leaning trusting on the Lord who gave her strength huh how is it that Paul in our text and many unnamed and unheralded saints men and women you know them some of them you know them some of them are in your families people who you felt who have seemingly been dealt a bad hand after bad hand after bad hand huh how is it that they're not blown away by life circumstances because they are held fast if you will by someone who was stronger than they are huh I can do all things through the one and that is Christ who strengthens me he is the power source the one who does the strengthening is Christ he empowers us to handle circumstances of life regardless how raw those circumstances may be he's the power source he provides!

what could be called the great common denominator for all of life situations huh he provides strength huh oh but is there not a reminder in verses 10 through 13 for us here it is regardless of the circumstances of life that the Lord the Lord provides strength for such circumstances through his son huh some of us need to hear that today uh in next month we're going to hear some of the great poetry of the church to include Psalm 23 Josh thank you for including that in your prayer today but that's a reminder that regardless of the life terrain green pastures still waters we like that none of us particularly like the valley of the shadow of death or sitting in the presence of our enemies those things do not feel good but how is it that regardless of the terrain that we get through he gives us strength huh

Christmas 2015 has arrived some of you here this morning are feeling the pressures of the season huh the question is not whether you have money in your hand or in the bank is do you have Christ in your life huh you may not have money in your hand but if you have Christ but if Christ has your hand huh guess what he's going to hold you fast huh on the other hand Christmas has arrived and some of you your hands are full huh one side or the other are you trusting are you feeling good that your hands are full huh let Christ hold your hand huh and sometimes in holding your hand he may take a little bit out of it huh huh allow him remember the true source of your strength and of your provision and for some of us that may mean letting some of it go huh may our contentment and satisfaction ultimately be in the ultimate source of our sufficiency the Lord himself

Paul put things in perspective didn't he the immediate gift had come from the Philippians but the ultimate gift is Christ himself and the strength and satisfaction and contentment that is him and him ultimately alone thanks be to God for his indescribable gift huh but the Lord not only provides strength through Christ our ultimate source he also provides support through his saints Paul's gratitude and testimony verses 10 through 13 but the Philippians generosity in verses 14 through 18 take a look yet it was kind of you and this here's our koinonia word our partnership word to share my trouble and these verses

Paul acknowledges the role that the Philippians had God used them to care for him and notice here what he's saying though he had said I'm okay regardless of the circumstances he did not just want to sort of slough them off the Lord is thank you for what you've given but regardless I mean whether you sent the gift or not I was okay but you did send it and I'm grateful that you did I'm not writing off your gifts as meaningless quite the contrary did you see what he said about them he said even though the Lord has taught me contentment you did well to be a channel through whom the Lord provided for me in my time of need and you Philippians verse 15 know that in the beginning of the gospel when I left Macedonia no church entered into there's our word again partnership with me in giving and receiving except you only they were partners with

[ 21 : 13 ] Paul even in his imprisonment and his dilemma had become their dilemma his present affliction had become their affliction that's the way partnership and friendship works there were not

fair of other friends there were people they had roots they had a history to their partnership from the beginning they had partnered with him but beginning in verse 15 through the first part of verse 18 Paul began to use the language of commerce and accounting financial terms if you will their relationship was one where transactions of giving and receiving took place and even as a young church they entered into that kind of relationship where they were supporting him in a financial in a material kind of way generous support to the work of the gospel and in verse 17 what a wonderful verse it is because gospel reciprocity gospel partnership with reciprocity giving and receiving it comes into view again and notice that verse what it says not that I seek the gift but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit it was the

Philippians it was not what Paul could get that was of his primary concern it was what the Philippians would gain I mean as we think there really were two systems of accounting that were in play because see a debit in the earthly account registered as a credit in their heavenly account and for Paul this was the account that was the dominant account what was going on in divine accounting if you will he wanted their spiritual progress the fruit that increases to would increase to their account the giver gives but also the giver gains something what does the giver get God is glorified through him that's a credit people are helped through them that's a credit more seed is sown that's a credit but also there is what's called this whole this fruit if turn back over to chapter 1 and verse 11 we see the same word for Paul in his prayer beginning in verse 10 so that you may approve what is excellent so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ here it is filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God I think a look in 2nd Corinthians also helps us to see or understand this dynamic of what happens in the life of those in the life of givers as it relates to spiritual maturity and spiritual progress in their lives and God is able to make all grace abound to you Paul writes to the Corinthians so that having all sufficiency in all things you may abound in every good work as it is written he has distributed freely he has given to the poor his righteousness endures forever he will supply seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness you will be here it is enriched in every way for all your generosity which through us will produce thanksgiving to God for the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but it is overflowing in many thanksgivings to God I mean it's just this whole it seems like this lifestyle that is a credit to God and that it is fruitful in various kinds of ways while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God upon you I mean this whole life of fruitful life of a giver seems like it's like a tree that is filled if you will with your fruit here's the specific acknowledgement of the gift you notice that in verse 18 I've received full payment and more I will I am well supplied having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent so he I mean it wasn't enough for him to say I got your gift no he's giving a description I mean it's sort of like something when you give someone a gift you really want to know that they acknowledge it you really want to know that they savor it and not simply a thank you thanks for the gift sign

Arthur I got your gift the other day it was really really good as a matter of fact it made me think about something on and on I turn it at the card on the back and I write something on the back I really like this gift huh so here he describes sort of the nature their gift was generous was it not I received notice full payment I mean he sort of stacks up these words that really helps to describe how grand this gift was and on the other hand he celebrates Christ in verses 10-13 but here he celebrates the fact that he had received a marvelous gift from them their gift was generous Paul had been well supplied hear the language his word choices reflect abundant overflowing of their nation full payment and more Paul was pleased with the gift but also it was a an offering offering that fit the description of a good offering in the old testament well pleasing to God it was fragrant it had the stamp of God's approval on it 1988

[ 27 : 55 ] Shirley and I prepared to come to Chicago we got a call to be the assistant pastor at the Rock of Our Salvation Church on Chicago's west side and there was a family of seven of us my wife and me and our five children Rock Church was an inner city church and they couldn't pay much money I mean when they they they gave me a range that they could pay me and check this out this was in 1988 so we can give you 20 to 25 thousand dollars I mean even in 1988 folks that was not a lot of money okay for a family of seven I said well we give us give us the high end of the range give us the high end of the range and if you would allow us we will raise what else we need for support so we sent out an appeal and I never will forget one of my co-workers who had been

I believe a missionary at one time he his job was a courier okay and couriers did not make much money but anyway on a Saturday morning Tom Cox took Shirley and me out to breakfast and he came with an envelope in his hand and a pledge and a check but also a pledge card basically it said Arthur and Shirley we are with you on your mission in Chicago and for five years without missing Tom and Linda supported out of their means support for our gospel partnership on Chicago's west side the Lord used them to help close the gap in what we were getting and what we need examples of generous gospel sharing supplying for pastoral ministry

Paul wanted them to know he appreciated that and thanks and I know that I can speak for myself as well as our other pastoral team this is an opportunity for us to say thanks for your generous support that enables us to serve in the word and up and in the city for the glory and honor of God I saw Marcos and Devin come up this morning and I flashback to KAM when Marcos walked in a single man right about eight years ago and now his lovely wife two lovely daughters pastoral ministry that the generous giving of God's people enables us to minister to individuals and families thank you what a wonderful offering that is that allows us to serve in that kind of way here's the second reminder in this text the Lord uses the generosity of his people does he not remember that the Lord provides for his work and his workers through the generosity of his saints what an honor Paul's gratitude Philippians generosity but also God's grace the Lord is the gracious giver of all things you see that there in verse 19 and my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus another one of those Philippian favorites but we see it in context do we not essentially it says that the Lord will meet his children at the point of their needs just as a loving parent would a child so the Lord does for his children and these are confidence building words that we find in our text I trust that they would minister to us here this morning may they prompt!

Confidence in God's earthly as well as his eternal care and I know that we're at various places as far as dire need and plenty and we're different places on the life continuum oh but the reality is that God will provide God will supply regardless of where you are on that continuum did you notice the comprehensive nature he will supply every need of yours this was a word to those who had supplied through gospel generosity gifts for the support of the work and said well God has you in mind God will supply for your needs this was the case and not simply did it mean in a material kind of sense because there were various needs that were in the

[ 33 : 39 ] Philippian congregation they had a need to stand firm God would help them do that they had a need to strive together for the faith of the gospel they had a need even in the midst of suffering they had needs interpersonally among themselves and Paul continued to point them to Christ God will help you people God will supply whatever the kind of need that's in view Paul's word to ones who had supplied him with exceptional gift is my God will satisfy meet them at the point of the need and he would do it in a card with his glorious riches in Christ that's the portion such is the portion of those who are in union with him he's the source both of strength and supply he gives it both strength and supply think about this think about this

Romans 8 he who spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all how shall he not with him also freely give us all things!

And if you know the context of Romans chapter 8 is looking at troubles the sufferings of this present world and he's present there and the one who has provided for us and the argument is from greater to lesser he didn't spare his son for your eternal well-being how shall he not with him also freely give us all things you can fill in the blank if you will graciously give us all things the Lord Jesus Christ is the divine executor if you will of the father's estate and things flow in and through and from him all is centered in on him all comes from him that's what we see he's the channel and it's his care friends is in accord with his glorious riches

Paul uses this term elsewhere in Ephesians chapter 3 that according to the riches of his glory he would grant you listen to this to be strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith so that you being rooted and grounded in love may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth it's a noble love of Christ that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God oh the riches that we have in him through him out of his infinite riches in Jesus what does he do he give it and give it and give it again no wonder he goes into doxology in verse 20 to our God and Father be glory forever and ever praise to God the God who orchestrates all of these things through the agency of his son is worthy to be praised and honored so as we sang the song this morning of the father's love begun and it just continued to come back again to the celebration of

Christ to the celebration of Christ the word made flesh and who dwelt among us and beholding his glory as of the only begotten of the father full and Christ Christ have you trusted him do you know him if you don't know him you can how do you do that you meet him at the cross that is that's the meeting place that's the mercy seat of

[ 37 : 55 ] God and we come to the cross recognizing that without him we have no standing before the God of the universe but with him we are counted as righteous as God makes another divine transaction and that he takes our sin it has been laid upon him and as we are seen in him we are he we get his righteousness the one who has taken our sin do you know!

him huh? and if you know him do you find him sufficient for all things in every situation you can and I trust that that would be your posture today glorious riches in Christ huh?

so what do we have in this passage? there's a paradigm here I believe both for gospel living and giving and living the Lord gives to his people his people share what he gives and they become channels for gospel generosity the God who so loved the world that he gave becomes our pattern he gives and we give it's not this season about gospel generosity gospel generosity that becomes our paradigm for both living and giving for receiving and sharing as we see in the son of God my prayer as we close this book is that we would live in a manner manner that demonstrates an understanding of that living with a primary focus on the life that is

God himself through the giver of life even our savior the Lord Jesus Christ what am I saying simply this the Lord provides his strength and his support from his supply for his people the Lord provides his strength and his support from his supply for his people we can rejoice in that shall we pray father we love you we give thanks this morning for our savior our Christ and we bless his name today!