

God Will Supply Every Need

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[0:00] I know how to be brought low and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Amen. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. We hear that a lot. It's on a lot of inspirational calendars, on a lot of Hallmark cards. What does it really mean? Do we misunderstand what it means?

Does it mean, as some would seem to suggest, that we can literally do anything we set our minds to? Well, do we have anyone in the congregation who wanted to grow up to be an astronaut? Anyone?

Have at least one. Anyone who wanted to grow up to be a professional athlete? Mark, I know you wanted to be the running back for the Jets. Now, is this verse telling you that if you had wanted it badly enough, with enough faith, it would have happened?

I still remember when I was in middle school thinking that I might want to go on to play college football one day. Then I topped out at a gigantic 5'7", and I didn't play football past the 8th grade.

[1:53] Later, as a teenager who was playing guitar and punk rock and heavy metal bands, I thought I would spend my life playing music professionally. That was my aspiration. Then I got my call to ministry, and that didn't work out either.

Now, I remember once hearing my younger sister say that she wanted to grow up to work at Walmart. She set a more achievable goal than I did.

I can do all things. Now, I think this verse is one of the most widely recognized, yet most misunderstood verses in all of Scripture.

It's not telling us that we can do whatever we set our minds to. It's not telling us that we need to tap into our unlimited potential and pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps.

It's not telling us that the legitimately painful things we have to go through in life don't really hurt. No.

[3:02] In context, I think we'll see that it doesn't mean any of those things. It means something far greater and more real than that. First, we notice that Paul is talking in the context of the Philippians' partnership with him in the work of the gospel, especially their financial support for his ministry.

Now, these verses aren't really about Paul's potential for greatness at all, as some might read them. It's about how Christians are called to support one another in the gospel.

It's about how we are all called to be content in all circumstances. But it's not about us, ultimately.

It's about our God and how he will supply our every need.

Now, with that in mind, let's take a look at the verses appointed for this morning, starting in verse 10, Philippians 4. I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me.

You were indeed concerned for me, but had no opportunity. Now, Paul begins this passage by sharing with the Philippian believers that he is rejoicing that they have renewed their partnership with him in the gospel, especially through sending him financial support, now that they've had the opportunity to do that again.

[4:40] But we see, very quickly, that Paul wasn't out to get their money. That's not what it's about. He wasn't taking their support for the purpose of building a mansion for himself, buying a private jet, or a fancy new car.

Indeed, he immediately goes on to talk about how he has learned to be content in everything. He didn't need support to lead a life of ease and luxury.

Verse 11. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

Notice here that Paul doesn't actually say that he's not in need. I mean, he was imprisoned at the moment, so that probably wouldn't have been terribly accurate.

What he's saying is that he's learned in every situation to be content. My brothers and sisters, that is not a lesson that is easily learned.

[5:55] It's most often learned through suffering and through hardship. Think for a second about Paul's life. The man was beaten. He was lashed. He was imprisoned.

He was shipwrecked. He was wrongfully accused of doing evil. And ultimately killed at the hands of a wicked empire. For what? For his testimony to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And in this, of course, he was following and imitating the Lord Jesus, who, as the book of Hebrews tells us, burned obedience through the things he suffered. Paul suffered.

Our Lord Jesus suffered. Brothers and sisters, we will too. The Bible tells us that as believers, we share in his sufferings. We will suffer.

Period. As the old saying goes, none of us get out of this world alive. We don't get out unscathed.

[7:01] But, if we are believers, we have the assurance that all things, even suffering, work together for our good, that if we suffer with Christ, we will reign with him also.

If we suffer, we follow in the footsteps of believers who have gone before us. And we follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus.

Now, in this example, I'm exposing my Baptist roots here a little bit. The great preacher and Baptist minister of the 19th century, Charles Spurgeon, suffered terribly from ill health and chronic pain, yet had a very fruitful ministry.

He had this to say on suffering. When the pangs shoot through our body, and ghastly death appears in view, people see the patience of the dying Christian.

Our infirmities become the black velvet on which the diamond of God's love glitters all the more brightly. Thank God I can suffer.

[8:19] Thank God I can be made the object of shame and contempt. For in this way, God shall be glorified. He also said, there is no university for a Christian like that of sorrow and trial.

Well, the Apostle Paul studied at that university. He graduated from that university. What did he learn there? To be content in all things.

He continues in verse 12. I know how to be brought low and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

What did Paul learn through his being brought low and his abounding? What did Paul learn in plenty and in hunger? What did Paul learn in abundance and in need?

We see his answer in verse 13. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. That's what Paul learned.

[9:37] He didn't learn that he would always have abundance, as some might suggest. He didn't learn that he would never face hunger or need. So what did he learn?

He learned that in plenty and in hunger, in abundance and in need, in abounding and in being brought low, Jesus would be with him. Jesus would never forsake him.

That he would never have to face any of it alone. That Jesus would strengthen him to undergo the suffering that he had to endure.

I can do all things through him. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Doesn't mean that suffering doesn't hurt. It doesn't mean that I can do anything I set my mind to.

It doesn't mean that with enough faith and hard work, I can have anything I desire. What does it mean?

[10:37] Jesus is all I need and he is with me. That's what it means. He is my great reward.

A reward far greater than anything that I might have to suffer for his sake. His strength is made perfect in my weakness. And by his grace, I can endure through suffering and through hardship.

So the psalmist once wrote, Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

Jesus is our reward. Our sins have been forgiven through his blood. We have the promise of eternal life through faith in him.

And he is with us, even in suffering. We know him and he loves us. So why wouldn't we be content? The things of this world will pass away.

[11:41] That means that the troubles of this world will pass away. But the hope that we have in Jesus will never pass away. As John Newton wrote in the hymn Amazing Grace, The earth shall

soon dissolve like snow, The sun forbear to shine, But God who called me here below will be forever mine.

Or as the Carmelite nun St. Therese of Lisieux put it, Life is passing. And eternity draws nigh. Soon shall we live the very life of God.

And after having drunk deep at the fount of bitterness, Our thirst will be quenched, The very source of all sweetness. Brothers and sisters, Do you believe that?

Are you prepared to be content in all things? Trusting in Jesus? Trusting in his strength made perfect in your weakness? Do you believe that you have everything that you need in Jesus, Even in the face of suffering?

Believe it. It's true. Paul goes on to remind the Philippians, In our next few verses, That just as he has everything they need in the Lord, So do they.

[13:07] He starts by talking about their support for his ministry. Starting in verse 14. Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. Do you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, When I left Macedonia, No church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, Except you only.

Even in Thessalonica, You sent me hope for my needs once again. Paul sees their support as a demonstration of the love that believers are supposed to have for one another.

But, he also sees the gift as being beneficial to the givers. Verses 17 and 18. Not that I seek the gift, But I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.

I have received full payment and more. I am well supplied, Having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, Fragrant offering, A sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

Paul sees their support for his ministry as a sacrificial offering. They have partnered in Paul's gospel mission.

[14:24] They have given of their own resources as an act of worship to Almighty God. They gave generously because of their faith in the power of the gospel message.

As Paul has taught in this epistle, There is no reason not to give and to give generously to the work of the gospel. Because we can give as those who know that God is with us.

That our needs are supplied. That we have all we could ever need in Christ Jesus. As we see from what Paul writes in the following verse.

They have given to Paul generously.

And Christian love. And they have the certainty that God in Christ Jesus Will supply everything that they need.

[15:28] We see a common theme running through this passage. God supplies all we need in Christ Jesus.

This morning, Are you looking to Jesus for all that you need? Now if you're not, Maybe things are going well for you at the moment.

But they won't go well forever. Suffering comes to us all. But the hope that is found in Jesus Christ Is stronger than suffering.

And even stronger than death. Maybe on the other hand, You're suffering this morning. Dealing with pain or dealing with grief. If that's you this morning, Look to Jesus and cling to Him.

He knows what it is to suffer. He will be with you. You can endure all things in Him. Even at your weakest. Because His strength is made perfect in weakness.

[16:37] And He can be glorified. Even through your suffering. And my brothers and sisters, I am not speaking theoretically here. I have seen His strength in my weakness.

I have seen my suffering used for His glory. Maybe you have too. Maybe you've seen your suffering used for His glory.

Maybe you have seen His strength in your weakness. The hope that we have in the Lord Is there in plenty and in hunger.

In abundance and in need. Praise God for that. Having assured the Philippians That God will supply all they need in Christ Jesus, Paul praises God and ends his epistle to the Philippians Much the same way as it began.

Celebrating the love that believers have for one another And the partnership that they share In the work of the gospel. Paul writes, To our God and Father Be glory forever and ever.

[17:51] Amen. Greet every saint in Christ Jesus The brothers who are with me greet you All the saints greet you Especially those of Caesar's household The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ Be with

your spirit Just a final reflection On those verses In light of what we talked about this morning.

Paul The beginning of Philippians Talks about how his imprisonment Has been For the good of the gospel And to God's glory. Because the word of his imprisonment for Christ Is spread through the imperial household.

One can't help but wonder If the brothers of Caesar's household That he mentions here Came to faith through Paul's imprisonment.

Reminded of that theme in Philippians again That even in our suffering God is glorified. As our Philippians series has come to a close I want to thank my fellow preachers in the series Raymond Thank you I want to say I've really enjoyed Our time together In this amazing book of scripture I hope That somehow Through my feeble efforts But more powerfully Through the power of his word The Lord has spoken to you As he spoke to me Through his word As I studied And prepared For these sermons It's been amazing The word of God Is powerful And it has been so incredible To dive into it together So now

I'll close this series Quoting Paul's own words To our God And Father Be glory Forever and ever Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen