

God will Supply All Your Needs

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Preacher: Hilary Roath

[0 : 00] This is the AM service on June the 22nd, 1997.

The preacher is Hilary Roth. The sermon is entitled, God Will Supply All Your Needs, and is taken from Philippians chapter 4, verses 10 to 23.

Paul of Tarsus must have come from a wealthy background, because he was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, which was a privilege that not many people had, and which must have been very expensive.

But when Paul gave himself to Jesus Christ, he turned his back not only on position and prominence and authority, but upon a large income as well.

And this was certainly a step of faith, because when Paul was commissioned by the church in Antioch to go and preach the gospel to the ends of the earth, he left with no promise of support from them.

[1 : 26] He left Antioch with their prayers and little else. And in our passage today from Philippians, the last part of the book, we find that Paul is writing in verse 10 to thank the Philippians for a second gift that they'd given him.

Paul knows, too, the deep poverty out of which this generous gift had come to him.

But Paul also recognizes that it was their love of him, their love for the gospel that he had brought them, and their love for the Lord Jesus Christ, which prompted the gift.

He says to them, I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it. Not that I am referring to being in need, for I have learned to be content with whatever I have.

[2 : 41] I have learned to be content with whatever I have. As we've worked through the book of Philippians, it's easy to see or to find the secret of Paul's contentment.

In chapter 1, verse 21, Paul says, For to me, living is Christ. For to me, living is Christ.

Or to paraphrase that, as far as I am concerned, Jesus Christ is the sum total of life. For me, Jesus Christ is the foundation of life.

Jesus Christ is the goal of life. Jesus Christ is the fullness of life. Jesus Christ is life.

Paul encourages the Philippians to make Christ the center of their lives too. In chapter 2, he encourages them to have the mind of Christ.

[4 : 03] And he explains that to have the mind of Christ means becoming a servant, to set aside our own will, our own plans, our own ambitions, and to fit into the plan of God, and to do what the word of God directs.

Paul had made Christ the center of his life. So he knows nothing, wants nothing, does nothing other than what God directs.

In chapter 3, verse 1, Paul says, Jesus Christ has become the joy of his life. And he again encourages the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord always.

Knowing Christ, walking in fellowship with him, and being obedient to him, floods Paul's life, Paul's heart, and his mind with joy.

Christ had become the center of his life. And the joy of God had become the fullness of his life. And God had become the standard for his life.

[5 : 24] He had found perfect rest, perfect satisfaction, and perfect contentment. Air and water are two entirely different elements.

And it's impossible to have a container with air and water in it at the same time. One that is filled with air must have the air displaced in order to be filled with water.

And in a similar way, if our life is given over to those chasing after the things of this world, our life cannot be filled with Jesus Christ.

Because until that love of worldly things is displaced, our life cannot be filled with Jesus Christ. satisfaction and contentment comes from making Jesus Christ the center of our lives.

[6 : 40] To be content is the opposite of to be covetous. And when Paul met the Lord Jesus Christ on the Damascus Road, what previously had meaning in his life was taken out and his life was filled with Jesus Christ.

And the things of this world no longer mattered to him. And so Paul could say in verse 12, I know what it is to have little.

I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances, I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need.

And then back to verse 11, not that I am referring to being in need, for I have learned to be content with whatever I have.

The reason material things can never make anyone content is that they are never able to get enough to satisfy them.

[8 : 01] Someone once asked Rockefeller how much money is enough. And he thought for a moment and said, just a little more than one has.

The world's wealthiest person has yet to say, I have enough to be satisfied. And many of us Christians still have to learn the secret of contentment.

Socrates, the Greek philosopher, was asked on one occasion, who was the wealthiest man? And he replied, he that is content with least.

For contentment is nature's well. And Paul said, to live is Christ and I am content.

Thank you. the window of a shop, there was a sign which read, we fix anything, which is rather an extravagant claim.

[9 : 22] And there is such a credibility gap in the advertising rule today that the government has to protect the public from the dishonest claims that are made by the advertisers.

because what a person says is not always to be believed. So when we hear Paul making a claim such as the one in verse 13, we too might become skeptical and say, oh yeah, can this be true?

But Paul does say, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I can do all things.

The Philippians had become deeply concerned about Paul's poverty and so they go to him with help and when they arrive they don't find a man who is discouraged or defeated or in despair, they find a man who is utterly triumphant in the Lord.

They can't understand this attitude. They can't understand the joy and the peace in the midst of these circumstances. The once wealthy Pharisee, the once wealthy Pharisee though, had learned perfect contentment in the midst of his poverty and he shares his secret with them.

[10 : 59] I can be rich, he says, I can be poor, I can be respected, I can be despised, I can be free, I can be in prison.

It makes little difference for I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. and when we are teamed up with Christ and Christ is set free to work through us, there is nothing that we cannot do.

There is nothing that we cannot do. if Michelangelo somehow could move his body into mine and control my mind and my hands, I could turn a block of marble into a sculpture.

if Leonardo da Vinci could move into my body and control me, I could paint a masterpiece. And if Beethoven could move into my body and control me, I could write a symphony.

If Jesus Christ, who does live in me, controls my mind, controls my lips, my hands and my feet, he can do anything through me that he has the power to do.

[12 : 39] We are commanded to be lights of the world, to be witnesses for Jesus Christ. We can do all these things through Christ because he is the light.

we are commanded to love our brothers and sisters. We can do all these things through Christ because he is love.

All that Jesus Christ is today in heaven can be manifest through us on earth through the Holy Spirit. there is no limit to what Jesus Christ could do when he was here on earth and there is nothing that Jesus Christ cannot do from heaven through us through the Holy Spirit.

I can do all things says Paul through Christ who strengthens me and we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

[13 : 57] Paul did not have to consult an etiquette book to know that he ought to thank the Philippians for the gift that they sent him and in this part of the letter he expresses his gratitude to this church for the gift that they gave him.

But there is a strange thing in this passage the strange thing is that Paul is not commending the Philippians because they met his need he is commending them because they have satisfied a need of their own of which they seem to be entirely ignorant since Paul had nothing we would suppose that he would thank them because of the help that their gift was to him but he barely mentions that his thanksgiving goes to God it goes to God because the gift the Philippians have satisfied because the gift that the Philippians have given satisfies their need which they have so the thanksgiving goes to God because through the gift the

Philippians have given they have satisfied their need Paul goes on to point out that this is not the first time the Philippians contributed to his need and in Acts 16 we read that Paul was called out of Asia Minor through a vision and came to Philippi he ministered the word of God there to a small group of women who normally met along the river banks and he brought them to faith in Jesus Christ then he had to run from Philippi run for his life and he went to Thessalonica and while Paul was in Thessalonica the Philippians twice sent an offering to him that group of believers he had left behind in

Philippi was very small and they were probably not people of any means since they seemed to be single women or widows and as Paul continued on to Corinth it was the gift of the Philippians that kept him going but years have gone by now and Paul is in Rome and those whose hearts were touched by his need when he was running from those angry Jews in Macedonia they reach out to him again reach out to him now in Rome and they have again taken up an offering and sent it to him and Paul says to them in verse 14 in any case it was kind of you to share my distress you Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel when

I left Macedonia no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone for even when I was in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs more than once and then he goes on to explain why he thinks they did well not because I seek the gift he says not because I seek the gift and the implication would be that he certainly could use it but I seek the profit that accumulates to your account I seek the profit that accumulates to your account and so Paul introduces here introduces us to his concept of giving in our day materialistic affluence is a real danger and we are in real danger of not having a biblical attitude to money a biblical attitude to giving but

[18:40] Paul is saying here I am delighted to receive your gift not because of what it did for me but because of what it did for you and I desired it so that profit accumulates to your account Paul saw that profit would come to the Philippians we too need to bring our material goods under the guidance under the direction of the spirit of God so that our needs might be met that God's church's needs might be met and so that God may be glorified as we give sacrifices that are acceptable to him as Paul draws this letter to a close he makes a promise to the

Philippians in verse 19 a promise that has been a rock under the feet of God's people down through the ages my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus these Philippians have given generously out of deep poverty they've given all they had to Paul and Paul responds by reminding them of the promise that God had made my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus this is not a new promise Paul is giving it has its roots deep in the Old Testament God is faithful to meet the needs of his people the Philippians were obedient they were obedient to the gospel they were obedient to the demands of love for Paul and they were obedient in their obligation to God's servant and because of their obedience Paul can say categorically to them I realize that your poverty that in your poverty you gave and that you are reduced to dire circumstances but my God shall supply the needs your needs because they arose out of obedience in verse 23 Paul finishes his letter with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit the letter begins with grace in verse 2 and with grace it ends it was impossible for

Paul to know in detail all that his friends might be going through but he wished that always and everywhere they might be conscious of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ with them behind and before encompassing they are going out and they coming in and enfolding them in their lying down and in their rising up and now the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit Amen God