

## Philippians 4:10-23

### Introduction and Review

#### I. Review of Philippians

Relational Triangle: Paul, Philippians, and God who has made himself known in Christ

##### A. Paul: the great example

1:3: thanking and praying for them

1:12: in prison in Rome, rival preachers out there while he's stuck in chains

--Value: Christ is being proclaimed (that's all that matters to him)

1:19: considers his coming trial (might end up in execution)

--Value: Christ is honored in me

3:4: considers all the privilege and status he used to have

--Value: loss for sake of Christ

3:12: pressing on towards this heavenly goal of receiving Christ like a runner

4:11: a man who is content in all circumstances

##### B. Philippians: special friends

1:5: partnership of the gospel

1:7: both in his imprisonment and defense of gospel

1:27: urges them to continue to strive side by side for the gospel in Philippi in midst of persecution

2:25: tangible evidence of their partnership: sent Epaphroditus and \$

4:15: generosity

##### C. God who has been made known in Jesus Christ

1:6: began a good work and will finish it

1:19: Whose Spirit will come to Paul's aid in prison as he makes a defense

2:6: Christ, demonstrates his equality with God not by demanding status

But by considering others needs ahead of his own

2:13: working in us to will and do according to his good pleasure

2:20: through Christ will transform our bodies (bring to completion)

4:19: the source and ground of Paul's contentment and Philippians' generosity

#### II. Introduction to Passage

A. The subject is the Philippians' generous financial gift to Paul (v. 10, v. 18)

B. Paul's contentment and the Philippians' generosity

C. Contentment and Generosity today

1. Contentment = "being satisfied with what you have"

Contentment eludes many people in our culture

--advertising and comparing with others leads us to want more

--the "living above your means" virus

--we take our cue from what's an appropriate standard of living from the culture around us, not from Bible (1 Timothy 6:7-9)

Different areas of contentment

Financial, physical, relational, giftedness/wiring

2. Generosity

We run into the same issues as with contentment

The Passage

Notice the Relational Triangle

I. God: the source of Paul's contentment and the Philippians' generosity (v. 19)

- "According to his riches in glory": God is so wealthy

- "in Christ Jesus": God's wealth has been demonstrated in Christ

God has given the most amazing/expensive gift—his Son

- "he will supply every need of yours"

Not every want but every need

This is the consistent perspective throughout New Testament

Confidence in this rich God who will always provide

See Matthew 6:25-34, Romans 8:31-

II. Paul: Contentment

A. Thank you (v. 10-11)

B. "Not that": a deeper perspective

"I don't actually need the financial gift. My life is not dependent on that. There are deeper things going on."

1. We must keep v. 13 in its context so we don't misinterpret it

Context: v. 11-12: different financial, economic circumstances

So: "all things" = whatever life throws my way, I can walk through it

Whether rich or poor I can walk through faithfully

2. Notice what Paul is doing with the language in verse 11 and 13

a. v. 11: "content"

A word popular in philosophy (especially stoic philosophy)

= "self-sufficient" (the goal of the stoic)

A person whose serenity is not determined by outward circumstances because they find their strength and resources from within, independence

Likewise, Paul's peace not dependent on circumstances

b. v. 13: "through him who strengthens me"

he takes this "self-sufficient" notion and turns it upside down

He is not "self-sufficient"; he is "Christ-sufficient"

His independence from circumstance comes from his radical dependence on Christ

3. Notice this is something he “learned” (v. 11, 12)
  - This didn’t come naturally to him (he had to work at it)
  - 2 Cor 12:9-10: Christ taught him this through experiences
  - Christ’s grace is sufficient through his weakness
  
4. Notice he includes the good along with bad as situations he’s learned to face
  - Poverty and wealth are equally regarded as trials that one must depend on Christ in order to live through faithfully
  - Wealth presents its own challenges
    - Temptation to find our security in wealth, not God
    - Temptation to want more and more
    - Temptation to be ungrateful
    - Temptation to feel guilty for our wealth

### III. The Philippians: Generosity

#### A. Thank you

- v. 14: the gift really does help
- v. 15-16: a long history of generous giving to Paul
  - Philippi was probably the only church to regularly support Paul

#### B. “Not that”: a deeper perspective

“It’s not the financial gift that I’m most interested in. It’s what the gift represents  
Two images

1. Financial image (v. 17)
  - “the interest that accrues to your account”
  - They have a spiritual bank account and their generosity is compounding interest for them (storing up treasure in heaven)
  - Financial giving is a spiritual issue
2. Sacrificial image (v. 18)
  - Their giving is like a burnt offering, a sacrifice pleasing to God
  - Ultimately they didn’t give money to Paul but to God

### Conclusion

Beautiful picture of this triangle!

God: supplying all they need

Paul: finding contentment by relying on Christ’s power

Philippians: able to be generous because God will supply all their needs

Where do you find yourself today?

1. Are you in a place of need?
  - Find contentment in the Lord, knowing he will provide for you
2. Are you in a place of plenty?
  - Give generously to God, knowing that he will provide for you

## Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. Looking back on our series in Philippians, what one main idea, perspective, or practice will you take with you as you move on in life?
3. In what ways do you struggle with contentment? What situations cause the most discontentment in you? And what experiences has God brought you through to help you find your contentment in him? To use Paul's language, how have you "learned" contentment?
4. Paul's language in v. 12 suggests that wealth and poverty can equally be challenges that are difficult to walk through. What are some of the greatest challenges that wealth has presented to you or those you know?
5. In 4:19 Paul, speaking to Christians, says "my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." To what extent can we rely on that statement? Is Paul including our tangible, material needs, or is he just referring to spiritual needs?
6. Discuss Paul's standard of contentment in 1 Timothy 6:7-10. How does that apply to us today?