

#### RELATED SCRIPTURES

Philippians 4:10–13 | Isaiah 56:7; 60:7 | Romans 11:35–36

#### STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 11.24.24

#### SUMMARY

With his final remarks to the church, Paul includes words of thanksgiving—but they come with a caveat. Paul first preached the gospel in Philippi ten years before writing this letter; then, he departed for Macedonia on what would have been his second missionary journey. From his departure until the writing of this letter, the church at Philippi continued to support him. It was only the Philippian church that provided consistent support for him. So naturally, Paul was grateful for the church who, as he noted, brought him another gift (Philippians 2:25–30, 4:10), but he then goes on to say—as appreciative as he is—that he didn’t need the gift (vs. 11–13, 17). Paul’s motivation for expressing this is rooted in the idea that his work is neither dependent on nor motivated by anyone’s financial support. While the gift from the church alleviates physical discomfort, Paul’s joy is not reliant upon it. Yet Paul is concerned that the church does not receive his comments as ingratitude, so he expresses his thanks (vs. 14–16) and rejoices that ultimately, their gift to him is a display of “the fruit that increases to your credit” (v. 18). In other words, Paul is more interested in the spiritual development that sacrificial giving has on the church over any advantage he receives from it. He notes that their generosity concretely demonstrates that God was at work in the church. Paul likens their generosity to the sacrifices of the Old Testament—a sacrifice to God, acceptable and pleasing in his sight. Paul concludes his letter by asking the church to receive his greeting individually, “Greet every saint in Christ Jesus” (v. 21). Throughout Paul’s letter, he emphasizes unity in the church; his conclusion stresses the equal worth of every member of the church before God. In his final greeting, he notes, “especially those of Caesar’s household” (v. 22), which testifies to the rapid expansion of the gospel—that it even reaches those in the most gospel-oppressed places. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ goes on!

#### GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Philippians 4:14–23.

What does Paul’s message to the church teach us about giving? Is the church dependent on giving? How so?

If the gospel reached Caesar’s household when Caesar adamantly opposed it, what conclusions can we draw about how and when we should proclaim it?

If there’s one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

#### CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today’s themes in what you bring before God.