

— OUTLINE —

I. Early in his letter to the Philippians, Paul said,

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.

PHILIPPIANS 1:3-5

- A. The word translated “**fellowship**” in verse 5 is the Greek word *koinonia*, and it literally means “**partnership**” (*Strong’s Concordance*).
 - B. Paul was thanking the Philippians for their partnership in the Gospel.
 - C. They were people who gave to Paul in a greater way than any other church had.
 - D. Paul made specific mention of how eager they were to care for him and provide for his needs.
 - E. They were helping him take the Gospel to other places around the world.
 - F. When he said they were careful but lacked opportunity (Phil. 4:10), he was saying they didn’t always know where to send their money, but the moment they heard Paul was in Rome, they sent clothes, finances, and things for him to study.
 - G. But Paul wasn’t rejoicing over them just because they took care of him (Phil. 4:11-13); he was rejoicing because he saw their hearts to give, and he knew that by supporting him, they were actually giving to God.
 - H. He saw that their giving would cause God to pour out a blessing on them and result in a hundredfold return.
- ### II. The amazing thing here is that Paul said no other churches were giving him money to help preach the Gospel (Phil. 4:15).
- A. It seems people gave to Paul only while he was in their town preaching: they fed him and gave him a place to stay, but as soon as he left town, he was on his own again.
 - B. So, every time he went to a new place, he had to start all over financially.
 - C. I don’t think Paul should have had to scrape by like that.
 - D. People should have been so thankful for what God was doing through him that they took care of him no matter where he was.
- ### III. You can see why Paul was thankful every time he thought about the Philippians and how they helped establish churches in other areas.

For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

PHILIPPIANS 4:16-17

- A. **“Once and again”** just means they sent money to Paul more than once.
- B. Their giving wasn’t just benefiting Paul personally; it was helping to establish God’s kingdom abroad, and Paul understood that their giving would result in a supernatural return—because God gives seed to sowers.
- C. Paul talked about how their giving caused him to abound, and then he said,

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:19

- D. God desires to bless both believers and unbelievers, but this particular verse is talking about people who had partnered with Paul in sharing the Gospel and were helping to establish God’s covenant upon the earth.
 - E. They weren’t just giving to Paul because they were receiving from him; they were giving when Paul was blessing people beyond their own city, and they weren’t receiving anything in return.
 - F. In modern terms, you could say they weren’t just giving to get books and videos—they were giving toward missionary work.
- IV. Philippians 4:19 is talking about the special blessing on those who become partners in spreading the Gospel, which means that if you really want to be blessed, then partner with a ministry that has a big vision and is doing a great job of spreading the Gospel.
- A. The way God gets money to a ministry is by giving it to the believers who support it.
 - B. So, one of the best ways to prosper is to find a ministry that is powerfully anointed by God and become a partner with it.
 - C. I pray that God blesses our partners and causes them to abound, because my ability to accomplish God’s will is directly dependent upon other people joining with me and becoming partners.
 - D. God has made provision for every believer, but there is a special anointing on people who give to help spread the Gospel.
 - E. When you say “I want to help this church change my city, and I want to help this person go around the world and spread the Gospel,” then God is going to prosper you.
 - F. God gives money to people who will use it to advance the kingdom (Deut. 8:18), and He gives more than enough, so there is always plenty left over for the giver.
- V. Aside from causing a flow of finances to pass through partners’ hands, there is an additional benefit to partnering with a ministry:

A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

PROVERBS 18:16

- A. I used to think this meant “**gift**” in the sense of God-given ability or anointing.
 - B. I thought that if I would use my gift of teaching properly, for instance, it would open up doors and bring me before great people.
 - C. But the Hebrew word used for gift here is *mattan*, and it literally means “a present” (*Strong's Concordance*).
 - D. It's clear from its other uses in Scripture that it means some kind of monetary gift.¹
 - E. This verse is simply saying that even in the natural realm, a gift opens doors.
 - F. In a negative sense, you could understand this kind of gift to be a bribe, but there is also a positive side to this.
 - G. You can turn away wrath with a gift or gain favor with people.
 - H. Gifts also have an effect in the spiritual realm.
 - I. It can create opportunities and bring you before powerful people.
 - J. This is different from a bribe, and Scripture gives us an example of a gift being used in this positive sense.
- VI. In the Old Testament, it says that when the Queen of Sheba heard how wise and prosperous King Solomon was, she traveled to Jerusalem to witness it for herself.

- A. It says she went up with “**a very great train**” of camels bearing spices, precious stones, and “**very much gold**” (1 Kin. 10:2).
- B. The Queen of Sheba was astounded by what she saw in King Solomon's court, and she said,

It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

1 KINGS 10:6-7

- C. Solomon was the wisest and wealthiest man on the face of the earth.
- D. The Bible says that people came from all over the world to inquire of him and search out his wisdom.
- E. I believe Solomon had more fame and notoriety than the leader of any country today.

¹For example, Prov. 15:27 and 19:6

- F. So, the Queen of Sheba brought gifts to get Solomon's attention and gain access to him.

And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

1 KINGS 10:10

- G. A talent is equal to about 75.5 pounds, so that means the queen gave Solomon 9,000 pounds, or 145,000 ounces, of gold.
- H. At today's price of \$1,730 per ounce, that gold would be worth more than \$250,000,000, and there's no telling how much her other gifts were worth.
- I. I don't know how long the line was of people waiting to see King Solomon, but the queen's gift moved her right to the front.
- J. Not only did she get to spend a little time with him; she ate with him and saw all the different aspects of his kingdom.
- K. In a spiritual sense, when you give by partnering with a ministry, it's like you start drawing on the anointing that is on the ministry.
- L. You end up partaking of the fruits of that ministry.
- M. You receive the benefit of prospering from their blessing.
- VII. Here's something else to consider: I bet the Queen of Sheba could have used that 250 million dollars for needs within her own kingdom.
- A. I bet it raised some eyebrows when people heard that she was planning to give all of that money to a king who was already the richest man on earth.
- B. She could have changed entire nations with that money.
- C. She could have built buildings and helped farmers in every town she passed through.
- D. But the Queen of Sheba decided she was going to use that money to go find out how King Solomon had become so successful in running his kingdom.
- E. Then she could apply that knowledge to improving her own land.
- F. She did it because she wanted to partake of the success Solomon was experiencing—and it worked.

And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

1 KINGS 10:13

- G. The queen's gift was only a fraction of King Solomon's yearly earnings, so when it says that Solomon gave to her of his bounty, I think the Queen of Sheba received more from Solomon than she gave.
 - H. On her return journey, she still had tremendous wealth to use to aid beggars and farmers, but she also had wisdom and anointing she could use to build her entire nation.
 - I. Benevolent giving would have been a short-term solution, but using wisdom and anointing to lift the kingdom out of need was a long-term solution.
- VIII. Sometimes, like the Queen of Sheba did, you should give because you need what a church or minister can give to you.
- A. I tell my Bible college students to "sow where you want to go."
 - B. In other words, if you feel called into missionary work, then find people who are doing good work in that field and support them.
 - C. By partnering with them, you begin to draw on the anointing and experience they have.
 - D. It will come to you and help you fulfill your own calling.
 - E. You find someone who has gone further than you have gone, and you sow into their life to help get yourself to the same place.
 - F. The Queen of Sheba found a man who had more favor, more wisdom, and greater wealth, and she used a large gift to gain access to him in order to glean more wisdom, wealth, and favor for herself.
 - G. When you do that, it starts a supernatural flow of God's finances toward you so that you are able to both meet your own needs and also abound unto every good work.
- IX. God always blesses you back when you show faith in Him by giving of your substance.
- A. You will never be more faithful to God than He is to you.
 - B. I'm not saying that partnering with a ministry is about giving just to get—that's why I spent so much time in earlier lessons talking about your heart motives being more important than your gift.
 - C. But when your heart is right, partnering with a ministry to help it get the Gospel out is going to open doors for you and cause you to prosper.
- X. Giving is a powerful part of tapping into God's prosperity.
- A. Several different things help determine the harvest you get from your giving—like the attitude you give with, where you give, and trusting God as your source—so there isn't a formula.

- B. But you can't really prosper in God's economy until you start sowing into His kingdom.
- C. I recommend you do it regularly by tithing and giving from the first fruits of your income.
- D. That way, you won't spend your money before you can give, and end up missing out on God's supernatural supply.
- E. As you become a deliberate, on-purpose giver—and you do it motivated by love—it will start a flow of God's blessings into your life that will cause you to prosper like never before.

DISCIPLESHIP

QUESTIONS

1. Read Philippians 1:3-5. Why was Paul thanking the Philippians?

2. What is another word for *fellowship*?

3. What were the Philippians helping him do?

4. Read Philippians 4:11-13. Why wasn't Paul interested in only getting his needs met?

5. According to Philippians 4:15, the Philippian church was the _____ church that supported him when he departed Macedonia.

- A. First
- B. Best
- C. Largest
- D. Only
- E. Friendliest

6. Read Philippians 4:19. Even though God desires to bless both believers and unbelievers, who is the verse specifically talking about?

7. True or false: The Philippians were giving to Paul because they were receiving from him.

8. What's one reason Andrew prays that God blesses his partners and causes them to abound?

9. True or false: A giver has just enough money to advance God's kingdom.

10. Read Proverbs 18:16. "**Gift**" in this verse refers to what?

- A. A birthday gift
- B. A monetary gift
- C. A spiritual gift
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

11. What does this kind of gift do?

12. For what purpose did the Queen of Sheba give a gift to King Solomon?

13. Why did she want access to King Solomon?

14. Like the Queen of Sheba, what's one reason you should give to a church or minister?

15. To "sow where you want to go" means what?

16. What will that do for you?

17. You will _____ be more faithful to God than He is to you.

18. Why did Andrew spent so much time in earlier lessons talking about your heart motives being more important than your gift?

19. What things help determine the harvest you get from your giving?

20. True or false: You can't really prosper in God's economy until you start sowing into His kingdom.

21. Why should you regularly tithe and give from your first fruits?

22. To start a flow of God's blessings into your life that will cause you to prosper like never before, what do you need to do?

—SCRIPTURES—

PHILIPPIANS 4:19

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 1:3-5

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, [4] Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, [5] For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-17

But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. [11] Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. [12] I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. [13] I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. [14] Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. [15] Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. [16] For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. [17] Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

PSALM 35:27

Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

MATTHEW 5:45

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

3 JOHN 2

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

DEUTERONOMY 8:18

But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

PROVERBS 18:16

A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

PROVERBS 15:27

He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

—SCRIPTURES—

PROVERBS 19:6

Many will intreat the favour of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.

1 KINGS 10:6-7

And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. [7] Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

1 KINGS 10:10

And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

1 KINGS 10:13

And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

1 JOHN 3:17

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?