

Give and Go
Philippians 4:15-19
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I. Me and You v.15

a. Philippians

- i. By the time of Paul's arrival, Philippi had become an "urban political center" (Fee, *Philippians*, 26; see Acts 16:11–15). , Paul, Silas, and Timothy established the church at Philippi—probably in AD 49 (Fee, *Philippians*, 27)—starting with Lydia's baptism.
- ii. Philippians." Rarely does he ever do this, that is, address the readers of his letters by name. In fact, the only times he does so are in letters where he rebukes them and then softens the rebuke by addressing them as "Corinthians" (2 Cor 6:11) or "Galatians" (Gal 3:1).
 1. Thus Paul in using this word, which is a monstrum, "monstrosity," in Greek, was nevertheless courteously respecting a feeling of justifiable pride on the part of the Philippians by acknowledging the Latin character of their city and the dignity that was theirs as Roman citizens
- iii. Paul reminds them that they know and he knows as well that (ὅτι) they had sent things to meet his needs when he was in Thessalonica. This is an amazing fact, and it shows the immense concern the Philippians had for Paul, their loyalty to him, and their commitment to the advancement of the gospel he preached. For when Paul, after founding the church in Philippi, left there, he went immediately to Thessalonica, a city only a short distance away, to carry on his mission (Acts 17:1–9). Thus, soon after their own beginning as a church, the Philippians began their pattern of giving by sending help to relieve the pressure of his needs
- iv. Paul had developed a comprehensive theology of stewardship. Its most thorough statement occurs in 2 Cor 8–9, where he solicited support for a famine relief offering. He stated that the Macedonians led the way in giving, and most likely the primary church to give was Philippi (2 Cor 8:1–5). Their giving was exemplary because they gave out of "rock-bottom poverty."

b. Preaching the Gospel

- i. In the very beginning of their Christian experience (Acts 16) when Paul left Macedonia they alone shared with him **in the matter of giving and receiving**. And again when Paul was in Thessalonica on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1) and experienced definite need, the Philippians **sent** him **aid** twice.
- ii. The reference is clearly shown by the succeeding words to be to the first preaching of the gospel in Macedonia, about ten years before the composition of this letter. *It is equivalent to 'when the gospel was first*

proclaimed among you.’ He alludes, no doubt, to money supplied before or at his departure from Macedonia (Acts 17:14)

- iii. Paul commended the church for the way it supported him. Its support was unique. It was the only Macedonian church to support him. Paul disclosed one of the reasons he remembered the Philippians fondly “from the first day until now” (1:5). When they first heard the gospel, they saw its implications for others and shared in its propagation. Since Paul committed his life to the progress of the gospel (1:12) and measured his success by the proclamation of the gospel (1:18), their giving promoted a natural friendship. The early days in Macedonia had been difficult. Paul suffered physically in Philippi. In Thessalonica his work caused an uproar (1 Thess 2:9), which resulted in his departing the city (Acts 17:5–9). These difficulties were only external. Perhaps the greatest difficulty was that the other churches failed to help him. In this, Philippi was different! From the very first it supported his work, evidencing the genuineness of salvation and love for Paul.

- c. No One Shared - became partner with me,’ or ‘entered into partnership with me.’

- i. The other churches failed in their obligations to the gospel. Paul called the Philippian support a matter “of giving and receiving” (4:15). When he stated that other churches did not support him, he used the common word for “fellowship” (*koinōneō*) which so characterizes this book. Subtly and without complaining, Paul pointed out that others had received but not given. They had a one-way relationship in the gospel. Paul expected rejection and loneliness in his work; it came as no surprise. He was, however, troubled for two reasons. First, when they received they had a responsibility to share. Second, they missed the spiritual blessings that came from giving. The Philippians understood both principles and acted on them. That brought joy to Paul’s heart.
- ii. The sense “to give a share,” which is rare in secular Greek, is more common in the NT especially in Paul. The two-sided meaning is obviously present in Phil. 4:15, where Paul commends the community for demonstrating its fellowship with him. Between apostle and community there is a reciprocal relation. The community shares in the spiritual gifts of the apostle and it grants him a share in its own material goods.
- iii. It expresses at the deepest level the fellowship between the original Jewish Christian congregation and the Gentile missionary congregations. Thus the collection has for Paul a religious significance. The fellowship ἐν Χριστῷ between the two parts of Christianity (Gl. 2:9)
- iv. Again the gathering of money is not the main thing for the apostle. What really counts is the fellowship of Christians expressed in the collection.

- d. But You

- i. Giving and Receiving

1. Receiving a **condition of being in receipt of, *receiving***, as a commercial term to receive or accept an object or benefit for which the initiative rests with the giver, but the focus of attention in the transfer is upon the receiver
2. The matter is expressed in a mercantile metaphor. The Philippians, by their contributions, had ‘opened an account’ with him
 - a. “giving,” and λήμψις, “receiving,” are words that belong to the commercial vocabulary of the ancient world and refer to the debit and credit sides of the ledger. They invariably refer to financial transactions
3. He understood well that genuine giving seeks no personal benefits. He lived that way, and so did they. Nevertheless, giving brings blessings to both giver and receiver. First, Paul stated what he received from their gifts. Further, using financial language, Paul stated that his need was met. He had sufficient resources to carry on God’s work
4. no other church entered into a partnership with me in an accounting of expenditures and receipts except you alone.” Paul tells the Philippians that they were uniquely his partners in his missionary endeavors. Once again there is evidence that Paul deliberately tempers his thanks to the Philippians in the fact that he employs so many financial terms when he refers here to the assistance that they gave him

II. Give and Go v.16-18

- a. Thessalonica - Paul founded a congregation here **Ac 17:1, 11, 13; Phil 4:16; 2 Ti 4:10.**
 - i. καὶ ἐν Θεσσαλονίκη: ‘even in Thessalonica.’ A Macedonian city, near Philippi, where a church was founded by Paul before his departure into Achaia (Acts 17:1–9); yet the contribution came from Philippi, and not from Thessalonica, and that while he was actually *in* Thessalonica
 - ii. His statement in 4:10, however, reveals that at some time their support ceased. Perhaps the deeper meaning of their giving enhanced Paul’s joy when they gave again.
 - iii. Paul’s reference to the labor and hardship he experienced in Thessalonica, working day and night so as not to be a burden to anyone, paying all his own expenses by working at his trade by day and preaching the gospel by night (cf. 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8), implies that his mission there was an extended one. This then gave the Philippians opportunity to learn of the apostle’s strenuous schedule of activities and a chance to make it lighter. They did so by sending gifts, welcomed or not, to meet his needs

- b. Gift- In Paul only here and Eph. 4:8. Not the particular gift which they had sent, but the gift as related to his characteristic attitude,
 - i. **Need - that which is lacking and needed, need, lack, want, difficulty** that which is lacking and particularly needed
 - ii. They are not, however, to understand him as implying that he desired their gifts principally for his own relief or enrichment. He prizes their gift chiefly because their sending it will be fruitful in blessing to them. In vs. 11 he disclaimed the sense of want. Here he disclaims the desire for the gift in itself considered
- c. For my Needs
- d. Gift
 - i. I don't seek a gift
 - 1. **Seek - to be seriously interested in or have a strong desire for**
 - ii. Profit
 - 1. Profit - Profit - **advantage, gain, profit not the gift, but the advantage** (accruing to the Philippians their generous giving
 - a. But in light of the meaning of its cognates καρπεῖαι, "profits," and καρπίζεσθαι, "to reap the return," and the present context in which it appears, καρπός must be understood in the sense of "profit" or "credit" (see MM, 321). And the participle that modifies it, πλεονάζοντα, lit. "increasing,"
 - 2. Your Account- Paul desires that the reward of blessing (καρπὸν, cf. καρπός in the sense of consequence) may accrue to the Philippians because of the support which they have given him
 - a. Account - *in settlement of a mutual account of giving and receiving*, 'of debit and credit') **Phil 4:15** but it may equally point to the blessing which is continually accruing to faithful ministry in the richer development of Christian character.
 - iii. Received in Full
 - 1. Full - **to receive in full what is due, to be paid in full, receive in full**
 - 2. Abundance - For Paul himself, who thankfully acknowledges that he is greatly blessed, material Phil. 4:12
 - 3. Though Paul was content no matter what the circumstances, he was nevertheless grateful for the help the Philippians sent with Epaphroditus. Because they gave of their means they shared with the apostle in his **troubles**; they did something about his problem.
 - a. Since these people had already helped him so much, Paul did not want them to think he was still looking for more from them. He had received from the Philippians full payment, all the money they had sent, so he was then abounding and was **amply supplied**

they are a fragrant odor, a sacrifice that God accepts and that pleases him.” Suddenly Paul turns from the vocabulary of banking to the language of worship in order to finish his description of this gift from the Philippians

III. Give Back v.18b.-19

- a. Fragment Aroma - Fragrant Aroma **the quality of that affects the mind as with an odor, odor** fig in reference to the Philippians’ gift **Phil 4:18**, to Jesus’ sacrifice of himself **Eph 5:2**,
 - i. The first of these is a common expression taken over from the ot. It pictures God as literally taking pleasure in the smell of the sacrifices offered by his people (Cf Gen 8:21). Symbolically it refers to the quality an offering must possess in order for it to be pleasing and acceptable to God (Exod 29:18, 25, 41; Lev 1:9, 13; Ezek 20:41; cf. Eph 5:2).
 - ii. Acceptable **to being pleasing because of being approved, pleasing, acceptable**, of things:
 - iii. Sacrifice - **that which is offered**
 - 1. First, God was pleased. In terms reminiscent of Rom 12:1–2, Paul pointed out that their gift was an acceptable Christian sacrifice. Like Rom 12, this passage teaches that physical activity can become spiritual in motivation and importance. Romans states that dedicating the body to God is a spiritual act. Here, Paul revealed that giving was a spiritual exercise. Since Paul used the language of the Old Testament sacrificial system, perhaps even his terms subtly countered the Jewish false teachers.
 - 2. The second of these terms, *θυσίαν*, “a sacrifice,” again is a common ot word to refer literally to the multitude of animal sacrifices offered to God (cf. Lev 1:2–13), the sacrifices of birds (Lev 1:13–17), grain (Lev 2:1–10), and the firstfruits of the harvest (Lev 2:12–13).
 - iv. Well pleasing - **pleasing, acceptable** (s. εὐαρεστέω; in the. world commonly said of things and esp. of pers. noted for their civic-minded generosity and who endeavor to do things that are pleasing Otherwise it is always used of God’s attitude towards human conduct. It is characteristic of the NT however, that only once is the judgment εὐάρεστος used retrospectively, i.e., at Phil. 4:18:
- b. God will Supply
 - i. Supply According to” means that the supply is suited to the resource and like it in kind and extent. God, therefore, bountifully blesses those who give with glorious provision in accord with his glory and for his purposes

1. The second benefit to the believers was that they would experience God's provision. Just as God had met Paul's needs in the work of the gospel, so God would meet their needs. The context of this promise deserves careful attention. Paul spoke to those who actively supported the work of the Lord. His statement of 4:15 indicates what he meant: God meets the needs of those who give to him
- ii. Needs - The needs that are under consideration here are similar to those kinds of needs that Paul himself had experienced due to hardships, suffering, deprivations, and afflictions (θλίψεις [v 14]) that could be alleviated only by earthly goods and services and by human associates.
 1. God would reciprocate to the Philippians. They had met Paul's needs and now God would meet theirs. ,
- iii. According to His riches – the rewarding will not be merely from his wealth, but also in a manner that befits his wealth—on a scale worthy of His wealth” (Michael, 226, italics original). Since God's wealth is limitless, it is therefore impossible to exhaust it