

Sunday, July 3, 2022

Worshipful Generosity

Philippians 4:14-19, pg. 982 in the Pew Bibles

JOY IN CONTEXT- Ends next week! Joy in Christ leading to spiritual maturity

Turn to Phil. 4:14

-Announce [Summer Psalms & Gift](#)

[Philippians 4:14-19; Stand, Read, Pray](#)

This is not a sermon on giving. It's a sermon on spiritual maturity as Paul gives testimony about the Philippians Church.

MAIN POINT- [Worshipful Generosity is a step towards Spiritual Maturity](#)

The sin, or the Fallen Condition, addressed in our text is subtle. **Read vs. 15**

When he stated that other churches did not support him, he used the common word for "fellowship" 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.

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. New American Standard Commentary

It was not a maturity that came over time... Their **step towards spiritual maturity (Main Point Slide)** was immediate! Thus Paul's statement in vs 16 (read); Thessalonica was the next town he witnessed to after Philippi. You can read about it in Acts 17, where Paul preaches Christ in the local synagogue and they freak out, seek to beat up Paul, but end up dragging a guy named Jason

to court where the famous statement “These men who have turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6) comes from & Paul had to escape by night.

We learn here that they sent funds to Paul and his team to help them out!

What’s even crazier is it wasn’t because they were rich! There might have been a few rich among them like Lydia, but collectively they were poor.

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their **extreme poverty** have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and **beyond their means**, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of **taking part** in the relief of the saints. 2 Corinthians 8:1-4

They gave out of their “extreme poverty” & “beyond their means”, which serves as an example for us.

The first step to understanding **Worshipful Generosity being a step towards Spiritual Maturity** is the Biblical understanding of **Fellowship**. Note the word “taking part”. It’s the biblical word for Fellowship and it’s all over the Epistle of Philippians. Paul bookends this letter with this idea.

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your **partnership** in the gospel from the first day until now. Philippians 1:3-5

Note verse 14.

Fellowship; an association involving close mutual relations and involvement—
‘close association, fellowship. Greek-English Lexicon

Our journey begins with Fellowship with Christ- We share in, Fellowship, Commune in, Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. This gives us new life. We then receive the Holy Spirit, who teaches us how to live what we have received by

grace. Now there is a connection, or fellowship between you and I; The Spirit in you and me which we call "the body of Christ" or The church; the gathering of Spirit-filled people of God. The logical response to all this incredible grace we have received is worship, yet not simply in words, but in deeds as well.

I appeal to you **therefore**, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Romans 12:1

It's not just your money, It's all of you- Which includes your resources.

This is Paul's point here as he testifies of the church in Philippi and their generosity. It's a participation, or fellowshiping in, I have received new life therefore I give my life to Jesus AND the things Jesus gave his life for- The Church. It's a "giving and receiving" life

MAIN POINT- Worshipful Generosity is a step towards Spiritual Maturity

Read vs 15

#1. Worshipful generosity understands the interconnectivity or Fellowship of the Christian life! And be sue of this...

#2. Worshipful generosity invests their resources in Heavenly things.

Vs. 17- It's not what wants *FROM* them, but *FOR* them.

The terms throughout this text are financial or accounting terms. It's like Paul is speaking to them as an investment banker.

When we invest in the Kingdom, we receive a part of the fruit that takes place in other peoples efforts. It's investing in stocks that bear heavenly dividends.

This perspective is right and good in the eyes of God. If fact, it's received as WORSHIP!

Read vs. 18-19

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. 2 Corinthians 9:11

Application

1. This doesn't have to be slow process. Like the Philippians immediate response, you can step towards this today!
2. Remember, based on the Fellowship we have in Christ, we are called to share our of us, which includes giving.
3. Invest in Heavenly things as a response in worship.
4. As you step, watch your growth in Christ become exponential!

MAIN POINT- Worshipful Generosity is a step towards Spiritual Maturity

Communion & Offering

For Paul the bread and wine are vehicles of the presence of Christ, just as the Jewish altar is a pledge of the presence of God. Partaking of bread and wine is union (Fellowship) with the heavenly Christ.¹

¹ Hauck, F. (1964-). [κοινός, κοινωνός, κοινωνέω, κοινωνία, συγκοινωνός, συγκοινωνέω, κοινωνικός, κοινώω](#). G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*

Bible Study Notes







Philippians 4:14-19

Main Point- Worshipful Generosity equals spiritual maturity

Key Words-Giving, receiving, needs (x2), gift (x2)

Key Verse-Vs. 15→ Giving & Receiving

FCF- Not responding to what we have received in generosity

 General  God  Key Words  Command  Truth  Sin

[14] Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. [15] And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. [16] Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. [17] Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. [18] I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. [19] And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Initial Thoughts

Vs. 14-Context from previous thought; Gratitude for their care and concern

"Again, Thank you... I could feel your support."

Vs. 15-No one else but y'all responded properly to the Gospel- Your receiving turned to giving.

Vs. 16-Even when I was in the next town, you helped!

Vs. 17-Money isn't why I do this, but because you gave you get dividends from my labors.

Vs. 18-What you did was an act of worship

Vs. 19-God will return your investment!

This is a narrative/testimony; no imperatives, only indicatives.

Key Words are based in financial terms- Giving, receiving, needs (x2), gift (x2),

Translations

Vs. 14

ESV- Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.

NKJV- Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress.

NASB- Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction.

NIV- Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles

CEB-Still, you did well by partnering with me in my hardship.

Message- I don't mean that your help didn't mean a lot to me—it did. It was a beautiful thing that you came alongside me in my troubles.

NLT-Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.

The word for "share" or "partner" is the word used for Fellowship, which ties into the entire text. They not only 'shared' his distress but shared in his fruit as well. (Vs. 17)

Vs. 15

ESV & NJKV-And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only.

NASB-You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

NIV-Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only

CEB- And you Philippians 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.

Message-You Philippians well know, and you can be sure I'll never forget it, that when I first left Macedonia province, venturing out with the Message, not one church helped out in the **give-and-take** of this work except you. You were the only one.

NLT- As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who gave me **financial help** when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this.

The way ESV & NJKV say "in the beginning of the Gospel" is weird. The other translations make it WAY easier to understand; in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel (NIV)

I like how The Message says "give-and-take". I do not like how NLT takes out "give and receive"

The word "shared" is the same word in vs. 14, "fellowship"

Vs. 16 Similar in all translations

Vs. 17

ESV-Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that **increases** to your **credit**.

NKJV-Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that **abounds** to your **account**.

NASB-Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the **profit** which increases to your **account**.

NIV-Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be **credited to your account**

CEB-Same as NIV

Message-Not that I'm looking for handouts, but I do want you to experience **the blessing that issues from generosity**.

NLT-I don't say this because I want a gift from you. Rather, I want you to **receive a reward for your kindness**.

I like how the other translations, when read together, give a strong sense to the financial terms being used, which corresponds to the Greek.

Vs. 18

ESV-I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

NKJV-Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

NASB-But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

NIV-I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

CEB-But I have received everything in full, and I have an abundance. I am fully supplied, having received from Epaphroditus^b what you provided—a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

Message-The gifts you sent with Epaphroditus were more than enough, like a sweet-smelling sacrifice roasting on the altar, filling the air with fragrance, pleasing God no end.

NLT-At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God.

Their giving was worship! If we could only see giving in such a light!

Vs. 19

ESV-And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

NKJV-Same as ESV

NASB-^^^

NIV-^^^

CEB-^^^

Message-You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus.

NLT- And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.

Sowing and reaping!

People in the Text

We learn a lot about the church in Philippi and their example in giving when cross referencing to 2 Cor. 8:1-5; their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity.

Epaphroditus was the guy who brought the encouragement and gift, being a "sent one" from Philippi. He almost died in the process (Phil 2:25-29)

Cross References

[14] Yet it was kind of you [e]to share(1) my trouble. [15] And you Philippians yourselves know that [f]in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, [g]no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. [16] Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. [17] [h]Not that I seek the gift, but I seek [i]the fruit that increases to your credit.(2) [18] I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, [j]having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, [k]a fragrant offering, [l]a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. [19] And my God [m]will supply every need of yours [n]according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Footnotes; (1) 4:14 Or *have fellowship in*, (2) 4:17 Or *I seek the profit that accrues to your account*

[e]: It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all **partakers** with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. Philippians 1:7

[9] I, John, your brother and **partner** in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. Revelation 1:9

Share, Partakers, partner→ Fellowship

[f]: because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. Philippians 1:5

Paul's reference in 1:5 & 7 is book ending the letter with all references to Fellowship (see *Greek study below*)

[g]: I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way. 2 Corinthians 11:8-9

[h]:But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be. Otherwise, if some **Macedonians** come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—for being so confident. So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift you have promised, **so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction.** 2 Corinthians 9:3-5

[l]: I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. Romans 1:13

And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful. Titus 3:14

[j]: I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me. Philippians 2:25-30

[k]: And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. Genesis 8:21

And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:2

[l]: Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Hebrews 13:16

[m]: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. Psalm 23:1

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8

[n]: Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? Romans 2:4

Observations

The ideas of Fellowship w/ reaping and sowing as an act of worship is a mature believer

Summary of Passage

Spiritual maturity is shown through a life of Fellowship and worshipful generosity.

Or Fellowship and worshipful generosity are signs of spiritual maturity

Commentaries

New American Commentary

Vs. 14

In reflecting on his tribulations, Paul realized the eschatological significance of his ministry and that those who supported him participated in that themselves. Their gifts evidenced their willingness to identify with the new era inaugurated by Jesus.

Vs. 15

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.

Vs. 17

Paul commended them because their gifts were an investment. Financial terms dominate this passage.²

Vs. 18

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.

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."¹⁴ Their contribution was a "fragrant offering" to God because of its sacrifice, its Christian motivation, and its significance to the spread of the gospel.

Vs. 19

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. In the context of ministering being ministered to occurs.

² This was pointed out long ago by H. A. A. Kennedy, "The Financial Colouring of Phil. 4:15-18," *ExpTim* 12 (1900-1901): 43ff. Some of these are: "fruit," "increase," "account," and "full payment."

God, therefore, bountifully blesses those who give with glorious provision in accord with his glory and for his purposes.³

The Pulpit Commentary

Vs. 17, It is not the gift that he desires; but there is something which he longs for, and that is, charity, the fruit of the Spirit, showing itself in the generosity of the Philippians—the fruit of good works, continually increasing, and set down in heaven to their account.

He uses another metaphor: in ver. 17 the gift was fruit, now it is a sacrifice: given to the servant of God, it is in truth offered to God himself. “How high does he lift their gift!” says Chrysostom; “it is not I, he says, who have received it, but God through me.”

Vs. 19, The reward is given to his saints through union with him: “Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image from glory to glory.” In glory; that is, by setting them in glory—the glory of holiness now, the glory of eternal life hereafter.⁴

Greek Studies

Partner/ Fellowship- an association involving close mutual relations and involvement—‘close association, fellowship.’⁵

Paul uses *κοινωνία* for the religious fellowship (participation) of the believer in Christ and Christian blessings, and for the mutual fellowship of believers.

The *σύν* verbs, which are peculiar to Paul (cf. R. 8:17: *συμπάσχειν–συνδοξασθῆναι*), develop the content of this fellowship with Christ as regards both present and future (→ 806). Since there is no question of mystical absorption into Christ, this participation in Christ and fellowship with Him arise only through faith, which implies the identification of our life with His. By the very nature of the case this participation in

³ New American Commentary Melick, R. R. (1991). *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*

⁴ Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Ed.). (1909). *Philippians* (p. 159).

⁵ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*

the Son is a present possession of the Christian to salvation. Yet it is to be consummated in the future (1 Th. 4:17: σὺν κυρίῳ). As there is personal participation in Christ, so there is participation in the Gospel (1 C. 9:23) or in faith.

Paul then makes highly significant use of κοινωμία for the fellowship which arises in the Lord's Supper. Participation in Christ, which is known basically and perfectly in faith, is achieved and experienced in enhanced form, with no dogmatic implication, in the sacrament

Thus the nature of the Lord's Supper is expounded by Paul in terms of fellowship with the person of Christ, namely, κοινωμία with His body and blood. For Paul the bread and wine are vehicles of the presence of Christ, just as the Jewish altar is a pledge of the presence of God. Partaking of bread and wine is union (sharing) with the heavenly Christ.⁶

⁶ Hauck, F. (1964-). [κοινός](#), [κοινωνός](#), [κοινωνέω](#), [κοινωνία](#), [συγκοινωνός](#), [συγκοινωνέω](#), [κοινωνικός](#), [κοινώω](#). G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*