

PHILIPPIANS: DIVISION VI
THE APPRECIATION FOR GOOD CHRISTIAN
RELATIONSHIPS, [Philippians 4:10-23](#)

A. Appreciation: For a Church That Revives Its Sacrificial Giving, [Philippians 4:10-19](#)

([Philippians 4:10-19](#)) Introduction: this passage deals with stewardship, in particular the giving of money to meet the needs of ministers and missions or the spread of the gospel to the world. Remember: Paul is in prison facing the false charge of insurrection against the government. He is facing the death penalty if convicted. The Philippians had heard about his plight, and they had heard how Paul was standing fast and continuing to preach the gospel to everyone who visited him. The church was stirred to do two things: to take up a love offering and to send a man, Epaphroditus, to minister to Paul's needs.

This passage is Paul's appreciation for a church that is stirred to revive its interest in missions—stirred to begin giving *once again* to the support of God's ministers worldwide.

1. **Their giving was revived and it flourished (v.10).**
2. **Their giving was not necessary, but it was needed (v.11-14).**
3. **Their giving was distinctive: they were the only church that gave and they gave consistently (v.15-16).**
4. **Their giving was sacrificial and it was seen and rewarded by God (v.17-19).**

1. ([Philippians 4:10](#)) Stewardship— Giving: the church revived its giving and its giving flourished.

Note the words "**flourished again**" (*anethalete*): it means "**to revive again**". It is the picture of plants and flowers sprouting, shooting up, and blossoming *again*. The key word is *again*. When the church had been founded, the believers had supported Paul and his mission work on a regular basis. But for some reason they had dropped their mission support. That had probably been over ten to twelve years before (Strauss). Why they had stopped sending support to Paul is not known. However, the point to see is the glorious revival of mission support that took place in the church. They picked up the support of Paul once again, and their giving flourished and blossomed anew. The joy and rejoicing of Paul's heart can just be imagined. He says, "**I rejoiced in the Lord greatly.**"

Thought 1. Why had the church dropped its mission support of Paul? As stated, the reason is not known. In his gracious and kind way, Paul just passes over the issue by saying that he knew they cared for him, but they had just lacked opportunity to support him.

Was their lack of support.....

1. legitimate: that is, due to persecution or poverty?
2. illegitimate: that is, due to neglect and unconcern for the spread of the gospel and missions world-wide?

Being honest about the matter, it is difficult to conceive of a legitimate reason for dropping mission support. It is especially difficult to see a reason that would last as long as the ten to twelve years that the Philippian church had failed to support Paul. Whether legitimate or not, we all need to search our hearts about our own personal support of God's ministers and missions world-wide.

- a. The gospel must be supported.
- b. The gospel must be carried world-wide.
- c. The need of the hour is for churches to awaken to the world-wide mission of Christ.
- d. Preachers, that is, ministers, missionaries, teachers, and evangelists—all of God's appointed preachers and teachers—must be supported as they carry the gospel to the world.

Note this: it has been centuries heaped upon centuries since Jesus Christ came to die for the sins of men and to give them life. Yet, look at how little has been done—at how many have still not heard or believed.

⇒ Where are the laborers to carry the message? Where are those who actually pray for laborers as He instructed? Look at how many stay at home and then look at the few out in the communities and fields of the world ministering and witnessing to the lost. Is this God's method? His will? Thought and honesty give us the answer. The problem is not that we don't know the truth. We know the truth: we know that we are to go. The problem is that we do not go. We are just unwilling to commit ourselves to go. We are unwilling to leave the comfort and security of our homes and offices, jobs and families to go into the communities and nations of the world.

The need of the hour is for laborers—laborers who will do exactly what Christ commanded: **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** ([Mark 16:15](#)). And if we cannot go, then we must commit ourselves to support those who are willing to go!

"Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few" ([Matthew 9:37](#)).

"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" ([Luke 10:2](#)).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" ([Luke 14:33](#)).

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" ([John 4:35-36](#)).

2. ([Philippians 4:11-14](#)) Stewardship— Ministers— Provision: the church's giving was not necessary, but it was needed.

Very simply, what this means is that God will take care of His dear servant even if churches do not adequately care for him. Down through the centuries most churches have not adequately cared for their ministers. This has been part of the sufferings most ministers have to bear in order to carry the gospel forth to a world reeling in desperate need. Yet, God's dear servants have gone forth despite whatever suffering they have had to bear.

Note three significant points.

1. Giving is not necessary because God teaches His servants to be content, no matter the circumstances ([Phil. 4:11-12](#)). The word "content" (*autarkēs*) means to be self-sufficient; to be completely detached from circumstances. Note the word "learned." It was a learning experience. Paul had to learn to conquer circumstances and not to let circumstances worry him.

But note: he had learned contentment. He says three descriptive things:

- a. that he knew how to be abased (to live humbly with little) and how to abound (to live with plenty and prosperity).
- b. that he knew the *secret* to facing every situation, whether being full or going hungry.
- c. that he knew how to abound (live in plenty) and how to suffer need.

Lehman Strauss says:

*"In those early days of my Christian experience I could not see how some Christians I knew could be content with so little of this world's goods. I sincerely trust that I am learning the secret. From what I see about me I do not hesitate to say that it is a secret many Christians have yet to learn. Paul needed to learn it. He said, 'I have learned....' The lesson of contentment was one he learned by degrees in varying circumstances. As a young unbelieving Jew, he had no want insofar as this world's possessions are concerned. He did not always know the divine provision of satisfaction, but after he was saved he came to learn it, not in the academic classroom, but as the result of a lengthy experience of trials and discipline, 'I have learned' is the language of a good student. Have you learned to be satisfied with your place and position and possessions in this life?" (*Devotional Studies in Philippians*, p.321.)*

What was the secret Paul had learned? It is the next point.

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" ([Phil. 4:11](#)).

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" ([1 Tim. 6:6-10](#)).

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" ([Hebrews 13:5](#)).

2. Giving is not necessary because the minister can do all things through Christ who strengthens him ([Phil. 4:13](#)).

Note the verse:

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" ([Phil. 4:13](#)).

God's servant (minister) can be content in all circumstances no matter how severe they are—through Christ—but he cannot be content in any circumstance apart from Christ.

Note exactly what the verse says:

- a. "I can...through Christ"
- b. "Christ who strengthens me"

Christ does not do everything for the believer; neither does the believer do everything for himself. Both Christ and the believer have a part in conquering circumstances. The believer declares, "**I can,**" and he gets up and faces the circumstances head on. It is then that Christ steps in and strengthens the believer. Christ infuses strength into the believer *while the believer* is tackling the problem.

Facing reality, there is no need for strength unless the believer is facing and struggling against the circumstance.

- a. The believer does not need extra strength to arise and face the circumstance. Any believer, no matter who he is, has the strength himself to arise and face any circumstance that confronts him.
- b. The believer does not even need strength to begin struggling to conquer and solve the circumstance. He has the strength himself to fight against the circumstance that confronts him.

It is only when the believer has exhausted what he can do that a special infusion of the strength of Christ is needed. Christ steps in when our strength is no longer sufficient. It is then that He is able to demonstrate His wonderful love and care for His dear servant.

Note something else as well: all praise and glory is then due Christ and not man. Giving is not necessary; God will provide and care for His dear servant.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me, Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37).

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8).

"That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man" (Ephes. 3:16).

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

"So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:6).

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him" (Psalm 28:7).

"But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God" (Psalm 40:17).

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).

3. However, giving is needed, and it is work well done (Phil. 4:14). The minister needs daily provision and the gospel needs to be supported so that it can be carried around the world. Money and support are greatly needed. They are not necessary; God can take care of His dear servants and the gospel with or without any church. But His will is for every single church to become involved in supporting His servants and world-wide missions. God can do the job without us; God can bypass us and put us on the shelf just like a useless book. But He wants His people to give and give generously. When they do, they perform a work that is well done, that is commendable and noble.

"I have showed you all things how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" ([Galatians 6:9-10](#)).

3. ([Philippians 4:15-16](#)) **Stewardship— Minister— Missions: the church's giving was distinctive—they were the only church that gave and they gave consistently.**

This is a point that desperately needs to be heeded by churches everywhere. When the Philippian church was founded, it underwrote the ministry of Paul and it was consistent in its support. **But note:** it was the only church that was supporting Paul. The unfaithfulness of the other churches cut Paul's heart. This is clear from his words that no church supported him—none except the Philippian church.

It was while he was in Thessalonica that the Philippians had been consistent in their mission support. And how he had needed their support in Thessalonica, for it was there that he had faced severe persecution ([Acts 17:1f](#)).

Thought 1. Imagine! Just one church supporting Paul and his mission to the world! And that church was a church that had just been founded. Two questions desperately need to be asked by all of us.

- 1) What are we doing for the Paul's and missions of today?
- 2) Have we made a commitment to support any minister or mission and backed off the commitment?

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven" ([Matthew 19:23](#)).

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" ([Mark 4:19](#)).

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" ([1 Tim. 6:7](#)).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" ([1 Tim. 6:9](#)).

"For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others" ([Psalm 49:10](#)).

"Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" ([Proverbs 23:5](#)).

"For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?" ([Proverbs 27:24](#)).

"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" ([Jeremiah 17:11](#)).

4. ([Philippians 4:17-19](#)) **Stewardship— Mission: the church's giving was sacrificial, and it was seen and rewarded by God.**

The gift cost the Philippian church. They were a church that gave, not just a percentage (so to speak) but sacrificially.

This is seen in two points. Their gift is said to be a definite *sacrifice*, acceptable and well pleasing to God. Their gift is also said to have created a *need* among themselves. But Paul answers them, "God shall supply all your needs...." ([Phil. 4:19](#)).

Note three points.

1. God saw who sacrificially gave to support Paul and He deposited a reward to their account ([Phil. 4:17](#)). This was what Paul desired in giving: not a gift for himself, but a reward for the giver. Paul knew that God saw and rewarded the believers who gave sacrificially; therefore, Paul desired believers to give and to give sacrificially.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" ([Matthew 6:20](#)).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" ([Matthew 19:21](#)).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" ([Luke 12:33](#)).

"Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" ([Luke 18:30](#)).

2. God was well pleased with the giving of the Philippians ([Phil. 4:18](#)). Paul compares it to an Old Testament sacrifice which a person offered up to God. The person's sacrificial commitment to God was just like the *pleasant smell* of the animal sacrifice: it was acceptable. The sacrificial commitment was a sweet or pleasant smell to God. So it was and is with sacrificial giving. The commitment of the gift is acceptable to God just like the pleasant smell of an animal sacrifice.

"But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God" ([Phil. 4:18](#)).

"But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" ([Hebrews 13:16](#)).

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, and holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 2:5](#)).

3. God promised to supply all the needs of His dear people ([Phil. 4:19](#)).

This is one of the great promises of Scripture:

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" ([Phil. 4:19](#)).

- a. **There is the great Provider: *God Himself*.** No matter what the need is, the need is not greater than God. God can and will meet the need. But note the pronoun "**my**." It is "**my God**" who shall provide for the needs. A person has to make sure...
 - 1. that the God who can really provide for needs is his God.
 - 2. that he knows God personally—well enough that he can trust and depend upon God to meet his need.
- b. **There is the great assurance of provision: "my God shall supply."** There is no question about the provision being supplied. God is God; therefore, He is able to provide and He will supply whatever provision His dear child needs.
- c. **There is the great provision: "all your needs."** This promise does not refer only to the physical needs for food, clothing, and shelter. It refers to mental, emotional, social, and spiritual needs. It refers to any need that arises, engulfs, or confronts the believer. No need will be omitted or overlooked. No need is too big or too little. No need is unimportant—not to God, not if His dear child is really experiencing the need.
 - a. There may be a lesson for the believer to learn before the need can be met, some lesson such as more trust, endurance, love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, or control.
 - b. There may be some testimony that the believer needs to share as to the strength of Christ which carries us through trials.

But no matter what the trial or need is, God will supply all our needs.

- d. **There is the great *resource*: "according to His riches in glory."** Take all the riches and wealth, glory and majesty of heaven—it is all available to meet the needs of God's dear people. There is no limit—not even a fraction—to the great resources at God's disposal. God can provide for any need.
- e. **There is the great Mediator: "By Christ Jesus."** This is critical to note, for God does nothing apart from Christ. No person can approach God without coming to Him through Christ Jesus. This is the key to having our needs met: surrendering our lives to Jesus Christ, and asking God to meet our needs in Him. We must always remember that God has only one child: the Lord Jesus Christ. God loves Christ so much that He will do anything for the person who honors Christ by sacrificially giving to share the glorious news about Him.

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" ([2 Cor. 9:8](#)).

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" ([Luke 6:38](#)).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" ([Ephes. 3:20](#)).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" ([Phil. 4:19](#)).

"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" ([1 Tim. 1:14](#)).

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" ([2 Tim. 4:8](#)).

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" ([2 Peter 1:11](#)).

"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" ([Isaiah 41:10](#)).

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B. Appreciation: For God and for Fellow Christians, [Philippians 4:20-23](#)

([Philippians 4:20-23](#)) Introduction: the great *Letter of Philippians* is now being closed. But before it is closed, one more thing must be done. Appreciation must be expressed—appreciation for God and for fellow Christian believers.

1. **God is to be praised as God and as our Father (v.20).**
2. **Believers are to salute every saint (v.21-22).**
3. **Believers are to wish the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ upon each other (v.23).**

1. ([Philippians 4:20](#)) God— Praise: God is to be praised as God and as our Father.

1. First, God is to be praised as God. He is God, the Creator and Sovereign Ruler of the universe. God has made all, and He rules and governs all.

- a. He is the only wise God who dwells in majesty and glory, dominion and power ([Jude 24-25](#)).
- b. He is the only One who possesses the bottomless depth of wisdom and knowledge, who possesses all the riches of wisdom and knowledge. He is the One whose judgments are unsearchable, and whose ways are past finding out. He is the One who has a mind that no man can know and who has such wisdom that no man can be a counsellor to Him: "**For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen**" ([Romans 11:36](#)).
- c. He is the only One who reigns and is clothed with majesty and strength, whose very voice is the embodiment of power and of creation. Before Him are both honor and majesty ([Psalm 29:4](#); [Psalm 93:1](#); [Psalm 96:6](#)).
- d. He is the only One whose glory is like a devouring fire ([Exodus 24:17](#)). He is the One whose glory is declared by the heavens, and whose handiwork is shown by the firmament ([Psalm 19:1](#)).

An eternity of declaration could be proclaimed about God. God is God, and because He is God, He is to be praised as God.

2. God is to be praised as *our Father*. Imagine! The Sovereign Majesty of the universe has humbled Himself so much that He has adopted us as His sons and daughters. Just think about the fact. He is the Sovereign Power not only of this earth, but of the whole universe.

Yet.....

1. we have criticized, grumbled, and complained about His rule.
2. we have cursed His very name.
3. we have rebelled and rejected Him.
4. we have questioned and denied Him, and even scoffed at the very idea of Him.
5. we have deliberately disobeyed Him.
6. we have chosen to live as we please and to do our own thing instead of following Him.

Just think about our attitude and behavior toward God—toward Him who is the Ruler of the universe in all its glory and vastness. Yet, He has not wiped us out; He has not destroyed us. On the contrary, He has sent His Son into the world to declare that He loves the world and that He wants to reconcile us to Himself. How? Through the death of His Son Jesus Christ. God wants to adopt men and women as sons and daughters through faith in the death of His Son.

This is the *great humility (or condescension) and mercy of God*—that He, as the Sovereign Ruler of the universe whom we have rejected and cursed so much, would still save and adopt us and let us call Him Father.

The great condescension of God demands one thing: that we praise and glorify Him *as our Father for ever and ever*.

"After the manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" ([Matthew 6:9](#)).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" ([Romans 8:15-17](#)).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" ([1 Cor. 6:20](#)).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" ([Galatians 4:4-6](#)).

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" ([Hebrews 13:15](#)).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" ([1 Peter 2:9](#)).

2. (Philippians 4:21-22) Brotherhood— Greeting— Prejudice— Partiality: believers are to salute every saint, that is, every true believer.

"Saint" (*hagion*) means those who are separated or set apart unto God; those who are different from the person who lives for the world, for its possessions and pleasures. **Note: every saint is to be greeted.** There is to be no discrimination or favoritism shown.

Among saints there is to be.....

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| a. no clique | g. no neglect |
| b. no ignoring | h. no snubbing |
| c. no downgrading | i. no separation |
| d. no withdrawal | j. no avoiding |
| e. no sense of superiority | k. no sense of pride |
| f. no sense of super-spirituality | l. no sense of being better |

Poverty, education, handicap, unattractiveness, clothing, social standing, employment, race, nationality—nothing is to cause believers to discriminate or to show partiality and favoritism. All saints are equally acceptable to God. Therefore, all saints are to be greeted by all believers.

1. Christian leaders are to greet every saint. Note that "**all the brothers**" with Paul send their greetings. This apparently refers to the ministers who accompanied and served with Paul in his ministry—men such as Timothy and Luke. Paul does not name them, so we do not know who they were. The point to note is that the Christian leaders are to take the lead in greeting *every saint*. If the leader shows discrimination and favoritism, then others in the church will do the same. The minister and other leaders must always demonstrate love, interest, and care *for all*.

2. All the saints, including government officials, are to greet every saint. Caesar's household does not necessarily refer to members of Caesar's family. The term is very similar to what we call civil servants, or government employees. As in our day, Rome had its government employees scattered all over the world. But note: Paul was in Rome, so this means that some government officials had been reached for Christ. The lesson for us is that humility must be demonstrated even by those in the echelons of government, no matter how high their position is. Even if a person is in Caesar's household, in the highest position of government, he must walk humbly before God and greet all the saints, even the lowest saint.

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" ([Phil. 2:3-4](#)).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" ([1 Peter 5:5-6](#)).

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" ([Matthew 18:4](#)).

"And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" ([Luke 22:25-26](#)).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" ([Romans 12:3](#)).

"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" ([Romans 12:16](#)).

3. ([Philippians 4:23](#)) Grace: believers are to wish the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ upon each other.

([Ephesians 1:2](#)) Grace (*charis*): probably the most meaningful word in the language of men. The Bible means something far more than men mean by grace.

To men the word "grace" means three things.

1. Grace is that something, that quality within a thing, that is beautiful or joyful. It may be the fragrance of a flower, the rich green of the grass, the beauty of a lovely person.
2. Grace is anything that has loveliness. It may be a thought, an act, a word, a person.
3. Grace is a gift, a favor that someone might extend to a friend. The favor is always freely done, expecting nothing in return, and the favor is always done for a friend.

In light of this, grace means two very significant things.

1. Grace means all the favors and gifts of God. It means all the good and perfect gifts of God, all the good and beneficial things He gives us and does for us, whether physical, material, or spiritual ([James 1:17](#)).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" ([Ephes. 1:7](#)).

"That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" ([Ephes. 2:7](#)).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" ([Phil. 4:19](#)).

"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" ([1 Tim. 1:14](#)).

2. Grace means the favor of God showered upon men—men who did not deserve His favor. When the early Christians looked at what God had done for men, they had to add a deeper and much richer meaning to the word *grace*. For God had saved sinners, those who had acted against Him.

Grace became the kindness and love that God freely gives to His *enemies*—men who are.....

1. "without strength" ([Romans 5:6](#)).
2. "ungodly" ([Romans 5:6](#)).
3. "sinners" ([Romans 5:8](#)).
4. "enemies" ([Romans 5:10](#)).

No other word so expresses the depth and richness of the heart and mind of God. This is the distinctive difference between God's grace and man's grace. Whereas man sometimes does favors for his friends and thereby can be said to be gracious, God has done a thing unheard of among men: He has given His very own Son to die for His enemies ([Romans 5:8-10](#)).

a. God's grace is not earned. It is something completely undeserved and unmerited.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" ([Ephes. 2:8-9](#)).

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:4-5](#)).

b. God's grace is the free gift of God. God extends His grace out toward man.

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" ([Romans 3:24](#)).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" ([Ephes. 2:4-5](#)).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" ([Titus 2:11-14](#)).

c. God's grace is the only way man can be saved.

"If through the offence of one [Adam] many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" ([Romans 5:15](#)).

"I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ" ([1 Cor. 1:4](#)).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" ([2 Cor. 8:9](#)).

"[Salvation] which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" ([Titus 3:6-7](#)).