

Week 8 notes Philippians 4:10-23

It is difficult to write these notes, because I have yet to teach this week's lesson. But since it is our last week together, I want you to have at least a brief overview of our last session together.

As we stand firm in truth, unwavering in our perseverance, we have available to us the peace, power, and provision of God. Last week we explored the peace of God. This week we conclude with the power of God and the provision of God—two areas often misunderstood by believers.

The Power of God. Paul is concluding his letter with heartfelt thanks for the supplies the church has sent to him. But he does not want them to think he is only interested in the supplies, so he writes about his contentment in all circumstances. The word *contentment* is an interesting word in the Greek. It means *contained* and secular Greek often uses it to mean self-sufficient. It means a person has the resources within himself to meet his own needs. BUT Paul is saying, our contentment is not our own strength or our own inner resources, rather it is the strength and resources of **Christ in us**. Paul has **learned** contentment by living in a multiplicity of circumstances. For Paul and for us, Christ in us is sufficient to weather any storm, to live victoriously in any circumstance, and to accomplish anything God asks of us. Again, we must remember that we participate through dependent /responsibility—totally dependent on the strength of Christ in us, yet totally surrendered to trust and obey Him.

The Provision of God. Paul views the gift from the Philippians as both an investment and a sacrifice. As an investment because there is a spiritual return on all we give to the Lord. God is NOT obligated to return in like kind, but he does give a spiritual return, and He is faithful with our needs. Paul also sees their gift as a sacrifice—a pleasing offering to God, a gift that honors God. Verse 19 is a familiar verse. Paul is assured that God will meet every need they have. Verse 19 is **personal**. “**And MY God...**” God is not some far off, fickle God, holding out on us until we squirm. He is a personal God, one who is intimately acquainted with us...and our needs. Verse 19 is also **providential**. Providential means **to see beforehand**. God knows our needs...all of them...even before we do and He is actively at work in our lives, moving people and circumstances to meet every need. *All of our needs* include physical, material, emotional, and spiritual needs. Sometimes we need tires on the car, but sometimes we need peace of mind even more than tires. God knows each need and is moving to meet them. Finally, God’s provision is **plentiful**. “*According to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*” The phrase *according to* means in *proportion to*. God is not giving to us OUT of His riches. He is giving to us in proportion to His riches. He is not dipping into a shallow well with a thimble, rather He is pouring out buckets full of blessings from an infinite ocean. This is not “name it and claim it” theology—asking for whatever we want and expecting God to give it, or expecting God to give endless wealth, health, and prosperity. God supplies our needs, and we trust Him as the sparrow trusts Him: trusting His wisdom, His goodness, His character, and His Word.

Philippians is indeed a joyful letter. But Joy is a work of the Holy Spirit within us as we surrender to Christ daily. We lean into Jesus, totally dependent on His strength within us, and we trust Him enough to obey His Word. There is joy in surrender.