

Philippians 4:14–17

“How to Multiply Your Thankfulness by Infinity”

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Is a thank-you still a thank-you if you were content without the gift? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. *Philippians 4:14–17* prepares us for the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these four verses, the Holy Spirit teaches us how the contentment that comes from treasuring Christ above all makes our thankfulness for Christians' generosity not less but infinitely greater.

Friday, August 13, 2021 • Read Philippians 4:14–17

Questions from the Scripture text: How have the Philippians done (v14)? By doing what? To what time does the apostle refer in v15? What had he done then? What were the Philippians the only ones to do at that time? To where else had they done this (v16)? How often? What doesn't the apostle seek (v17)? What does the apostle seek?

When Christ means more and more to us, and material things mean less and less to us, we might unintentionally communicate that we are not so grateful for those material things that we do receive from others. The apostle seems aware of this, when he begins v14, “Nevertheless.”

But if material things are less valuable, then Christian generosity is not less but rather all the more valuable; for, Christian generosity is a spiritual thing! “You have done good,” the apostle tells the Philippians (v14a). “You had fellowship together” now with my distress (v14b) just as you had done in the giving and receiving in my evangelistic mission (v15). And in between that “beginning of the gospel” way back when, and the recent distress, have been other times when they seized the opportunity (v16, cf. v10) to give.

So, they have done well to have fellowship. The apostle doesn't say anything about what the gift was, or how much, or what it was used for. He stresses their doing good. He stresses their fellowship with him. The importance of the material gift (v17a) pales in comparison to the importance of the spiritual fruit that comes from it, and with which they will be credited (v17b).

So the Philippians' gifts were not made smaller to Paul by his contentment in Christ, but rather greater. Their gifts were gifts from the Christ with Whom he was content. They themselves were gifts from the Christ with Whom he was content. The generosity that they displayed was a work within them of the Christ with Whom he was content. And the measure of these things would increase, as that Christ did more work through them, as a result of the work that He has done in them.

So, let us never allow increasing contentment apart from material things to twist itself into ingratitude for the generosity either of our Lord or of other believers. For, the more that Christ means to us, the more that the generosity itself ought to impress us, regardless of its content or quantity. And that is cause for gratitude to Him, to them, and to Him in their behalf.

How have others been generous with you? How have you had opportunity to be generous to others? How can you foster appreciation for the spiritual nature of that generosity? How can you communicate that appreciation in a way that focuses upon its spiritual character?

Sample prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, You are a God Who are sufficient and abundant in Yourself. You are the Giver of all good gifts, and Your creatures are all receivers. Forgive us for whenever we are discontented, or when we overlook the displays of Your goodness and grace in others or to ourselves. Thank You for what we have seen of others' generosity, as You reproduce Your own likeness in them. Increase our own generosity, and our own gratitude, we ask through Him Who is Your greatest gift—Yourself in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32B “Instruction, I Will Give to You” or TPH173 “Almighty God, Your Word”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Philippians chapter 4.

Versus 14 through 17. So looking in chapter 4, versus 14 through 17. These are God's words. Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress now you Philippians. No. Also that in the beginning of the gospel and I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me. Concerning giving and receiving.

But you only for even in Thessalonica, you sent a once and again from my necessities not that I seek a gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. So he says never the less you have done. Well how have the done Ezekiel and that you shared in my distress?

What was it that they did? Well, Victoria, Sheridan was distressed now you Philippians, what does he

call them now? John Philippians Philippians. No. Also that in the beginning of the gospel. So what time period is he talking about Beatrice? I'm gonna do another gospel When I departed from Macedonia.

Beginning of the gospel. Going from, where? Karissa Macedonia No church shared with me. Concerning giving and receiving but you only so how many churches should shared with him at that time Emmett and what had the Philippians? What was that? One is okay and there will be a church and what was it that the Philippians were the only ones to share with him in case it giving and receiving for even in Thessalonica.

So where was he in the time that he's talking about in verse 16 Ezekiel You sent aid once and again how many times did they send aid Victoria once again? Okay. So at least twice, four minus necessities for what had they sent the aid? John there is this necessity.

Not that I seek the gift. So what does he not seek? Or what did he not seek be interests, gift the gift but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. So what is it that he did seek that? He was so happy about press. I the fruits at about school, okay?

Very good. So, now all of you could probably teach this but let us have our teaching time.

Philippians 4 versus 14 through 17. These are God's words. Never the last, you have done well that you shared in my distress. Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no, church share with me, concerning giving and receiving but you only or even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities.

Not that I seek the gift but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account so far the reading of God's inspired and inherent word, there's something that you might want to be careful when you send a thank you note which the among other things Paul's letter to the Philippians is a.

Thank you, note. And that is. And you're thinking note, you probably shouldn't tell the person who gave you whatever it is. How content you were without what they gave you. I didn't need the thing that you had at all that you sent it all. I was perfectly happy without it, unless you have a good spiritual relationship with them.

And there is not only the understanding of what we are going to be hearing about in these verses. But that you would repeat some of the theology, some of the spiritual truth that is here to describe to them, that you are even glad about their gift to you. Then, if you had desperately wanted and needed the whatever it was that they gave you, the apostle Paul has just been telling them that he is, he knows how to suffer and he knows how to to abound, he knows how to be full, he knows how to be hungry.

He knows how to be a based to be brought low and how how to abandon that he's content and all circumstances. And yet, he very much wants to communicate thankfulness to the Philippians, for loving him, for sending the gift to him. He even when he talks about the gift, the gifts that he sent, that they had sent in his time in Tesla and Ika he referred to it as for his necessities of, it's not like the gift was even unappreciated in a material sense.

But there's something that he appreciates far more than the gift because to Paul Christ is more than everything else. But together and so he doesn't just describe their gift as supply. But fellowship now you Philippians. No. Also in the beginning of the gospel and I departed from Macedonia no church shared and the word for sharing is a word for fellowship and back in, verse 14, never the last you have done well that you shared in my distress so I was in need and distress and you decided that you would be needy and distressed to.

So you took what you needed and gave it to me. Sacrificial giving, but the word there again is shared and it's a word about fellowship and so the they're giving to him was something that came out of Christian love and a desire that they would have fellowship with him and he feels his fellowship with them and not only that but their gift isn't just Christian fellowship.

It is fruit from the grace of Christ that bears fruit for the glory of Christ. So he he tells him how thankful he is versus 14 15, 16. He wants them to understand that he's not just thankful because of how needy he was and how they shared and the neediness.

Although that is a wonderful thing but he's especially thankful. Because this is something that is fruit. Not fruit comes as, you know, after other things have been done, there's planting and watering and telling and weeding and caregiving, and maybe tearing suckers off and pruning in the right way. And and then at last, there's fruit like all of the wonderful photos of roses are rose blossoms.

That we are getting now is is fruit or when you get sent out to the garden to collect a bowl of stuff. There's fruit and that fruit is the enjoyment of the effectiveness of the work having been done. Now, of course the fruit in the Philippians giving is the result of Christ's effective work.

And then and the work that they are doing is sending the gospel to someone else For he says in the beginning

of the gospel when I departed from acidonia. No. Church shared in the concern of giving and receiving, but you ugly. Well, Paul had been on an entire missionary journey before he ever set out.

Again, with a different missionary partner Silas with him, he ended up in a Philippian jails and so forth and the Philippian church was planted. So what does he mean by the beginning of the gospel means by the beginning of the gospel going out from them, At one point, they were a church plant, a place where the gospel was coming for the first time.

And yet, once a church is established, it becomes not a place where the gospel merely has come. But now it must be a place from which the gospel goes. If the gospel isn't going out from a church that church isn't alive, that church is dead. And so when he says the beginning of the gospel, he means as soon as your church really was established as a church.

You know what happened? You started evangelizing and you sent me. Paul says as your evangelists no longer was he just a missionary from Antioch and evangelist from the church in Antioch? Now he was a an evangelist from the church in Philippi. And the church in Philippi apparently, understood this a lot better than many of the other churches because he says no other church.

But you when I was leaving from Macedonia, no other church but you sent me as an evangelist and so he's not just excited about the fruit of Christ's grace in them, that has made them want to share with him. He's excited about the fruit unto Christ's glory, that comes from their sending the money.

He says, you know, just as Christ had worked in them and that work had produced the effective fruit of there being converted of their sharing with them of their caring about the gospel. So also as they sent the gift, the gift itself became in a sense work, planting and watering and prudent and weeding and all of those things that the Lord blessed to the evangelism of others in the planting of other churches.

And so now, that's not just God's blessing on, Paul's labor and polls planting, and would work and effort and so forth. It's also a blessing on the Philippians labor. And so he's excited for his brother and that they will will always have the privilege and the honor of being one's through whom the gospel has come to others.

So as Paul content without the money, yes, Paul isn't so much thankful for the money. Is he he's thankful because of Christ in them and their fellowship together in Christ and the fruit of Christ's work in them and the fruit of Christ's work through them in others and the glory of Christ that comes from all this and they're getting to share the glory of Christ.

You notice, we just had Christ a lot didn't tweet. So for an apostle, or an ordinary believer, like you are, you're not an apostle, but I hope this comes to be true for each of you more and more. If Christ is more than everything else. But together, and they're so much of Christ's grace, and Christ's glory.

In what other Christians do for you. I hope you're thankfulness is all the greater precisely because you would have been content even without the gift, because the gift itself is not the thing. It's Christ's grace, and Christ's glory in them, and through them in you and through you. Now you can write some really good Christian.

Thank you notes, maybe even ones that say I really didn't need that but I am so overjoyed that what I have seen of Christ in that gift and what he is doing through it. So let us learn to turn our contentment, not into shrugging our shoulders, when people give us things, or do things for us, but into being infinitely, more grateful, because of how it comes from.

And in and under the glory of Christ. Hmm, very good. Let's pray.

Our father how we thank you. That treasuring you in your son and treasuring your son under your glory. So improves, not just our relationship with you, but our mental and emotional state, making us a grateful people into content, people, and our relationship with others, giving us occasion to rejoice with great rejoicing, over the good that you do us through them, over the good that we see, you do in them, help us out God, to interact with one another and this house, as those who appreciate Christ in and through each other that this would be a house of love and affection and thankfulness and generosity that we would share in one another's distress.

We would share and one another's glory. We pray that you would make that good practice and our day to day relationships, with one another for the relationships that we have with our extended family and your body, the church who pray that our congregation would be one in which this kind of mutual rejoicing that comes from contentment and sharing and being obsessed with Jesus.

That ours would be a church in which this kind of rejoicing abounds, granted to God by your spirit as he produces in us, the character of Christ that the fruit that character would be known by would be not only love first of all, but joy. Second of all do this, we ask unto your glory even as you are please to glorify yourself by doing us good and especially in and through Jesus, in his name we ask it.

Amen.