

TRUTHS THAT TRANSFORM SERIES

“God Shall Supply All Your Needs”

We are in this series” “Truths that Transform.” I hope this series is a wonderful time of growth, a real help and blessing to you. It’s my hope and prayer that God will work these to become more of a reality in your life.

Today, we will be discussing this truth that can transform your life: ***“My God will supply all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”*** *Philippians 4:19*

Fred and Cheryl went to Haiti to bring a child home that they had adopted. Addie was five years old. She was an orphan without a family, but as she walked across the tarmac to board the plane, the little girl reached up and slipped her hands into the hands of her new parents whom she had just met. They described it as her "birth moment," when in that physical act of grasping their hands, she expressed an innocent, fearless trust in their care for her.

That evening, back home in Arizona, they sat down to their first supper together with their new daughter. There was a platter of pork chops and a bowl of mashed potatoes on the table. After the first serving, their two teenage boys kept refilling their plates. Soon the pork chops had disappeared and the potatoes were gone. Addie had never seen so much food on one table in her whole life. Her eyes were big as she watched her new brothers eat huge amounts of food to satisfy their teenage appetites.

Fred and Cheryl noticed that Addie had become very quiet at the table and realized that something was wrong. Then Cheryl guessed that it was the disappearing food. She suspected that because Addie had grown up hungry, so when food was gone from the table she might be thinking that it would be a day or more before there was something to eat. Cheryl had guessed right.

She took Addie’s hand and led her to the bread drawer and pulled it out, showing her a back-up of three loaves. She took her to the refrigerator, opened the door, and showed her the bottles of milk

and orange juice, the fresh vegetables, jars of jelly and jam and peanut butter, a carton of eggs, and a package of bacon. She took her to the pantry with its bins of potatoes, onions, and squash, and the shelves of canned goods—tomatoes and peaches and pickles. She opened the freezer and showed Addie four chickens, a few packages of fish, and two cartons of ice cream. All the time she was reassuring Addie that there was lots of food in the house, that no matter how much her new teenage brothers ate and how fast they ate it, there was a lot more where that came from. She would never go hungry again.

Cheryl showed Addie that she was home and would never go hungry again.

Today, let God show you the same thing. God provides for you to live. And He has committed to care for you. God hasn't promised to make you rich, or that you will have everything you want. He has promised: ***“My God will supply all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”***

It's amazing to me that Paul would write these words because both Paul, and the people he was writing to had reasons to feel that God wasn't supplying enough.

You see, Paul writes the letter to the believers in the city of Philippi from a prison cell in Rome. In those days, prisons did not provide food and clothing and soap and towels and medicines for the inmates. Friends and family provided that stuff, or the prisoner simply went without.

It wasn't uncommon at all for prisoners to die in prison from starvation or from just a little illness that had gotten worse because no medicine was provided by the prison system. You either had family or friends help you out when you were in prison, or you were in a real bad spot.

So here's Paul rotting in a dark, filthy prison cell, far away from any family or friends. Word gets back to the Church at Philippi, and, of course, that would mean he was in need. The believers in Philippi hear of his need, and they show up at Paul's prison cell with arms

full of provisions for him — food and clothing, medical supplies, and all the rest.

Can you imagine the emotional impact that would have on somebody? And this wasn't even the first time these kind-hearted people had helped him out like this. Two other times when Paul was in desperate need, the church that he had started in Philippi had heard about it, and they brought provisions to keep him alive.

And this touched Paul so deeply because he knew the financial condition of the people back at that church. He knew that most of them were just hard working people, barely earning enough to put food on their own table. Here they were providing for him again. So when those provisions show up at Paul's cell, he's just humbled and awestruck. He hardly knows what to do with that sense of gratitude that he feels.

Paul wrote, ***“My God will supply all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”*** What makes this promise so amazing is that Paul wrote it when both he and the Philippians were in tough financial situations. But what he found is that God supplied Paul's needs, AND God supplied the Philippians' needs.

If you had been in the sandals of the Philippian people, would you have given so generously? Usually we worry about whether God will supply all our needs. We look at what we have, and forecast future income, and we conclude, “It doesn't look like we're going to have enough – in short supply.”

Sometimes I hear people warning that Social Security and Medicare won't be around by the time I retire. And I've got to admit -- I sometimes find myself thinking that I'm in short supply. It doesn't look like there's going to be enough – That there's EVER going to be enough.

But that's not true, is it? I live in America. Compared to everyone in the world, I am in the richest 5% of people on the planet – just because I have a roof over my head, food to eat everyday, and more than one change of clothes. I may not be as wealthy as my neighbor, but I have all I need to live – and some extra!

As I look back on my life so far, I have found that God has ALWAYS provided for me and my family. God has ALWAYS given all that we need. I have never faced starvation or been homeless.

Now, many of you are in a *different* place in your life that I am and you don't have the same concerns I do, but I'll bet you've got *other* concerns. And often those concerns get carried over to become full-blown worries.

Jesus knew this about us. One day Jesus said, ***"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear."*** Matthew 6:25a "Don't worry," Jesus says. "Don't worry about having the stuff you need for this life. Don't worry because God will supply.

How do I know that God will supply all your needs – especially when it looks to us like we're in short supply? Well, there are 3 good reasons why God will supply your needs. Those reasons – why God gives – have to do with the character of God Himself. God doesn't give to you because of what you want. He doesn't give because of what you deserve or think you deserve, or earn. God gives because God Himself is a giving, loving, good God. In His Word, the Bible (And God's word is certain and true. His promise doesn't fail because God doesn't fail!) – in His Word God has promised and given 3 reasons why you can know that God will supply all your needs.

The first reason that you know that God will supply your needs is **God's Power. He Has The Ability To Give To You.**

In 1 Chronicles chapter 29 there is a tremendous passage of Scripture. King David and King Solomon have built a temple for worshipping God. David himself gave all of his wealth. The people also gave willingly, generously, and in love for God. There was great wealth to be used to build this temple, yet David responded to this offering by declaring that God is the source of every blessing. David prayed, ***"Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all."*** 1 Chronicles 29:12

Wealth and honor come from God. God has the power – the ability to give.

Your house, your car, your clothes, your TV, your food, your boat, your snowmobiles and motorcycles, your investments – all of it is from GOD. Your family, your spouse, your kids, your mom and your dad – they're all gifts from God. Your health – that's a gift from God. Before today is over, for me, it might be all over. I never know. Neither do you. Each breath you take, every movement – they're all gifts from God. God is THE SOURCE. Everything comes from God. *EV-ERY-THING!*

Often we think we've earned what we have by working hard all our lives. Often we can find ourselves saying or thinking: "I've put in a lot of overtime. I've made smart investments. I've taken business risks. I've climbed the ladder of success. I've EARNED what I have – my house, my car, my vacations and clothes and investments. I've supplied all that I have through my own work."

But friends, WHO gave you your energy to work and earn your paycheck? Who gave you intelligence? Who gave you the skills, the abilities, the personality to do your job? You see, work is just taking the time, abilities, and knowledge that God gave you and trading a little bit of these gifts for money, so you can buy the other things that God wants to supply you. Through our work we do not supply our own needs. Through work GOD is supplying your needs.

1 Chronicles 29:14 says that: ***"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand."*** Isn't that interesting? This verse is saying that everything WE give to GOD, HE first gave to US. Our gifts from God, we just take and give right back to Him! We receive from GOD'S hand into OUR hands, and we give it right back into GOD'S hand.

When I was a boy, every year before Christmas my mother would take us to the big department store downtown. There were amazing displays of animated winter scenes and elves making toys. There was a whole floor full of the latest toys that every kid wanted.

I got to sit on Santa's knee. And every year we visited The Children's Christmas Shop. My mother would fill out an envelope, checking who I was to shop for. Mom – check. Dad – check. 3 brothers – check, check, check. Then she'd put cash into the envelope and a store employee would take me in to shop while my mother sat in the waiting room. For a kid of 4 or 5 it was the greatest thing!

On Christmas morning, I would proudly give the presents I bought to my family. My parents would open the presents I bought for them. But where did the money come from? It was **THEIR** money used for **THEIR** gifts. But still, I was so excited to give them something I bought for them.

This Scripture passage says the same thing about God. God blesses us. He blesses us with abilities, time, skills, intelligence. We use those and turn around and give right back to God.

“Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.” We haven't and can't earn anything on our own without God first giving to us. So everything we have – is HIS, God owns it. God doesn't NEED your gifts to Him – He owns it all already. What God wants, is to receive your love to Him. God wants your heart.

God will supply you because He has the power, the ability to give you all you need. Everything you have is a direct blessing from God Himself! EVERYTHING? Everything!!!

The second truth about our giving God is **God's Provision**. (God's provision) Not only is God ABLE to give to you, but **He** also **Has The Willingness** - the love-- **To Give To You**.

How do I know? Well, He's already given His Son. Romans 8:32 says: *“He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”* There is no more costly gift that God could have given you! He's given His Son, Jesus, to die, paying for your wrongs. In Jesus, your past has been forgiven, and anything that stood between you and God has been removed. You have a new relationship with God,

and your future lays wide open with Him – a future of living FOR Him on earth and WITH him in heaven. He did this, only because He loves you. This is His free gift to you. Won't He then give you everything you need today?

Why does God promise to “supply all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus”? Because God has the POWER/ the ability to give to you. He has the PROVISION/ the willingness to give to you. And God gives because of His **Partnership** to supply all your needs: **He Has A Reason** – a plan - **To Give To You**. God gives to you so He can partner with you.

God is a giving God. And He wants YOU to be like HIM. So He gives to you so you can join Him, become a partner with Him in giving to others.

It's like an ice-cube tray. (You know those plastic trays that you fill up with water and place in your freezer at home). Even if you have an automatic ice maker – you know how they work. Do you have to fill up every single cube mold in that tray? No! you just pour water into one, and the one fills up and spills the water over to fill up all the others.

It's the same way with God. He gives to you NOT so that you can try to KEEP all His blessings to yourself. But so that you can become blessed as you join Him in giving to others. God invites you onto His team. You are His partner in His ministry. He gives you that joy of helping others.

Paul mentions this in Philippians 4, vs. 18. He says: ***“I have received full payment and even more; 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.”***

This imagery is very easy for us to understand. We all react strongly to stinky odors, don't we? Did you ever leave something in the refrigerator, go on a vacation, come home, open the refrigerator door unsuspectingly and then get knocked off your feet by a smell that ought to be used in warfare?

I used to have that happen in college. What we left in the refrigerator could be bottled up and used in warfare. If it were dropped on Russia they'd give up. Well, contrast those awful smells with walking into a house where fresh bread is being baked or where spring flowers have just been cut and put in a vase.

We all know the bliss of a sweet-smelling aroma. Usually we inhale that aroma deeply and we comment on it. We go, "Oh, that smells so good," and we breathe it in again and again. Paul says to the Christ-followers at Philippi, "Every time you open up your heart, your hands, your wallet, and you help someone in need, every time you give to advance the purposes of God in this world, a sweet fragrance wafts its way heavenward."

God smells it and says, "Ah, what a wonderful aroma. I love the fragrance that comes my way when my children on earth are generous." So Paul tells the Philippian believers, "God inhaled two or three extra times when you brought that stuff to my cell. Good job, Guys. Good job, Gals. You're doing it just right."

Here's the deal with this: Paul says, "I know that whenever anybody parts with anything for the sake of the poor or the advancement of the work of God in the world, whenever anyone parts with anything, be it food or money or clothing, blankets, soap, towels, real estate, appreciated stock, a car, there's always that nagging fear once you've made the gift, 'Oh no, what have I done?'" It's a moment of "giver's remorse."

A person says, "Oh, what have I done? I've followed the prompting to be generous. I joyfully contributed to a pressing need, but now what if I'm left high and dry? What if my rent goes up? What if my car breaks down? What if my kids need braces? What if the economy cools off? What if...?"

Those are pretty human worries. Paul says, "Just focus your attention away from there. Pin your hopes on this promise: ***“My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”*** Translation: "I am not going to be left high and dry. I am not going to be left on a street corner like an abandoned child because !! God

Made A Promise To Me. God has shifted responsibility for the basic provisions of my life from my shoulders to His."

God says, "I will supply your needs. Not everything you want, but your basic needs."

Friends, I pray that every time God is God is prompting you to be generous that you remember God's promises to you that He has the power, the ability to supply all your needs. God has the provision / the willingness to give you all you need. He loves you. He's already given you His best, His Son Jesus, to be your Savior. And God just wants to partner with you – so that your heart and life is shaped to be more like God Himself – loving, giving, and generous. Amen.