

# WHY WE GIVE: Philippians 4:17-18

## INTRODUCTION

**Q.** Do you give? Do you give financially to advance the gospel and meet the needs of the saints?

This passage helps us answer a tremendously important question: **Q. Why do we give?**

**BIG IDEA:** We give of the money God has entrusted to us because it necessary for our happiness and the happiness of others; we also give because it makes God happy.

## I. GIVING IS NOT ABOUT *THE GIFT* AS MUCH AS *THE ONE IT IS GIVEN TO*— NAMELY, GOD (v. 17a)

**Philippians 4:17a** “Not that I seek the gift,”

## II. GIVING PRODUCES HAPPINESS BOTH FOREVER AND NOW (v. 17b)

**Philippians 4:17b** “but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.”

- **DR. STEVEN LAWSON:** “Whenever someone invests in a business venture, they are allowed to share in the profits earned. By way of metaphor, this is how the financial support of the Philippians is profiting them. By their monetary gifts, the Philippians are storing up an eternal profit for themselves in heaven.”

### I) Giving produces happiness forever (Matthew 6:19-20)

- **Matthew 6:19-20** “19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.”
- **CHILDREN:** Have you ever held a dollar? Imagine you had a whole bunch of them, and they all belonged to Jesus. Should you leave those dollars laying around for a thief to come and steal when you are not looking? What if there was a little bug that liked to eat paper money; would you leave Jesus’ dollars laying around to be eaten up?
- **Q. Do you want to be most happy FOREVER? A.** Then use *NOW* what God has given you for what will last forever. **Q.** What will last forever? **A.** God’s glory, chiefly revealed in the gospel of His Son Jesus Christ!

### II) Giving produces happiness now (Acts 20:35)

- **Acts 20:35** “. . .remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”
- **Q. Do you want to be most happy NOW? A.** Then be most like Jesus now.
- **2 Corinthians 8:9** “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.”

## III. GIVING MUST MAINLY BE FOR THE ADVANCE OF THE GOSPEL AND FOR THOSE IN NEED (v. 18a)

**Philippians 4:18a** “I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent,”

**When you give to advance the gospel or meet the needs of the saints, that giving produces God glorifying results (Philippians 4:10; Corinthians 9:13)**

- **I) PAUL REJOICED WHEN THE PHILIPPIANS AGAIN GAVE TO MEET HIS NEEDS.**
- **Philippians 4:10** “I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me.”
- **II) THE JERUSALEM SAINTS GLORIFIED GOD WHEN THE PHILIPPIANS AND THE SAINTS IN CORINTH GAVE TO MEET THEIR NEEDS.**
- **2 Corinthians 9:13** “[the Jerusalem saints] will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution.”
- **Q. Do you want God to be most glorified? A.** Then give whatever you can so that more people will hear the gospel and become saints through faith in Jesus; and give so that the saints will have their needs met.
- **CHILDREN:** Have you ever seen someone receive a gift and then they are so happy that they praise God? That is one of the reasons we give of the money God has given us.

## IV. GIVING IS TO BE A SWEET FRAGRANCE TO GOD (v. 18b)

**Philippians 4:18b** “a fragrant offering.”

- **Giving** for the advancement of the gospel and to help meet the needs of the poor **is an act of worship! *GIVING IS WORSHIP!***
- **DR. STEVEN LAWSON:** “The apostle uses the imagery of an Old Testament sacrifice being offered by the priest on the altar, which we understand was a sacrifice being given to God. In this act, incense was poured onto the sacrifice, releasing a fragrant aroma that ascended upward to heaven. The sweet-smelling fragrance pictured the pleasure that such a sacrifice brought to God.”
- **CHILDREN:** Think about your favorite food. Does it make you happy when you smell your Mom cooking that? That is how it makes God happy when we give money so that other people may be saved and poor people can be helped—it makes God happy!
- **Q. Do you want to worship God in spirit and in truth? A.** Then give according to what God has put you in charge of; offer up a portion of your possessions, a fragrant offering that smells sweet in the nostrils of the Lord!

## V. GIVING IS TO BE A SACRIFICE TO GOD (v. 18c)

**Philippians 4:18c** “a sacrifice.”

- **CALVIN:** “God invites us with so much kindness to the honor of priesthood, and even puts sacrifices in our hands. . . the altars, on which sacrifices from our resources ought to be presented, are the poor, and the servants of Christ.” (*Commentary on Philippians*)
- **Q. What are you doing with the sacrifices God has providentially put in your hands?**
- According to God’s providence, your possessions may be very little. But do you sacrifice for God’s glory with them?
- According to God’s providence, your possessions may be very modest. Do you sacrifice for God’s glory with them?
- According to God’s providence, your possessions may be very great. Do you sacrifice for God’s glory with them?
- **CALVIN:** “Accursed be our [apathy]! . . .while God invites us with so much kindness to the honor of priesthood, and even puts sacrifices in our hands, we nevertheless do not sacrifice to him, and those things which were set apart for sacred oblations we not only lay out for profane uses, but squander them wickedly upon the most polluted contaminations. . . some squander their resources on every kind of luxury, others upon the palate, others upon immodest attire, others upon magnificent dwellings.” (*Commentary on Philippians*)
- **Q. Are you squandering the resources God has given you? A.** Oh how much better it is to sacrifice than to squander!

## VI. GIVING IS ACCEPTABLE AND PLEASING TO GOD (v. 18d)

**Philippians 4:18d** “acceptable and pleasing (or “*acceptably pleasing*”) to God.”

- **Hebrews 13:16** “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”
- **Q.** Are you trying to please yourself? **Q.** Are you trying to please others? or **Q.** Are you trying to please God?
- **Galatians 1:10** “For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

## ENDING

**Q1. Do you need motivation to glorify God by giving?** Oh then look to God Himself who “*GAVE* His only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.” (**John 3:16**)

- **CHILDREN:** How many Sons does God have? **ONE.** What did He do with Him? He **GAVE HIM!**

**Q2. Do you need inspiration to give even for your own happiness?** Then look to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith, “who *FOR THE JOY* that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is (now) seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” (**Hebrews 12:2**)

**Q3. Do you need stimulation to give in order to make sure Christ’s servants and the poor are “fully paid”?** Then look to Jesus in faith, who fully paid your sin debt to His Father for your eternal soul—“knowing that *YOU WERE RANSOMED* from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.” (**1 Peter 1:18-19**)

**Q4. Do you need prodding to give a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God?** Oh then look to Christ in faith, who “gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” (**Ephesians 5:2**)

**Q5. Do you need motivation to give in order to please God your Redeemer?** Then look to the Lord Jesus in faith—“For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” (**Romans 15:3**)

**BIG IDEA:** We give of the money God has entrusted to us because it necessary for our happiness and the happiness of others; we also give because it makes God happy.