



THE EXHORTER

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40

The Palmer Road church of Christ, Westland, Mi. (prchurchofchrist.org)

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Jump Start # 3556

Philippians 4:19 "And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

We sing, "God will take care of you." And, He does. Our verse today states that God will supply all your needs. This follows a verse where Paul had received financial help from the Philippians. God helped the Philippians. The Philippians helped Paul. He helped you. And, you have helped me.

And, often when this Philippian passage is read, our minds think of physical blessings such as health, jobs and finances. Our pantries are stocked. Our freezers are full. God has taken great care of us.

There are some lessons to be seen here:

First, unlike Israel in the wilderness, our blessings do not come like manna from above. God gives you ability. You use that ability to get a job. You are paid in that job. God has taken care of you. Within that lies responsibilities on your part. If you don't go to work, you don't get paid. If you take that paycheck and spend it all on stuff for yourself, waste it gambling, or give it all away, you'll be in need. You'll cry, 'Why won't God help me?' He has. He did. What did you do with it?

Second, sometimes our needs are not items we can hold in our hands or food we fill our bellies with. There is a greater need which God supplies help to. We see this in the life of David:

- When a lion appeared as he was watching sheep, God helped him
- When a giant appeared, God helped him
- When Saul chased him for years, God helped him
- When his own son tried to steal the kingdom, God helped him

This help involved fighting beasts and giants. But God helped him. This help meant fleeing and hiding, but God helped him. In each of the four situations listed above, David could have been killed. But he wasn't. God was his help.

(OVER)

Your greatest need may be dealing with an aging parent or a sick spouse. Your greatest need may be getting through the day with toxic co-workers who just want to gossip, blasphemy and expound upon the wonders of getting drunk every weekend. Your greatest need may be trying to fellowship someone in church who irritates and bothers you.

The help of God may be, as in David's case, standing and fighting for what is right. It may be in getting away and getting out of that situation. It may be in having to go face-to-face with someone and correct them for things that are wrong. We'd rather God just chase the lions and the giants away from our lives. But the help God provides may mean facing those things and being bold and courageous.

Third, the help God provides often comes through the hands of others. It did for Paul here in Philippians. Another time, Paul was depressed. God comforted him. He did that by sending Titus to him. We may miss the help God provides because we are looking for manna to fall from the skies and the help is standing right next to us. The help comes in the form of a brother or a sister in Christ. The help is not a powerful angel, but a simple child of God. Don't limit God by tying His hands. Don't expect God to only help you in the way that you want and in the way you expect. Allow God to do things His way. And, don't be quick to cry out, "I'm all alone and there is no one to help me," when in fact God has sent help, but we didn't like the package it came in.

Fourth, it seems from the flow of the Philippian passage, that as God helps us, he wants us to help others. Today, we hear the expression, "supply chain." Getting the part from the manufacturer, to the store, to your home—a supply chain. And, it seems there is a spiritual supply chain. We are helped to help others. We've been taught so we can teach others. We have been encouraged, so we can encourage others.

All of this reminds us that we are connected to one another and that we need one another. I need you. You need me. We need each other. The teacher of God's word supplies the needed lessons from the Bible. The student listening to that teaching encourages the teacher by learning and allowing the word of God to change his life.

During the pandemic there was a massive breakdown in the physical supply chain in our country. New trucks sat for months, waiting on chips that were on back order. Appliances were back ordered and people had to wait and wait. Spiritually, we must make sure that the spiritual supply chain is running smoothly and fully operational. This is accomplished when we each do our part. God supplies. We must get those supplies to where they are needed. A kind word. A good deed. A lunch bought. A gift given. A card mailed. Keep the supply chain moving by doing your part.

God will take care of you...Our past proves it. Our present witnesses it. And, our future believes it.

Roger shouse (used by Permission)
