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EVERY SAINT

Whew! What a journey! The letter to the first church of Philippi leads readers on an amazing exploration of all you have in Jesus. The apostle Paul closes with memorable words in chapter 4:19-20, **"And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen."**

"**Every**" need. Quite an assertion! He says, don't be anxious about "**anything**" but take "**everything**" to God in prayer. Meditate on and practice all "**these things**" he has taught about Jesus, because you can do "**all things**" by Christ's strength in you. Now he declares God will supply "**every need**" through Christ!

Paul says this not by exaggeration, but by experience. He learned all this through God's providence in his own deprivations. Your true needs are essentially spiritual, not physical. Earthly life is temporal, but your spiritual life goes on forever. And how God meets your spiritual needs makes all the difference on where you will spend eternity, either apart from God in Hell, or with God in Heaven.

In the same way that true contentment is Christ Himself, so true riches in glory are Christ Himself. Only when YOU have received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, believing on Him alone for salvation, can YOU begin to experience the blessings of God's grace in Christ. Only by trusting Christ can YOU experience what Paul writes about in Philippians. Are YOU trusting Christ for salvation? To be all your strength, as you depend on Him to supply all your needs? As you work OUT all that God works IN you? As you learn to be content, in trial and blessing? As you live according to the mind of Christ, putting the needs of others ahead of your own? As you bring all your needs to God in prayer, with rejoicing and giving thanks, trusting God to bring to completion the good work He has begun in YOU?

Whew! That's a lot of promises for God to keep! YOU can experience them all, by trusting in Jesus alone as your personal Lord and Savior. So Paul closes this brief letter, with a particular, powerful, poignant point that echoes all he's written. Verses 21-23, **"Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."**

The word "saint" refers to believers in Christ, set apart to be sanctified and made holy in Christ. His readers included former Gentile pagans who had believed in many idol-gods, as well as former Jews who believed in the one true God. Their very different backgrounds made it difficult to accept one another.

Before you leave this brief letter, re-read it. Paul opens his letter to "**all the saints**" at Philippi, thanking them for partnership in the Gospel of Christ. The letter mentions saints disrupted by his imprisonment and those in controversy at Philippi. Paul adds personal greetings with the salutations of believers with him, mentioning specifically the church at Rome which includes members of Caesar's household and the imperial guard - under the Emperor Nero who would soon unleash terrible persecution. He closes the letter with "**greet every saint in Christ Jesus**" - because every one who has trusted Christ is equal at the foot of the cross, regardless of ethnicity or religious background.

What an example Paul provides! You may not agree with everything about other believers, but like you, they are in the process of becoming all of God's promises in Christ. So focus on the work before you, sharing the good news about Jesus with everyone around you. Pray for one another to serve Christ with the "**mind of Christ**" and the "**unity of the Spirit**" - as you reach out with practical witness and ministries, children's and youth groups, Bible studies, worship services, and more.

One day you will meet the believers in Philippi that Paul called his "**joy and crown**," and those with him, those who came to Christ through them - and those who come to Christ through YOU.

For now, show the world how the "**grace of the Lord Jesus**" is with YOU -- as God supplies your every need and as YOU put the needs of others ahead of your own, to serve the King of Kings, by His strength within. Indeed, to God be all the glory in Christ forever!