

The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,
holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



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God: A Wonderful Supplier

The church at Philippi was a very giving church. Their willingness to give was experienced first hand by Paul and he praised them for their generosity. In the book of Philippians, Paul thanks the brethren for supplying his needs while he was in Thessalonica (Philippians 4:15-18). Because of their willingness to help Paul financially while he preached the gospel, the Philippians would have part in the fruit borne by Paul's evangelistic efforts. The Philippians were willing to sacrifice for the cause of Christ and Paul assures them that it would not go unnoticed by God. While they helped to supply Paul with what he needed, God would continue to supply for them. Paul affirms confidently to the brethren in Philippi that God would supply all their needs (Philippians 4:19).

God has always been a wonderful supplier. He provided for Adam and Eve, even after they sinned against Him in the garden (Genesis 3:21). He provided a sacrifice for Abraham in place of his son Isaac (Gen. 22:13). He provided for the Israelites as they wandered through the wilderness (Deuteronomy 8:11-16). God has never ceased providing for His people. Does God still supply? Yes He does. He supplies for us in two ways. Consider the following.

1. God supplies our physical needs. Notice, I did not say that God gives us everything we want. Sometimes we want things that are not in our best interest to have. However, God does supply our needs even as Paul told the Philippians He would. Jesus assures us of this in Matthew 6:25-34. When it comes to putting food in our stomachs and clothes on our backs, God will make provision for us. Remember, God is our Father and every Father desires to take care of his children. Do you think that earthly fathers have more love for their children than God does? Do you think that human fathers care for their children more than God does for His? If you think like that, it stems from a lack of faith in the love and loyalty of God (Matthew 6:30; Matthew 7:7-11). As long as we seek God first, He will provide us with the necessities of life (Matthew 6:33). Does that mean that Christians will never struggle? No, sometimes it is hard to make ends meet even for God's children. There are poor Christians in the world. However, in the end, God does supply all of His children with what they need. God is indeed a giving God.

2. God supplies our spiritual needs. God has given us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). The word "life" here means more than just our physical existence. It refers to the spiritual life that we enjoy based on our relationship with God. "Godliness" denotes a devotion which is characterized by a God-ward attitude, and does that which is well-pleasing to God. So life and godliness encompasses the totality of our existence before God. In other words, everything necessary to please God and make it to heaven is covered by the statement "life and godliness." God has provided us with everything we need to be successful in the spiritual realm. He has given us a plan of salvation that is accessible to all (Romans 4:16). Anyone who wants to be in fellowship with God can because God has provided the means necessary to establish such fellowship.

But there is more. God has provided us with everything we need to maintain that fellowship. What has God supplied along those lines?

- a. His Word to guide us (Psalms 119:105).
- b. Prayer to strengthen us and keep us strong (Ephesians 6:18).
- c. A family to motivate us in doing right (Hebrews 10:24; Galatians 6:1).
- d. A mediator to help us when we fall (1 John 2:1-2; 1 John 1:7; Acts 8:18-23).

You can see that if we fail and miss out on heaven, it is certainly not God's fault. We will have no one to blame but ourselves, for God has supplied us with everything we need to be and stay in fellowship with Him.

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Who Is Right? Or What Is Right?

By Bobby Graham

It is easy to identify ourselves with persons because of similar dispositions, tastes, preferences, and habits. In cases where matters of right and wrong are being considered, we often say that we believe what Mr. So -and-So believes. This is probably the easier route, but is it the correct one?

When a Bible question is being discussed, it is quite common for many of us to "cast our lot" with some elder, preacher, or prominent brother in Christ rather than to take the time to study for ourselves and determine our personal faith and stand on our own feet. Dependence upon God and a willingness to receive help in study from others is much different from making our faith identical to that of others because of who they are.

Human beings err, even when they do not intend to do so. God and the Bible never err. Is it not much better to examine the Scriptures for ourselves so that we form our own faith? Even when our conclusions are identical to those of others, we need the strength coming from our own study to stand upon the firm foundation of truth. In this matter we need to imitate the example of those noble Bereans in searching the Scriptures daily to learn the truthfulness of what we hear (Acts 17:11).

When we form our own faith, guided by the Word, we then will believe and act as we do because of the influence of truth upon our hearts and lives, not who happens to believe and practice something. We ought to be more mindful of what is right than of who is right. Right is right regardless of who adheres to it or who does not. Which is more important to you: Who is right? or What is right?