

Values Matter Discovery Starters

We Are a Global Missions Movement

16. PRACTICE DEPENDENCE ON GOD

YWAM is a volunteer movement called to practice a life of dependence upon God for financial provision. For individuals and for any YWAM team or community, this comes primarily through His people. As God has been generous toward us, so we desire to be generous, giving ourselves, our time and talents to God with no expectation of remuneration.

[Gen 22:12-14](#); [Exo 36:2-7](#); [Num 18:25-29](#); [Mal 3:8-12](#); [Mat 6:25-33](#);
[Luk 19:8-9](#); [2Co 8:1-9:15](#); [Php 4:10-20](#); [Tit 3:14](#); [3Jn 5-8](#)

Value 16 – Practice Dependence on God: Paul Thanks His Supporters

Biblical Foundation:

How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.

As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who gave me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once. I don't say this because I want a gift from you. Rather, I want you to receive a reward for your kindness.

At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.

Now all glory to God our Father forever and ever! Amen (Php 4:10-20).

Discovery Starter:

As a missionary, Paul relied upon God to meet his financial needs. This provision came primarily through the people of God (2Co 11:7-9). He tells us that sometimes he had “almost nothing” and at other times he had “everything” he needed. He had learned to

“be content” in every financial circumstance, whether he had “plenty or little,” whether or not his stomach was “full... or empty” (Php 4:11-12). This is not metaphorical language; this was the reality of his life. He tells us, “I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food” (2Co 11:27). He was certainly not in the ministry for the money! Even though he did not have a fixed income, Paul had a fixed passion on the things of God’s kingdom (2Co 4:18).

Paul taught in 1Ti 5:17 that faithful church leaders are worthy of “double honor” (NIV, NRSV, ESV, NASB, KJV). Paul is calling for more than an attitude of respect. This phrase is an expression in Greek which means to be “paid well” (NLT). Paul makes his intention very clear quoting both Moses (Deu 25:4) and Jesus (Luk 10:7): “Give a bonus to leaders who do a good job, especially the ones who work hard at preaching and teaching. Scripture tells us, ‘Don’t muzzle a working ox’ and ‘A worker deserves his pay’ ” (1Ti 5:17-18 MSG). Paul reaffirms this perspective saying, “Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers” (Gal 6:6).

The Philippian believers gave “more than once” to support Paul’s missionary endeavors (2Co 11:9; Php 4:15-18). Paul considered them “partners in spreading the Good News about Christ” (Php 1:5) because they had once again sent a generous offering to him, hand-carried by Epaphroditus (Php 2:25; 4:18). He writes this letter to thank them for their financial support. He tells them “you have a special place in my heart” (Php 1:7). Twice he expresses, “how much I love you and long for you” (Php 1:8; 4:1). Paul’s aware that they have given sacrificially, so he encourages them, declaring that “this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches” (Php 4:19).

Keep Going:

The well-known Greek word, *koinonia*, and its derivatives were used to describe the relationship between business partners who shared in the costs and results of their joint venture. Four times in this “thank you letter” Paul uses one of these words to describe his relationship with the Philippian church; one time he uses it to share his desire to partner fully with Christ. Consider the following:

Php 1:4-5 Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been **my partners** (*koinonia*) in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now.

Php 1:7 So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You **share with** (*sugkoinonos*) me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News.

Php 2:1 Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any **fellowship together** (*koinonia*) in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate?

Php 3:10-11 I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, **sharing in** (*koinonia*) his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

Php 4:15-16 As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who **gave** (*koinoneo*) me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once.

As you ponder these passages, what is Holy Spirit impressing upon you? What are the take-aways from your meditation? What actions should you take to implement what God is saying to you at this time?

Are you a missionary? If so, take some time to write a thank you letter to someone who has supported you in finances and in other ways. Do you know a missionary? If so, take the time to write them a letter to encourage them and send them a financial gift to support them in their kingdom work.

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