

What Christians Keep Misunderstanding About God's Abundant Provision

Do you have some financial, physical or even an emotional need? Do you wonder if God really desires to provide it?

The short answer: He does! But keep reading.

The Bible is replete with God's promises of provision. In fact, some have counted at least 169 verses that confirm His desire to do so. Of these verses, perhaps the most popular is Paul's words to the church at Philippi: "But my God shall supply your every need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19, NRSV).

God's Praise-Provoking Promise

We must recognize that Paul wasn't instituting a new promise here. Rather, he was standing on the age-old promise of God's provision dating as far back as when Abraham named God "Jehovah Jireh," which means "the Lord will provide."

Given Paul's situation, the Philippian believers surely took notice of his words. Paul was once a high-ranking member of the Jewish establishment (see Phil. 3:5). Yet, for the cause of Christ, he was willing to walk away from his heritage and start over.

Though perhaps Paul started over with nothing, he didn't remain with nothing. As he continued to serve Jesus, Paul experienced God's faithfulness to meet his needs and boasted, at times, even to have more than enough (see Phil. 4:18).

In my book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, I take the time to deconstruct Paul's declaration of God's provision, phrase by phrase. It's a fascinating, praise-provoking study

that illustrates what God provides and how and why He does it.

For the sake of this article, however, I want to hone in on perhaps my favorite part—"according to his riches in glory"—in order to illustrate how God *doesn't* provide, and why it's good for you.

'According to His Riches in Glory

Reread the verse once more: "But my God shall supply your every need *according to His riches in glory* by Christ Jesus." (emphasis added). Notice the promise is not that God provides *out* of His riches, but *according* to them. The difference is significant.

If God provided *out* of His riches, it would indicate a supply that might eventually be depleted (even if it is a huge supply). And thus, you might fear that God doesn't have enough left for you. This is often the underlying source of many of our insecurities and jealousies. Subconsciously, people tend to believe if someone else receives the blessing for which they've asked God, then it must mean they won't get it themselves. The thoughts go like this: "Because they got the _____ I wanted, I guess I won't get it."

But this is misguided. Because God provides *according* to and not *out* of His riches, He's able to satisfy every one of our needs because His provision never runs out.

Not According to Anything of Yours

God's provision as "according to *His* riches" also means that it is not according to anything of yours. That is, God supplies according to His mercy, grace, and unconditional love, not according to your perfect behavior.

I regularly hear from people who believe they lack in an area because God is upset with them and has pulled away His provision to get them back. But God doesn't act this way. The

Bible promises that God holds no good thing back from His children (Ps. 84:11). He is not abusive, manipulative or a father who threatens, "Do this or else!" If provision were dependent on upholding some sort of law or living perfectly, we would all be vagabonds.

You May Count on God

If you're worried today about whether or not God will provide what you need to keep going, then Paul's declaration here should be an encouragement to you.

Because God meets our needs "according to His riches in glory," His supply is unlimited, which also means He hasn't given the answer to your financial need, miracle or breakthrough to someone else. Additionally, because Jesus paid the ultimate price at the cross for your failures, God doesn't require any more payment from you. This means He's not withholding your provision.

Sure, God's timing might be different than yours, but for at least the reasons I shared here, you may absolutely count on Him to satisfy your every need.

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