

PHILEMON

Lesson 11: FINANCIAL SUPPORT

10 March, 2016

In verse 6 the apostle Paul, speaking to Philemon, mentions “**the communication of thy faith.**” Last time we looked at the broad aspect of this Bible term; how your actions will prove your faith.

Today we’ll discuss the New Testament treatment of that word “**communication**” and observe how it is a term specifically used when talking about giving money to further the ministry of the Gospel.

Philemon was a man who financed the furtherance of the gospel. He made it possible for others to go on the missionary journeys. Paul was one who was supported by Philemon.

Every saved person ought to welcome the opportunity to support the church and give to missionaries and the spread of the Gospel. If you love the Lord, you’ll gladly spend money on Him. “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:21, Luke 12:34).

PHILIPPIANS 4:14-19

“**Communicate**” (vs. 14) is clearly defined as “**giving and receiving**” (vs. 15). It is described as sending “**unto my necessity**” (vs. 16). The believers at Philippi sent money “**once and again**” so Paul could continue his gospel mission.

Paul did not “**desire a gift.**” No honest pastor or missionary is in the ministry for the money. In fact they don’t enjoy taking money from other Christians, but in most cases it is a necessity for the furtherance of the Gospel. Some Christians have to GO do the mission while others STAY and earn the money so others can go.

God will “**supply all your need**” (vs. 19)—IF you are giving consistently and sacrificially. This is not a promise for increased wealth. It is a promise that you’ll have what you need—so you can continue to give. The context is important. God doesn’t promise to provide for the need of slackers who never give.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-20

This passage emphasizes the importance of willingness in our giving (vss. 3, 11, 12, 19).

The Macedonian believers were poor and needy, but they pleaded with Paul to receive their gift (vs. 4) so that they could enjoy the blessings that come from “**ministering to the saints.**” It was their will to help the saints.

They “**gave their own selves to the Lord**” (vs. 5). It was easy for them to give because their heart belonged to the Lord. Those who don’t love the Lord have a hard time giving to Him. Giving is grace (vs. 7). You can get involved in a lot of activities in church and never contribute anything, but that’s not fellowship; there’s no love in that. You’ll be missing out on an important aspect of the Christian life. It’s more enjoyable when you contribute to the work.

Giving proves “**the sincerity of your love**” (vs. 8). Jesus proved His love for us by giving up the riches of Heaven to save us (vs. 9). He is the ultimate example for us to follow.

We are asked to give out of what we have (vs. 11). Some people promise to give money IF they get a lot of money in the future. In the meantime, they’re not giving anything in the present. If you’re not willing to give from your meager wages now, you won’t be willing to give when you inherit a large amount of money. God appreciates the willingness of your heart when you give (Mark 12:42, Luke 21:2).

The gift of money offered by the Macedonians was called “**this grace**” (vs. 19) because it was a proof that the grace of God was operating in their lives.

Money donated by believers ought to be handled with integrity by those who are entrusted with it. Not only that, but those entrusted with the money should not be “blamed” (vs.20) or suspected of dishonesty. Give willingly, pray, and trust that your gift will be used for the Lord’s work and will bring forth fruit.

GALATIANS 6: 6

The Bible teacher ought to be compensated for his service. If you have benefited from a Bible teacher or preacher—why wouldn’t you expect to support him financially?

PHILEMON VS. 6

The “**communication**” of Philemon’s faith—including financial support for Paul’s missionary journeys. Paul wrote this letter knowing that it could result in Philemon becoming upset and cutting off his support. But the truth was more important than money to Paul. He was willing to suffer poverty if necessary as long as Philemon got to hear the truth. He would not compromise the truth for money and neither should we.
