

- Rev. Grant Mangold, [www.RiversideChurchIowa.com](http://www.RiversideChurchIowa.com)

## EVERY NEED

It used to be true that most people supported themselves. That's not the case today. Nearly half of Americans received benefits from one or more government programs in 2011, according to the Census Bureau. 151 million out of 308 million. These numbers have increased.

Over the past five years, the price of gas is up 108%. Unemployment rose 78%. "High unemployment" states rose 82%. The "misery index" is up 25%. Typical monthly food costs rose 5%. National debt climbed 53%, now near \$17 trillion. Meanwhile, rate of mortgage delinquencies increased 60%. Median value of a single-family home fell 8%. Median household income dropped 7%. Do you feel the squeeze?

Someone observes, "we're told America is capitalist and greedy. Yet half the population is subsidized. They think they are victims. Yet, their representatives run the government. Still, the poor keep getting poorer. However, the poor in America have things people in other countries only dream about. Yet, some people want America to be more like those other countries."

Consider also that statistics show nearly half of the world's richest 1% of people live in the United States. That's those earning at least \$34,000 a year. Perhaps many people you know live on around \$100 a day or more. Yet, over one-third of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day.

Human beings need oxygen, water, food, clothing, shelter. We also need social relationships, God's Word, and above all, God Himself. We struggle with the difference between "needs" and "wants" and "rights."

When the apostle Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians, he was in prison for his faith in Christ. Prevented from supporting himself, he was dependent on what God supplied through others. In chapter 4, he thanks the church at Philippi for their kindness, even as he reminds them that he trusts only in God.

In Philippians 4:19 he makes this remarkable assertion, **"And my God will supply EVERY NEED of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."** Note first, this promise is "according to" God's riches, not according to your needs. God's riches in glory are infinite, unlimited, eternal, immeasurably above and beyond what you could ask or think - or need.

Notice it says "needs" not "wants." So what's the justification if you are using God's riches for your personal wants, while depriving others of their needs - that God could supply through you? That's why God says, give, and "lay up your treasures in heaven." Elsewhere, Paul writes that we are to make sure our missionaries have "everything they need."

Note also that God's supply of your every need is according to His riches IN CHRIST. Jesus Christ Himself is the sum and source of God's supply of your needs. That's the heart of contentment, the freedom from "wanting more" that Paul talks about in Philippians 4.

As Paul has been learning all this, even as he receives their gifts, he wants them to also learn the secret of contentment as they give their gifts. It's all about God, the provider. Verse 19 is a promise, **"God WILL supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."** Verse 20 is worship, **"To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen."**

Is this promise true in your life? If you trust Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, then you have His new eternal and abundant life, to be lived out in every way, by the power of the Holy Spirit within you.

As Creator, God is the ultimate owner of all things, the ultimate source, the ultimate provider of all good you receive. How do you thank God for His provision? How are you sharing with the needy? It all comes from God's "riches in glory" in Christ Jesus.

When you trust Him to supply your needs, so you can give to the needs of others, then this brings glory to God. With Paul, many voices say, "thank God for your giving"!