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If last week (4v4-9) was a command to rejoice (as well as Paul dealing with 3 hurdles that we face, this week (4v9-20) it's the rejoice 'example'

Next, Paul lets us in on his example and ability to rejoice. He's not just commanding them to do something he's not learnt to do. The focus of these verses is Paul's financial partnership with the Philippians.

Contentment in a time of discontent

Despite being thankful for them, Paul reminds them does not need them! He's learnt to be content - another huge challenge in our culture of discontent. Whether he has lots or little, whether cupboards full or empty, whether hungry or full. Paul knows contentment from the Lord. How? V13. Through the Lord who gives him strength. Note the context for this verse - it's not a motivational verse for being successful or fruitful, it's about the Lord making him content.

Provision in a time of need

Paul doesn't need their money though he is thankful for their support of him - from the beginning to the present. He sees their giving (v18) as part of their sacrifice and worship - using Old Testament type terms, he is also convinced (v19) that God can provide their needs through the riches of His grace to them in Christ. When the Lord has made us content so we can have an ability to give generously as we know he provides.

Here are some possible questions to help apply these challenging verses - as always feel free to adapt as needed for your group.

- **What does it mean to be content? Are you content? Why / why not?**
- **How has Paul learnt contentment?**
- **How does Paul describe their giving in v18? Do you see your giving in this way? Why / why not?**
- **What does v19 mean? How does that change our perspective on money and giving? Do you believe this?!**