

Hebrews

God Supplies Our Every Need to Live for Him

Hebrews 13:20-21

INTRODUCTION:

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BODY:

I. God Will Equip Us in Every Good Thing to do His Will.

Hebrews 13:21 (NASB95)

Romans 8:32 (NASB95)

Acts 2:22-24 (NASB95)

II. God Will Work in Us that Which is Pleasing in His Sight.

Philippians 2:12-13 (NASB95)

III. God Works These Things Through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:3-4 (NASB95)

IV. God and the Lord Jesus Christ Get All of the Glory.

Hebrews 13:21 (NASB95)

Revelation 5:13 (NASB95)

CONCLUSION:

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NASB95)

Matthew 13:44 (NASB95)

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INTRODUCTION:

We are finishing the book of Hebrews in the author's benediction. The first part was covered last week. The author summarized the purpose that he wrote Hebrews by telling us that Jesus was the fulfillment of the law and prophets. He provided our salvation by living a perfect life. He died on the cross as our perfect sacrifice and rose from the dead to prove that what He had taught was true. It was a stamp of approval by His Father. But He does not just save us from His judgment and then leave us to fend for ourselves. He also equips us in every good thing in order to do His will.

ILLUSTRATION:

John MacArthur told of an encounter that he had at a Christian camp in the mountains. "I met a young man with a severely withered arm and leg. He always stayed at the back of the group or in a corner by himself, never participating with the other campers. On the second day I went over to him, introduced myself, and asked his name.

He responded with a bitter scowl, pulled up the sleeve that covered his deformed arm, and said, "Look what God did to me."

After silently praying for God's wisdom I said, 'Would you like to know something? That's not you.'

"What do you mean it's not me" he retorted.

"It is just the house you live in," I said; "that's all". It's a very temporary house; but you are a **forever** person. God offers a forever plan for you and also a new and eternal body for your future".

"You're kidding," he said.

"No, I am not kidding," I replied, and then shared the gospel with him. He gave his heart to Jesus Christ, and his attitude and outlook immediately changed. As soon as Jesus Christ took control of his life he realized God had some things for him that far surpassed what, from his human perspective, had seemed to be so terribly important and valuable. When he knew he was part of God' eternal plan and had received God's eternal promises, his perspective dramatically changed."

Our passage this morning reflects back upon the awesome and wonderful potential of Christian believers through Jesus Christ. Each of us, at one time or another, will wonder if they will ever find fulfillment for their life. They wonder if life really has the potential to

be wonderful, meaningful, and fulfilling...and if it does, whether they can discover and achieve that potential.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Hebrews 13:20-21

²⁰ Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord, ²¹ equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The verb, "equip", expresses the **process** of receiving a desire or wish. The sense is, "May the God of peace equip you...." There are four facets to this:

Prayer

BODY:

I. God Will Equip Us in Every Good Thing to do His Will.

Hebrews 13:21 (NASB95)

God will ²¹ **equip** you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

ILLUSTRATION:

Imagine the parents of a newborn bringing their little bundle home from the hospital. They carry him from room to room, explaining, "There is the refrigerator. Help yourself when you are hungry. There is the bathroom. It has everything you need: a toilet, shower, and a sink. Your bedroom is in here. Just make sure that you change the sheets each week and make your bed. If you ever need anything, let us know. We will see what we can do."

Thankfully, no earthly parents would ever think of doing that, and God does not do that, either. As Paul explains...

Romans 8:32 (NASB95)

³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

There is one sense in which evil men killed Jesus. But in another sense, **God** put His **own** Son to death for us.

Acts 2:22-24 (NASB95)

²² "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— ²³ this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. ²⁴ But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

If God allowed His Son to die on the cross while we were yet sinners, consider how much more He will provide **all that we need** to live for Him and serve Him for His glory?

“**To do God’s will**” suggests that we live like Jesus, because He came to do God’s will. This is a lifelong process that is never complete in this life. But the point here is that the same mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead equips us to do God’s will and to live for His glory. When we attempt to do God’s will, God will restore our relationship with Him so that we can accomplish our intended purpose for Him.

As sinners, we are wounded and broken. By our own efforts, we could never put our lives back together so that they would be useful to the holy God. But what we cannot do, God does! He mends the torn places in our lives. He sets the broken bones, so that they will heal. He does not do this so that we can live for ourselves, but rather so that we can “**in every good thing ... do His will.**” His Word shows us the things that “**are pleasing in His sight**” so that we can walk in them.

II. God Will Work in Us that Which is Pleasing in His Sight.

God equips or restores us, and then He **works** in us. But this does not mean that we are to just sit back and wait for God to work in us. Rather, our text conveys an active faith.

Philippians 2:12-13 (NASB95)

¹² So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

God saves us by His sovereign grace, not by anything we do. Both saving faith and repentance are His **gift**, not something that comes from within us. Once we are saved, He blesses us with every spiritual blessing in Christ. He works in us, motivating and empowering us to do His will. And yet at the same time, we must work in cooperation with Him.

III. God Works These Things Through Jesus Christ.

Paul put it all together when he wrote to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:3-4 (NASB95)

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

God saved us by His grace, and He prepared the very works that we should do for Him beforehand. But, we have to walk in them. Our aim every day, beginning on the thought level, should be, “God, I want to please You because of Your abundant grace that You have shown me. Empower me today to do that which is pleasing in Your sight.”

Thus God will equip us in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight. Then the author adds “**through Jesus Christ**”.

As we saw back in verse 15 in our text, everything in the Christian life is “**through Him.**” We are **saved** because He chose us **in Him** before the foundation of the world. Through Christ we are blessed with every spiritual blessing.

Someone has added up the phrase “**in Christ**” or “**in Christ Jesus**” in Paul’s writings and found that it occurs 169 times. What a glorious truth, that if you have trusted Christ, everything that is true of Him is true of you! All of His riches are yours to enjoy!

ILLUSTRATION:

Imagine that you were a poor orphan in Africa and the billionaire, Bill Gates, adopted you and included you in his will as the only heir. Suddenly, all of the riches of the richest man in the world are yours because you are in his family. Far better than the riches of Bill Gates, which will perish, are God’s riches in Jesus Christ, which endure throughout eternity! And they are yours in Him!

IV. God and the Lord Jesus Christ Get All of the Glory.

Going back to our text...verse 21 continues...

Hebrews 13:21 (NASB95)

God will ²¹ **equip** you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, **to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Grammatically, “**to whom**” may refer either to God or to Jesus Christ, and scholars are divided over which is preferable. But since the Father and the Son are one, they both get the glory in our salvation.

As John revealed to us in Revelation concerning the second coming of Christ:

Revelation 5:13 (NASB95)

¹³ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying,

“To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.”

CONCLUSION:

People who are God’s enemies often do not recognize their true spiritual condition, because Satan has blinded their minds.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NASB95)

³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

(Emphasize) I know everyone here wants to go to heaven. You have all indicated this to me at one point or another. If you are truly wanting salvation so you can spend eternity in heaven, you will listen intently to the Gospel and do your very best to live by it. It is so easy to get distracted by this world. If our life is not driven by the Gospel, you are one of “**those who are perishing**”!

One of the first signs that God is at work in your heart is that you begin to see your sin and guilt before God.

You recognize that there is no way that you can atone for your own sin. You wonder if there is any way that you can have true peace with God. The great news of the Bible is, Yes! That is why Jesus Christ came. Paul wrote...

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 (NASB95)

¹⁸ Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses (or sins) against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

What is reconciliation? **Reconciliation is the restoration of our good standing with God that we lost when we became sinners.**

Now is the day of salvation when every sinner may find mercy at the cross.

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NASB95)

² for He says, "At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you." Behold, now is "the acceptable time," behold, now is "the day of salvation"—

Your acceptable time for your salvation will end when you die or when Jesus comes again. Then it will be too late and you will face judgment. So the first part of the author's benediction shows that God has provided everything for our salvation through Jesus our Lord. But, He does not just save us from His judgment and then leave us to fend for ourselves. Once we are saved, He also blesses us with every spiritual blessing in Christ He works in us, motivating and empowering us to do His will. And yet at the same time, we must work in cooperation with Him.

Has God opened your eyes to the realization that you need Christ? If so, let go of everything else and lay hold of Jesus Christ. He is that "treasure hidden in the field".

Matthew 13:44 (NASB95)

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid *again*; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Through Christ, God has provided all that you need for salvation from His judgment. In Him, God has provided all that you need to live in a manner that is pleasing unto Him, for His glory. Make sure that your faith rests in the great risen Shepherd: Jesus our Lord!

Salvation is not about us. The Christian life is not about us. It is all about God's glory and the glory of Jesus, the Lamb of God, who gave Himself for our sins. If you are not living daily to glorify God for His great salvation through Jesus Christ, you are living for an insignificant purpose. God created you so that you would live to glorify Him by enjoying Him forever. "So be it"... "Amen".

What a Day That Will Be.