

“The Lord Provides!”

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From our Old Testament lesson, we recall how God provided for the Israelites after they left Egypt and were in the wilderness going to the Promised Land. In our Second Lesson, we learn that God provides for His church, which is us, His people on earth.

And in our Gospel we're reminded how Jesus provided food to the multitude with five loaves and two fish, and used that memory in folk's heads to bring them to the truth, that God ultimately has provided all we need through His Son, Jesus Christ, Who is The Bread of Life.

Open to John 6. So if God has given gifts to all of mankind, what exactly does He provide? Look at verse 27, *“Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you.”*

God provides **Salvation** for us. He gives it us as a gift. It's a gift, that's handed over to us through faith. It's something that was caused by Jesus coming to earth and willingly give His life for us. Notice, Jesus doesn't say anything about us achieving this gift for ourselves, but Jesus says He'll give it to us. It's ours!

None of us are pure enough for God because we sin. But through Christ, God makes us ready for Him. God gives us salvation through the body and blood of Jesus Christ. It's His gift to the children He loves.

We learn about all that God provides through two things, **His Promises** and **His Word**. His promises began as He looks at creation and gives Adam and Eve the reasons He created the way He did. Listen to Genesis 1:29-31, *“And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.”*

To Noah, He promised He would never send a flood again. Genesis 8:21, *“And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done.”*

All of these promises come to us through His Word. Psalm 119:105, *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”* Everything we can ever gain comes through God and is given to us in His Word!

Our God gives us all things. Our work as Jesus says is to believe in Him Who the Father has sent. **Faith** in Jesus Christ given us through the Holy Spirit. We don't need to worry about our salvation, we don't need to try and obtain Jesus wants us to believe that our salvation is secure in the hands of God. Faith must our focus on the gifts that God offers us and believe. Faith believes in the promises of God. Faith accepts God's work of salvation as a gift.

Look at John 6:35, *“Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”* Jesus clearly identifies

Himself as the source of real life. He's not just talking about life here on earth, but also life forever with Him in heaven forever. He gives us true **Life** because of His love for us each and every day.

We are provided **Peace**. Think about the way we close worship with the Benediction, *"The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with His Favor and give you His peace."* With Jesus at your side, why do you worry? What possibly could stop you and keep you from knowing that He cares for you so much that even in a world that is going crazy, you have nothing to fear!

Open to 1 Timothy. We are provided **Contentment**. Many times, because of what we see in others, we feel like we are treated unfairly. Others seem to be reaching success in possessions and favor but we're not! Look at 6:6-7, *"But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world." God is the One Who provides not us or our works! It's all Him!*

He provides us **Each Other**. We're in this together! He calls us together as His children to praise and glorify Him and praise Him with all our hearts. But as we come together, it gives us an opportunity to share with each other, to pray for each other, support each other, and worship together in community.

As we're together in community here, we then have the opportunity to share what God has given us and work together to meet the needs of others. It's in what we give to others that we're sharing more than earthly needs, we're sharing Jesus Christ!

After looking at this list, the last point might seem like a given. He provides us **Grace**. Grace is so undeserved. We don't do anything to receive it. It comes to you out of the goodness of God's heart.

Because God gives you everything, open to Ephesians 2. Grace is such a blessing and it reminds us that everything He provides is a result of His incredible love. Join me as we close and look at Paul's words in verses 4-10, *"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."*