**“Flickering Lamps – Christ & His Church” (Blackaby)**

**Week 5: Christ’s Provision and His Church (Pt. 1)**

**October 28, 2020**

**“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness” 2 Cor. 12:9**

“Every time God places you in a position of need, He enables you to experience firsthand that He is your Provider.”

“…God is faithful to provide for every need we have as we obey Him. Timing is always key. In my experience, faith is always inked to action. It doesn’t take faith to believe intellectually that God can provide for your needs. But it does take faith to resign from a good job, sell your house, and relocate your family…”

“The truth is, faith is not expressed by what we say, but by what we do. Over the course of decades of ministry, I can testify that the Lord’s provision was never late. And, as my wife would hasten to add, ‘It was rarely early!’”

1. **An Open Door**

**The Church in Philadelphia:** Their faithfulness was rewarded with an open door. “Yet Christ promised to provide them unimpeded access to His presence.” (95)

**The Church in Laodicea:** “The church evidently was carrying out ministries without seeking God’s direction or provision. As a result, they had grown self-confident and prideful.” (96)

**The Church in Smyrna:** “Though this group of believers had little money or resources, they had an unlimited line of credit with the bank of heaven! If they saw themselves as impoverished, they would behave as paupers. If they viewed themselves as children of the King, they would step out in confidence. The important factor was not how much treasure they had, but how much treasure God had.”

**How does the Lord provide for His church in Smyrna?**

“The truth is, God can lead any church to a vibrant future. However, He requires churches to humble themselves and seek His direction. If you will do this, there will never be a need you face for which God does not have a generous supply.” (97)

1. **Truth About God’s Provision**

“Being continually reminded of what you don’t have is not necessarily a bad thing, as long as you don’t allow your poverty to determine your ministry. Your church’s ability to minister is never limited by your resources; it is driven by God’s provision.” (98)

“Before I moved to Canada, I knew intellectually that God was my Provider, but it was through the challenges we faced that I experienced Him that way. God invited me to serve Him in an impoverished church. Our only hope was God’s supply.” (98)

1. **God Provides In A Variety of Ways**
2. **God Provides Finances**

“God does not need to provide any resources for what you are not doing...God often waits until we start marching before He provides the required resources. (Josh. 3:15)”

Blackaby tells the story of calling a mission’s pastor, Len Koster ($7000)

“As we prayed, we clearly sensed God telling us to step out in faith and start mission churches. Most importantly, we knew that once God speaks we must obey immediately.”

“God did not promise to supply our good intentions. He promised to provide for our obedience.” (100)