

The Lord Will Provide

“Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin. . . Your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Luke 12:27-31 NKJV)

November typically has me meditating on what I’m thankful for, and this year I’ve been especially struck by God’s provision for my library’s collection—not just in the last few months, but throughout the past twenty years.

When I first started at the seminary there was no catalog and no shelf list—there were just books on shelves, and most of the best books were on loan from a professor. Two years later we merged our library collection and functions with the college across the street, and I withdrew the seminary’s duplicate volumes because of space constraints. Later, we learned that the college was moving to a new campus and the library collections would be split—the deduping from more than a decade before had to be reversed primarily through donations.

The library’s theological collection is not built solely on donations; that’s just bad library practice. However, the library acquisitions budget has had its good years (when I got to spend it) and bad years (when I didn’t). Sometimes I joke that I feel like I’m making bricks

without straw, but that isn’t entirely true; my library has received some amazing donations from former-students, faculty, and others. This summer I was told that the seminary intends to hire an Old Testament professor (new faculty usually provide new opportunities for collection use) and just about the same time, a retired professor of Religion and Jewish Studies donated his large, academic, professional collection covering subjects most likely to be of interest to our new hire.

Each of us has a story about how we “coincidentally” solved a problem in our libraries; this month I ask you to reflect on who orchestrated that solution. I have come to realize that God has sent specific donations of books to the library that have fulfilled specific collection needs. Luke 12:27–31 asks us to consider how God provides for the lilies that are here today and gone tomorrow. God knows what we need, and He will provide it—even for a library collection, for which I am very thankful.



—Jennifer Ewing

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