

I Can Do It

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Date: 14 June 2020

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[0 : 0 0] I can do all things through Christ. I can do all things through Christ. Have you ever quoted that verse? Might have been during a difficult time, or it might have been during a time in your life when you were wondering if you were up to the task for something. And we're going to be in Philippians chapter 4 this morning, that very verse that I just quoted. Chances are when we quote that verse to ourselves, it's normally for a reason. We've experienced things in this life that were either difficult or discouraging, and we often use that verse in our lives to remind ourselves that God is in control. And as a follower of Christ, we have the power of God at our disposal. And in fact, we can do all things through the power and through the strength that Christ is able to give us. But often we're tempted to play the victim and say, oh, woe is me. I can't do this anymore. I might as well just give up. And some do that. Many do that, and some even permanently. For the follower of Christ, there's really never an excuse for us to give up unless it is the will of God that we turn and pivot from one thing to another. But God is in control, and he can provide us that power.

The apostle Paul, who wrote this letter to the Philippian believers, believed that very same thing, that God was in control, and that no matter what he was experiencing, God was able to give him that strength. Paul chose to look up. If you remember, as we were talking about the background and the history and the setting of this letter of the book of the letter of Philippians, Paul was in prison.

And Paul was not in a very good circumstance, but rather than playing the victim and saying, oh, woe is me. God's called me to be the apostle to the Gentiles, but I can't reach anyone because I'm incarcerated. I can't do anything for God because I'm stuck here behind these four walls.

But Paul chose to look up, and Paul chose to make the best of his circumstances. He chose to be content in those circumstances because God was giving him the opportunity to speak to those Roman guards.

And God actually gave Paul an audience before the emperor. And so Paul looked up, realized that he could be content because God had a different plan for him. Although it may not have fit with Paul's plans for his life, he knew that God was still in control. God was able to give him the strength to go through anything that came his way. Now, we probably don't need to read this next verse, but let's say it together before I go there. Philippians 4.13, I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me or who strengthens me. Philippians 4.13, one of the verses that very many new believers in Christ learn, especially if you've been through Bible memory programs like BMA, Bible Memory Association, or WANA Youth Clubs, you've memorized Philippians 4.13. Or even without, you've been reading through God's Word and your eye just came to Philippians 4.13 and you stopped there, and it was a verse that meant something to you because it is something that we can latch onto and realize that God is in control. God can do the same thing for you and for me that he did for the Apostle Paul. Allow him to have contentment in whatever situation, in whatever state that he found himself in. But this morning, I believe we're going to see that there are three things, or what we're going to bring out today, is that there are at least three things that we need to be able to do to enable us to understand and realize, to be able to understand that God is able to do all things through us. The first thing is we need to identify, be able to identify our weaknesses, and realize that as a human being, we are weak. Receiving God's help starts with admitting the fact that I need help. Have you ever been somewhere or been in a situation where you try to help someone and you could tell they needed help but didn't want help? We realize sometimes that when we do need the help, we need to accept the help. And especially in God's case, we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us, but we need to be willing to admit it and receive the strength that he offers.

[5 : 37] 2 Corinthians 12, verses 9 and 10, Paul said, Paul realized and understood a little bit of background on 2 Corinthians chapter 12. The apostle Paul had prayed to God and he was wanting to be healed of an infirmity. But God said, no, I'm choosing not to take care of this for you, Paul.

And so Paul decides in verse 9, or Paul hears in verse 9, he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you. My strength is made perfect in what? In weakness. God's strength is made complete. That word perfect here means, so God is telling Paul, my strength is made complete through your weakness because I can then come through and show my power in your life. So it's through the weakness that Paul understood and realized that he had that God was able to come into Paul's life and show himself powerful to everyone around him. And sometimes people ask, how can you have a smile on your face taking into consideration all that's going on in your life? How can you handle that? How is it that you're not getting angry? How is it that you're not getting discouraged? Well, it's through the power and strength of God that he is providing. How can you forgive that person? Well, it's through the power of God that he is providing me. My strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, Paul said, most gladly, I will rather do what about his infirmities? I'll boast in them because it's an avenue for God to show himself powerful. Boast in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. God's strength is made perfect in my weakness. So in order to receive God's strength, we need to admit that we're weak. Is that easy for us? Not for most people. Not for that independent person that doesn't want to admit weakness. That's difficult for us. But we have to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and realize that he is in control. It sounds contradictory to say, in order to be able to do all things, I must admit that I can't do all things. It's not a contradiction. It's a paradox. What a paradox is, is two opposite things are equally true.

It's equally true that I'm weak, that you are weak as a human being, and we can't do all things. As a matter of fact, we really can't do much of anything that we can, and we can do nothing of eternal value. But at the same time, we can do all things because it's Christ that strengthens us.

So while it's true that we're weak, it's true that God is strong and he comes in and he fills in the gap. Verse 10, therefore, Paul said, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions. Now, wait a minute. What did Paul just, what did Paul, we just finished hearing Paul say in verses 10 through 12? What was he, what was his attitude in all the different situations he had experienced since Christ came into his life? Do you remember? I rejoiced in the Lord. Verse 10 says, I rejoiced in the Lord greatly. Now at last, your care has flourished again, though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Paul was trusting in the providence of God. He says, verse 11, not that I speak in regard to need. He says, I've learned in whatever state I am to be content. I know how to be abased. I know how to abound everywhere and in all things. I've learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. And then he says,

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. So Paul is saying, whether it's in plenty, Christ is strengthening me to be content in plenty. If I am in dire straits, God is strengthening me to be content in whatever situation I am because I know. So why was Paul able to say, or rather, why was Paul able to be content in whatever happens? Because he knew he could do all things. He could be content in plenty and he could be content in need. So I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. And we go to Peter 5, verse 6.

[10 : 46] Humble, therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time. So receiving the strength of God requires humility. I can't do it. But God, you can. And so as we humble ourselves and say, I can't do it, we can then say, I can do it through Christ who strengthens me. And we can echo the words of the Apostle Paul, I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me.

What is the thing we hear? You know, we all have self-talk, but we hear children. As children, we did this. We're learning a new task or we're learning a new skill. And we try the first few times and we fail. What do we often hear? What words do we often hear? I can't do it. I can't do it.

Yes. And what do we say as parents? Yes, you can. Just get up and try again. Yes, you can. I can't do it. Yes, you can. Why do we say that? For encouragement. But we know something they don't.

We know that skill and ability comes not only through practice, but also through age. And as we grow up, we're able to do things that we find difficult to do as a young child.

God knows something we don't. He knows he can give us the power to do whatever he wants us to do. But as we grow up, we may not say it out loud all the time, but we have a little voice in our head that when things get tough, what do we tell ourselves? Can't do it. I don't think I can do this.

[12 : 52] I don't think I can go through this. And what does that little voice cause us to do? Shut down. Stop trying. Stop being. It'll change our attitude.

We'll have a lousy, rotten attitude because we're telling ourselves or we're believing that inner voice in our head that says, you're not up to the task. You can't do this. You're not strong enough.

But if we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, what will God do? God will exalt us. God will take care of whatever is going on in our life. Romans chapter 8, verse 26. Likewise, the spirit also helps in our what? In our weaknesses. Whether we're having trouble forgiving someone, whether we're having trouble looking up when things are down, when we are in a period of plenty. And rather than becoming self-sufficient and thinking that we're doing this all on our own, the Holy Spirit helps our weakness and helps us to exalt and honor God for his provision.

For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now, the specific infirmity or inability that's listed here, we're not really sure because it could be anything in our life. Anytime we go through something that we don't know what to pray for, we don't know how to pray, the Holy Spirit takes over and he translates that inability to God and God knows exactly what we need. Many people ignore this verse in the Bible because they don't want to admit their disabilities. They don't want to admit their weaknesses or there's some things that God knows and we don't know. If we won't admit what we don't know, don't have and can't do, we can't receive God's help. Does that make sense? If we're not willing to admit that we need help or that God knows something that we don't, we're not going to receive his help because God, remember, God has given us and God allows us to have a free will. God will not force his will upon us if we choose to disobey God. Now, God may chastise us if, as a follower of Christ,

God may discipline us, but God won't force us or won't force his will upon us unless he sees it necessary. So, you and I are weak. We need God's strength to get through our life in such a way that honors and pleases him. So, we need to give up our pride, our independent spirit, and here's the key. Be content with what he provides. Be content with what he provides because all we need is God and what he chooses to provide. That's the key to being content. Realize that what it all boils down to is all I need is God. Don't need that new car.

[16 : 17] Don't need that new whatever. Don't need this or don't need that. It might be nice. I might be more comfortable, but I don't need it. All I need and all you need is God and what he chooses to provide. If he provides complete health, praise him for it. If he doesn't, thank him and say, I'll boast in my infirmity because God, you get the glory and God takes up where our weakness, where our strength leaves off. All we need is God and what he chooses to provide. So, identify and admit our weaknesses. Third, secondly, we must believe in God's strength. Believe in God's strength. Go back. We go back to 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verse number 9. Paul said, and he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Paul believed it. Therefore, most gladly, the result was I will boast in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Paul believed in the strength of God. Do you believe in God's strength? Well, you say, well, of course I do. I'm a Christian. I believe in the Bible. I believe in God's strength. I believe in the power of God, and I believe God can empower me to do anything. Okay? It's one thing to believe it up here in our head, but it's quite another to actually put it into practice and live like God is in control and God is all-powerful. So, we have to believe and respond that God is powerful and we can trust in God's strength. And then thirdly, we must exchange our weakness for his strength. Exchange our weakness for his strength. We come back to 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 9. God said, my grace is sufficient for you. My strength is made perfect in weakness. So, what did Paul do?

He says, therefore, most gladly, I will rather boast in my infirmities. What he did was he exchanged his weakness for the strength of God in his life. He said, okay, I give my weakness to you.

I admit it. I humble myself. And God, you've got my weakness. Here it is. And I'll exchange it. And in return, what did Paul receive? The power of God to make it through in spite of those difficult circumstances Paul found himself in. So, he exchanged his weakness for the strength of God. And we do the same. We can't live a contented life for Jesus without the Father's strength. Not true contentment anyway. Not being fully and truly content in everything that God chooses to provide us. And then verse 10. Therefore, as we come to a close, therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. The key is, when we begin to lose our grip on contentment. When we begin to lose or lack that contentment, and we begin to look to things around us and say, oh, if only I had, or if only things were different, I could feel better, or I would be more content. The moment we begin losing our grip on true contentment, consciously exchange those pangs of discontentment with his strength to be all that we need. Let that be the catalyst for you and for me to say, when I begin to lose my grip on contentment, and I begin to grumble and complain, then exchange that to say, okay, God, all I need is you and what you choose to provide, and you will take care of the rest. I believe his strength is made perfect in my weakness. I believe God is enough to change the way I think about me, and then say, as we say it together, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Let us pray. Father, this morning, as we've come through your word, an extremely familiar verse, the strength that Christ is able to give through us, give to us in spite of our weakness. Father, we pray that you would encourage us, that you would empower us this week to accomplish your will. Keep safe. And Father, I pray as well that you would help us to be able to reach others for Christ. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.