



SERIES: Philippians (May / June) “Finding Joy in the Journey”

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Saturday, June 26, 2021

Scripture: Philippians 4:13-14

NC0187

TITLE: Can You Really Do Anything?

One of the unique challenges and privileges of being a pastor is the opportunity to clear up confusing or misused passages of the Bible. As we’ve talked about, the books of the Bible were written from God through people to a certain audience. In other words, there is a context to every book, letter, passage, or verse. And what can happen is people cherry-pick a verse to fit their situation. Sometimes it works, but often it misses the mark.

One such passage is Philippians 4:13 (ESV). Let’s look at this often-misunderstood passage:

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me. ¹⁴ Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.”

We all like Philippians 4:13. We don’t often quote verse 14, though it keeps us grounded in the meaning. Paul has just shared the importance of right focus and thinking, because it drives our behavior or, as Paul put it, “practice”: The habit of righteous living - the ability to receive and practice peace, joy, and contentment. That’s why, in all circumstances, Paul can do all things through Him who gives us strength.

This is one of those passages that looks great on a piece of art to hang on a wall. It’s a great image to share on Facebook, because it’s biblical. But it’s not a magical phrase or prayer for a successful business, to write a best seller, record a Grammy-winning album, or beat Conor McGregor in an octagon.

So what was Paul getting at then? Paul had real physical hardship in following Christ. Yet, he knew God would provide for his needs, and provide sufficient power or strength to endure, until his time was up. So Paul was referring to the power to do what God had tasked him to do.

It sounds a lot like the words of Isaiah in Isaiah 40: “He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. ³⁰Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. ³¹But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint” (40:29-31, NLT).

You see, Friend, what God has commissioned, God will resource. What God has called, He will also supply. So here’s my challenge for you today: What is it God is asking you to do to fulfill his Great Commission? Paul was a disciple-making disciple. God is asking you to do the same

wherever you are at. But you can't do it alone. God is there and will provide you the strength to do it.

So do the next thing to be obedient to God and ask Him for the strength. It's there for the taking. The question is will you receive it?