

WHY CAN'T YOU? – PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13

INTRODUCTION

1. Living the Christian life and trying to follow in the step of Jesus can be a challenge.
2. It calls on us to sacrifice our desires for what God wants (**John 6:38; 2 Cor. 5:9**).
3. It calls on us to be able to endure and to grow (**Luke 9:23; Matt. 5:48; 1 Tim. 4:6-8**).
4. And while many of us strive to do this, many of us feel like we never do enough.
5. We feel like we never measure up, like it is impossible to be pleasing to God.
6. We wonder how Paul could say he could do “all things” in Christ?
7. Why do we feel this way and what can we do to overcome it?
8. What can we do to believe that we can also do all the things God wants us to do in Christ Jesus?

DISCUSSION

I. WHY DO YOU THINK YOU CAN'T?

- A. Why is it that some brethren feel like being a faithful disciple is impossible?
- B. Sometimes it is because we have a distorted view of God (**Matt. 25:14-30**).
 - i. Like the one-talent man, some see God as a “hard” or impossible master.
 - ii. Which is to say that God is “unyielding in behavior or attitude”¹ that He is “*hard, strict, harsh, cruel, merciless.*”²
 - iii. And because they picture God in this way, they seek to play it safe (i.e. bury their talent).
 - iv. They are so afraid of doing something wrong they don't end up doing much of anything, they don't try to do their best.
- C. Sometimes it is because we have a distorted view of our own selves (**Ps. 22:6**).
 - i. In other words, we base our identity on what we do or don't do.
 - ii. If we do something bad, we ARE bad.
 - iii. If we fail at something, we ARE a failure.
- D. Of course, these days we often find ourselves falling into the trap of comparing ourselves with others (**2 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 1:10**).
 - i. As we noted in other lessons, our fascination with social media has only heightened the tendency to do this.
 - ii. We look on our social media feeds and we see people whose lives seem to always be fun and exciting, who always seem to have it together.
 - iii. We come to services, and we see brethren who seem to have the perfect life, job, marriage, family, etc., but we are sure we never will.
 - iv. Of course, the truth is that what one sees on social media or on any given Sunday is not the whole truth.
 - v. No one in Jesus is without sin and no one who is human has a life without struggle (**1 John 1:8-10**).
 - vi. No one who is successful or faithful does it overnight or on their own.

¹ Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. 2000. In [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](#), 3rd ed., 930. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

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- E. And then there is the tendency to focus on all the things we see (or think we see) God expecting us to do and believe we cannot do it all or that we can't do it perfectly (**Matt. 28:20; Luke 17:10**).
- F. The truth is, that every single one of us can live lives that are pleasing to God (**Matt. 25:21, 23**).
- G. The truth is, that every single one of us can live lives that please God each and every day (**Matt. 5:13-16**).
- H. But how is this possible?

II. WHO ARE YOU IN CHRIST?

- A. There are a lot of ways to answer that question, but we must begin by considering who we are, and most importantly who we are in Jesus.
- B. Remember, Paul said he could do all things in Jesus (**Phil. 4:13**).
- C. Until we come to grips with who we truly are in Christ we will not be able to do what we should do as disciples.
- D. As one man observed, "You do what you do because of what you think of you"³ and "To change what you do, you need to first change what you think of you."⁴
- E. And this is what Scripture calls us to do and equips us to do, to renew our minds and be transformed into the people God intended us to be (**Rom. 12:1-2**).
- F. The gospel of Jesus is designed to open our eyes to the reality of who we truly are and who we were made to be, to help us see past Satan's and the world's lies (**2 Cor. 4:3-4; 1 John 2:15-17**).
- G. Scripture declares that if we are in Christ, we are a new person, a changed person and we should no longer see ourselves in the same way (**2 Cor. 5:16-19**).
- H. So, who are we in Christ?
 - i. We are loved, chosen, and adopted as children of God (**John 1:12; Eph. 1:3-14**).
 - ii. We are God's "masterpiece" (**Eph. 2:1-10, NLT**).
 - iii. We are citizens of the Kingdom and members of God's family (**Eph. 2:11-22**).
- I. We could go on and on showing how God has transformed us in Christ.
- J. If you are in Christ, you are not worthless and good for nothing.
- K. If you are in Christ, all things are possible (**Matt. 19:26; Eph. 3:20; Phil. 4:13**).

CONCLUSION

1. Christianity is not an easy life, but it isn't impossible either.
2. God would not have gone to such lengths to save us, redeem us and call us into fellowship with Him if He thought it was impossible for us to do what He asks (**Eph. 4:1; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 8:28**).
3. God is ready and willing to work in us, but for that to happen we must renew our minds.
4. If we will accept who we are in Christ and rely on God's grace, we can do all that God calls us to in Jesus (**Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; 4:13**).

³ Groeschel, Craig. 2023. [The Power to Change: Mastering the Habits That Matter Most](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

⁴ Groeschel, Craig. 2023. [The Power to Change: Mastering the Habits That Matter Most](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.