

WHEN YOU THINK YOU CAN'T, Remember Phillipians 4
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REMEMBER PHILIPPIANS 4:13

"I can do all things through Christ
which strengtheneth me."

I knew a lady who was an excellent game player, but she was her own worst enemy. Fully convinced of her inability to compete successfully, she would systematically explain reasons for her incompetence. Having done this, she would surprise herself with excellent play which vanquished her opponents. She would say, "I cannot do it," but she was mistaken.

It has often been claimed that it is better to try and fail than never to try. Francis Gay, in The Friendship Book for 1972, quoted these lines from an unknown author:

If you think you're beaten, you are. If you think you dare not,
you don't.
If you'd like to win, but you think you can't, it's almost certain,
you won't.
If you think you'll lose, you've lost, for out in the world, you'll find
That success begins in a fellow's will-it's all in the state
of the mind.
Think big, and your deeds will grow. Think small, and you'll
fall behind.
Think you can win, and you will-it's all in the state of mind.
Life's battles often go to the stronger or faster man.
But sooner or later, the man who wins is the man who thinks he can.

Consider Goliath Who Said He Would and Couldn't

He was a one-man mountain, the pride of all Philistia, and the hem of the nation's army. When the sun shone upon his glistening armor, it was easy to believe the mountain was being set on fire. When he roared his challenge to Israel, it sounded like thunder preceding a storm. When he flexed his muscles and waved his enormous weapons, his opponents trembled. Yet the giant was amazed when a small boy with pebbles in his hand challenged his superiority. This was an affront to his dignity, an unforgivable insult to his prowess.

"And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field" (1 Sam. 17:44).

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His face was flushed with fury-tis child was not even a dog, he was a senseless puppy! "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (1 Sam. 17:45-46).

That small boy was tall enough to look over the shoulder of the giant and see God behind him. Goliath said, "I will" but couldn't. David said, "I will" and did!

Consider Philip Who Said He Couldn't and Did

The Sea of Galilee was probably resplendent with the glow of a setting sun. The evening breeze was gently playing a tune in the leaves of the trees. As Jesus looked from the hill to see the immense multitude that had followed him, He sighed. They were hungry. They were "as sheep without a shepherd." The children were asking for food, but the excited parents were too intent on waiting for another miracle to pay attention to the needs of their offspring. It was wonder-

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ful to tell people about the bread of life, but they needed a meal. The little people had to be fed.

"[Jesus] saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them that every one of them may take a little" (John 6:5-7).

Master, what you suggest is impossible. I would need to work every day for nine months in order to obtain enough money to buy provisions for this crowd. There are no shops, and we have no money. A boy's lunch! Five barley loaves and a couple of small fish! Pardon my laughter, Lord, but common sense says it can't be done.

And yet it was done, and Philip helped do it What a difference Jesus made in that difficult situation. It is not known whether Philip ever met the apostle Paul, but in any case, he would have fully agreed with Paul's statement, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Consider Paul Who Said He Could and Did

Paul was an enigma, difficult to understand and even harder to explain. Writing to the Corinthians he said, "Of the Jews five times

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received I forty stripes save one." Therefore on five different occasions he was lashed for his faith - but he could not be silenced! "Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned." Other prisoners died during such punishment, but Paul survived. "Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep." He either clung to the wreckage of a ship, or lay in a tossing lifeboat, yet he did not sink (see 2 Cor. 11 :24-33). It is believed that Paul suffered from extremely poor eyesight, yet his letters comprise most of the New Testament. He could not have been a robust man, yet within his lifetime he evangelized the known world He did not always succeed in his mission, but he never quit Men and women of his caliber never do.

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