

Triumphant Living in 2024 Outline

Philippians 4:13

- I. The most well-known and misunderstood verse: Philippians 4:13
 - A. Can we really do all things? How come I haven't been able to do all things?
 - B. Is this a promise or a possibility?
 - C. Supposed context—Paul's life is going great
 1. Actual context—Paul's in prison with the possibility of death!
- II. The secret to a most satisfying, joyful, fulfilling, meaningful life:
 - A. Be able to transcend your circumstances (4:11-12).
- III. The meaning:
 - A. **Far reaching ability.**
 1. "All"—*emphatic position*: It means ALL!
 2. Qualification.
 - a. I can do *all* things that are *within the will of God*.
 3. The idea is to live ALL of life within the will of God through the power of Jesus
 - a. The moment we go out of God's will, we're on our own!
 4. (Vs. 11-12) Rely on the sufficiency and power of Jesus Christ REGARDLESS of your situation and circumstances.
 5. "All things" – *inclusion statement*: A-Z and everything inbetween.
 6. "I" is personal; "Can" is a word of power; "Do" is to be involved in activity.
 - a. "I can do" is in the *present tense*: it is ALWAYS in the present tense.
 7. There is not a situation that you can get in where you cannot glorify God.
 - B. **Exclusive access.**
 1. The promise and scope in Philippians 4:13 extremely wide, limitless but the access is extremely narrow (exclusive).
 - a. It is accessed ONLY through Jesus Christ.
 - b. "**Through**" = *en* (Gr) = "In" (a preposition!).

2. The secret to all of life is not in circumstances, rather the centrality of Jesus Christ in your life... **Christ in you!**

- a. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; 1st Timothy 1:12; 2nd Timothy 4:17

C. **Supernatural strength.**

1. “**Strengthens**” is *endunamoo*... a verb meaning “**dynamite**” = supernatural strength.

“Christianity is not a philosophy it is mighty power that enters us!”

-- Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones

IV. The will of God.

A. Romans 12:1-2

1. The aim of all human life in God’s eyes is that Christ would be made to look as valuable as he is throughout all of our lives.
2. One must put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator” (Colossians 3:10).
3. Paul’s answer to how we turn all of life into worship is—We must be transformed, not just our external behavior, but the way we feel and think — our minds (Romans 12:2).
4. “**If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation**” (2 Corinthians 5:17). But now we must ***become what we are!***

B. The will of God.

1. God’s will of decree (God’s sovereign will)—what WILL take place
2. God’s will of command—We can reject this.

C. The progressive process.

1. God’s will of command is revealed with final, decisive authority only in the Bible.
2. We apply biblical truth to new situations that may or may not be explicitly addressed in the Bible.
3. Operate from the subconscious.

Saturate your minds with the word of God. Learn who God is and what He desires. Apply Biblical truth to all of your lives. Be transformed! Know God's will for your life!

Embrace Philippians 4:13 beginning..... NOW!

Triumphant Living in 2024 Pastoral Notes

Philippians 4:13

Several years ago we were driving to Yosemite Valley, about a four hour drive from where we began...it was near New Years... I was listening to some talk show on AM radio as we drove... about every half hour the host of the show put out his teaser to keep us listening to his show...

It went something like this... *Coming up later in the show, I'll reveal the one great absolute truth that will totally change your life forever...* (not a Christian radio show...)

Another half hour went by as we drove...*Coming up, the one secret to a happy, joyful life, guaranteed!*

We kept driving getting closer to Yosemite... *On the top of the hour I will be revealing the greatest secret to a meaningful, fulfilling life...* Now... being a Christian... I know the true secret... you most likely do to... but hearing this over and over again... I have to admit that I was getting a little excited to find out what it was!...perhaps there was something I didn't know about the "ultimate life".

We were minutes to the valley... I remember there was a little static on the radio being an AM station in a very rural area...but I heard him say again... *after this commercial... in just a minute... I will reveal to you the true... absolute secret to a happy...meaningful... joyful... amazing life...fulfilling life... something you can employ today!*

For four hours I'd been hearing this teaser and I was very eager to hear what he had to say...

If you have ever entered Yosemite Valley from the South, you know that you go through a fairly long tunnel which opens to the glorious valley... the very moment we entered into this long tunnel... I heard the talk show host say *well...here it is...what you should have been waiting for... the secret to....*and then NOTHING!

AM radio never did well in tunnels!... I wanted to scream!... *You've got to be kidding me!... I drove for four hours in anticipation of finding out what life's greatest secret is... and this?...* We exited the other end of the tunnel just as the host said... *Well, there you have it!*

Well... you won't have to wait four hours to be frustrated.... Not even an hour... Being New Years Eve... I wanted to speak on something that would be encouraging... something we can sink our teeth in and employ into our lives...not just a teaser but absolute truth...yes... for this New Year...2024... but for the rest of our lives...

Some of you already have this truth... this will then be a refresher, a reminder... to some of you this might be new... It is a massive biblical truth found within one if not the most popular yet misunderstood verse in the Bible.

This is really a massive verse... but the verse alone won't help us much..... this verse must be understood in its context.... I say this verse is massive because it incorporates the entirety of what it means to live the triumphant Christian life.

Most of you know the verse... it is considered to be the most well-known verse in the Bible right behind John 3:16... Philippians 4:13.... If you have your bibles... turn to Philippians chapter 4... we must look at more than verse 13 to understand what the apostle Paul is telling us...the truth in this verse is completely reliant on context.... so let's begin with the familiar verse...

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me...

That's quite the promise isn't it?... yet... if we are honest with each other... we hear those words and wonder why I haven't been able to do *all* things!... most of us are Christians... we believe the Bible... but there have been a lot of things I haven't been able to do...

Some of us haven't been able to beat cancer or heart disease...some of you who have been Christians all your life have a problem in your marriage that won't go away... I talked to some of our college students and they didn't DO SO well on their final exams.... After praying, and praying and praying!... much more praying than studying!...

Does this verse imply that if I pray to Jesus... Jesus will enable me to do everything I want to do?... that hasn't been most of our experiences...is this just a huge exaggeration?... a false promise?...is Paul just being a blind optimist?...

Is it a promise for someone who is living a *perfect* Christian life?... and because of that *impeccable faith*...then...God will enable them to do "all things"?... **is this a promise or a possibility?...**

If you get yourself in the right position...and control your mind... focus intently...promise to read through the Bible in one year.... This is a possibility... or is this a over the counter absolute promise to each and every one of us who are Christians?

So what's the good news here?...what about this is going to propel our lives onward to that fulfilling, remarkable, satisfying, joyful life?

Let's begin with the one who said it... the apostle Paul.

If you didn't know better... you might have in your mind a "supposed context" that Paul is in when he wrote these words... Paul must have been at a high point in his life... probably just got

through some difficult experience...he prayed and Jesus saw him through it.... and now he's flying high.

He must have a full bank account...all his bills are paid and his new puppy is house trained... all the churches he started are singing his praises and are all in unity... just got a new car... sitting on some comfortable couch being served grapes and Perrier.

But the actual context is just the extreme opposite... Paul is under house arrest, probably in Rome during the reign of Nero... Nero is known as one of Rome's most infamous rulers... notorious for his cruelty and debauchery....

Paul likely was awaiting trial before the Roman Emperor.... As he writes, he recognizes that death may be the end point of his imprisonment because the emperor Nero was known to be extremely hostile to Christians.

Doesn't it seem almost unlikely that being in these circumstances... that Paul would say *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*... then why don't you break those chains and walk out of there?.... **because that's not what he's talking about.**

Paul can say this because true... deep...satisfaction in life.... a joyful life... fulfilling, satisfying life is truly found **only** in the Christian life and the Christian life is a life **that transcends our circumstances**...the context is found in the two verses before verse 13:

Read verses 11 & 12

So this text is what we all need for this year and beyond... this is what each one of us should desire, want, need to be able to say this morning—regardless of our situation... condition, circumstances...**I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.**

- Paul is not saying there is nothing *he* can do to contribute to what God has promised...
- Paul does not have a defeatist attitude...*I can't do anything, God has to do it all*
- Paul is upbeat... he's confident...there is a triumphant note that sounds in his voice.
- His confidence originates not within himself but in Jesus Christ.
- Paul certainly is NOT bragging about himself but rather boasting in Jesus Christ.

Let's pick this verse apart... three headings this morning then a plan....ok?

1. Far reaching ability

How many things will Jesus through His strength help Paul with?... notice it says “ALL”...in the Greek it means ALL... All things....For all you English majors... This is in the “**emphatic position**”...meaning it’s position in the sentence is a most emphasized word...

It means *all*... not most things, some things, nearly all things... it really means ALL THINGS.

Ok... if that is what it means... “ALL” needs some qualifications if that is indeed true... one commentator described it like this...*I can do all things that God calls me to do as I rely upon His grace.*”

What that means is **I can do all things that are within the will of God**...If what you are doing is within the will of God... you WILL be able to do it through the power and strength of Jesus Christ.

Some of you are thinking... *well that really limits things... I knew there was a catch... it is only for things that are in God’s will* that are included in this promise... what about the other things in life? (we’re going to get to that in a few minutes... but up front... **the idea is to live ALL of life in the will of God**).

The moment we take one step outside of the will of God... we’re on our own... and we don’t do very good when we’re on our own!...Anytime you disobey the word of God... the guarantee in this verse is off!...WHATEVER I do must be in the will of God... to obtain this amazing life.

The will of God includes: 1. All things that glorify God and 2. All things that glorify Jesus Christ...Paul could not do ALL THINGS if his goal was to promote himself...Paul could not do all things if he was operating under pridefulness... selfishness... pursuing his own agenda... being unloving... using his own strength exclusively.

Paul says All... ALL THINGS ... all THINGS were revealed in verses 11 & 12

The secret is being content... to not be in “want”... these verses reveal the secret to this desired life we’re seeking.... Verse 13 is the answer to the secret.

Verse 12 (the context) says the secret to this desired amazing life is contentment...

verse 13 tells us the way we get this contentment is to completely **rely on the sufficiency and power of Jesus Christ REGARDLESS of your situation and circumstances**.... His power will see you through as you live in the will of God.

Contentment is in a bloody battle with self-sufficiency... self-sufficiency says “I have the adequate strength and power to get through all that life throws at me...

[most of us think that a successful next year would be a reality if I just managed my time more efficiently... get more things done...get more organized... then I will have more time.... then I will be happy..... *4000 weeks*]

As long as I have PMA... a positive mental attitude...

How's that working?... Paul is teaching us a different dynamic....

I have adequate resources in the Lord which are sufficient in Jesus Christ... which allows me and enables me to be completely content in whatever circumstance I find myself.

Paul gave us two opposite circumstances in verse 12..... **1. Humble means** = poverty.... And **2. Prosperity**... wealth...rich!.... it matters not which one I'm in...(why? My economic status does not dictate my joy!) my financial bracket does not determine my life... it is my contentment in Jesus Christ!

“ALL THINGS” is called an “**Inclusion**” statement in English grammar... (if you don't learn how to have a wonderful life this morning, at least you'll have some English grammar!)... and **inclusion is the idea of the far extremes of the spectrum...**

A to Z includes all the alphabet in-between.

Los Angeles to New York includes all the cities in-between.... Inclusion... so “ALL THINGS” includes everything..... between all of life... the beginning to the end

I CAN DO ALL THINGS.....

When I have my needs being met... *I can do all things*....

when my circumstances prevent my needs from being met...*I can do all things*

when I have more than I need... when I don't have enough...*I can do all things*

when I'm in feast or famine

when I'm in luxury or famine...*I can do all things*.

I CAN DO ALL THINGS.... In other words... I am content where I am regardless....

This isn't some mind trick to deny your needs and tell yourself you are “content”... this is moving yourself off the world and onto the limitless grace of Jesus Christ.

“I” is personal

“Can” is a word of power...ability...it is positive... Paul says “I CAN!”

“Do” The stress here is that Paul is “doing” something... he is involved in an activity... he is not passive... he's not laying on the sofa looking at his circumstances singing que sera, sera (what will be will be).

It's not “*let go and let God*”... “*I can do all things*” implies an active personal involvement...

Paul is in the mix of doing.... It's Paul and Christ... it's Paul under the power of Jesus Christ.

I can do is in the **present tense**... it's always in the present tense... meaning it doesn't pass on by becoming past tense... **I CAN ALWAYS DO ALL THINGS**... not just when the circumstances are right... the conditions favorable... *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!*...

*But this is only for when you are in God's will... when you are glorifying Him... so there is the limitation... yes... **but there is not a situation that you can get in where you cannot glorify God in!**...there is not a part of life where you cannot glorify God.*

Even in your temptation... especially in your temptation... you glorify God in your resistance to the temptation... *I can by God's grace and the power of Jesus Christ rise above it and be successful! I can do it!* (that's called an **ACTIVE VOICE** in English grammar)

I WILL do it... I'm not going to sit back and be passive... think about it some more... I hope this is an encouragement for you this morning... perhaps a challenge... this should give you confidence... it should help you to get moving!

Whatever is going on in your life this morning... whatever happened to you this last year... and it is still affecting your life... all the stuff that will come at you this next year... you will be triumphant if you embrace the truth in this verse!

We just looked at how far reaching this promise is... limitless really... but as much as it is far reaching... as "wide" as its scope – I can do ALL things... it is very, very exclusive regarding those who can access it.

2. Exclusive access

All this is only possible through one's union with Jesus Christ... again... picking at this verse... notice the word "**through**"...it is the Greek word "*en*"... which could be translated as "in"... (a preposition English fans!)

It is the idea that the secret to all of life.... (not circumstances)... but the centrality of Jesus Christ in your life... Christ in you!.... there is a great illustration of what this means and entails from Paul's situation in 2nd Corinthians 12

Thorn in the flesh

God had given the apostle an amazing amount of His truth... Paul's acknowledging that in chapter 12.... He also acknowledges that God needed to help him keep his feet on the ground... lest his head expanded so great as to elevate him off the earth—thinking too much about himself and his God given knowledge.

Paul could have thought he was really something had not God helped him out a little bit... God helped him to remain humble.

Read 2 Cor. 12:7-10

When I am weak, I don't rely on myself... Jesus Christ is the only avenue for this strength!

The same thought in 1st Timothy 1:12 **I am grateful to Christ our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He regarded me faithful, putting me into service.**

Only through Jesus Christ!... no other power source will work!...2nd Timothy 2:1 Paul's final letter to Timothy... **You therefore, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus...**

2nd Timothy 4:17... Paul is in solitary confinement... he's been deserted by all his own people... he's been betrayed...

V. 14 – he was harmed

V. 16—No one supported him

V. 17—**But the Lord stood with me and strengthen me...**the Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient... in weakness we can be strong!.... in fact... the weaker you are... the greater the strength of Jesus in us!

3. Supernatural strength

Paul has centered his Life on Jesus Christ... every part of it!.... and the result is “supernatural strength”... to enable him to do all things... the word for **strengthens** is *endunamoo*... a verb meaning “**dynamite**”...

Explosive strength... extra-ordinary strength... strength not available from this world... supernatural... and this is in the present tense as well... it is “**Now!**”... it is always... it is ongoing!... Jesus doesn't take Saturdays and Sundays off... no holidays... ALWAYS.

Martin Lloyd Jones said ***Christianity is not a philosophy... it is mighty power that enters us!*** NOTICE HE DIDN'T SAY “**A**” MIGHTY POWER... IT IS MIGHTY POWER... Christ Is not just a power standing in the line of other options for power... HE IS POWER.

How much power?... what are the limits?... it is limitless!... move down to verse 19... **and my God WILL fulfill all your needs according to His riches in glory in Jesus Christ...**

Paul can say all of this because his entire life was not built on himself... how many of your problems are due to your selfish ambitions...selfish efforts... selfish control...self pity?

- All marital issues?
- All relationship tensions
- Anxiety and depression

Me...Me...Me...Me...Me... MY WILL BE DONE!

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me... I said there was one qualifying factor for this to be true... **I can do all things that are *within the will of God* ...**

The Will of God

let's talk about this.... This is vital...

When we think of the will of God... we often think of **specific events or situations**... we desire to seek God's will in these things... especially the big decisions in life.... We want to know God's will for a spouse... we want to know God's will for me in choosing a career... *what is God's will in me staying in my present job?*

What is God's will for me in choosing a college... or not going to college... what is His will in these things?... **what we often forget or don't realize is that God's "will" is for us to live ALL of our lives in His will**... not just specific big events.... All of it.

I think most Christians are confused about the will of God... and yet... verse 13 hinges on living in the will of God... so... let's do a quick flyover... this is quick... but if we don't understand something about the will of God... Philippians 4 will be elusive... considering the will of God.

Turn with me to Romans 12... here I think we can see what needs to happen in our lives to be able to embrace Philippians 4:13.... Classic verses:

Read Romans 12:1

The aim of all human life in God's eyes is that Christ would be made to look as valuable as he is throughout our lives.. How valuable is that?... He is so valuable that everything you do emanates through and out from Jesus Christ... that's what is meant by "**spiritual worship**"... all of our lives will become spiritual worship

Here worship means using our minds and hearts and bodies to express the **worth** of God and all he is for us in Jesus.... There is a way to live — a way to love — that does that.

- There is a way to do your job that expresses the true value of God.... if you can't... ***change your job.***
- There is a way to be married that expresses the true value of God... if it doesn't ***don't change your spouse!***... reposition your marriage... center it on Jesus... **Men**... centering your marriage on Jesus takes you out of center... and now you can love your wife like Christ loved the church (Eph.. 5) [spiritual service of worship]
- There's a way for you to run your household that expresses the true value of Jesus in your life...

You have to **put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator**" (Colossians 3:10). You have been made new in Christ; and now you are being renewed day by day

Read Romans 12: 2

That's Paul's answer to *how* we turn all of life into worship.... **We must be transformed**....Not just our external behavior, but the way we feel and think — our minds... **“Be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”**

If you are not living a Christ centered life you need to have a transformed mind.... How to do that in a minute.... All this is so that you will ***continuously* live in the will of God**... embracing the power of Jesus Christ in all you do (Phil.4:13)

Those who believe in Christ Jesus are already blood-bought new creatures in Christ. **“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation”** (2 Corinthians 5:17). But now **we must become what we are**. **“Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened”** (1 Corinthians 5:7). [so you can be who you are!...new creatures in Christ!]

So... the will of God:

To oversimplify... the Bible reveals two aspects of God's will (some list three, some more...we could argue):

1. God's hidden will of decree (God's sovereign will)...

It is “sovereign” in that it shows God to be the Sovereign ruler of the universe who decides all that happens.... It is “a will of decree” because it involves God's decrees.

It is “hidden” because we are usually unaware of this aspect of God's will until what He has decreed takes place. There is nothing that happens that is outside of God's sovereign will.... No man can thwart His sovereign will from happening.... Yes this is mind befuddling but it is true.

You may sin... God hates sin... but you didn't defeat God's sovereign will...your sin played in His sovereign will... He can use the wicked things of this world to carry out His plan.... This is why we can embrace Romans 8:28

And we *know* that those who love God *all things* work together for good, for those who are called according to *His purpose*.

By the way... the sovereignty of God is for our comfort.... To be able to be absolutely sure that no matter what our circumstances are... are in His control... don't try to figure it all out... how all that works is a mystery....

Deuteronomy 29:29 **The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed to us.**

God's sovereign will is often called His *Hidden Will*... we can't know most of what He will do in the future other than what has been prophesied in His word... all we can know is what He has

done in the past and what He is doing right now... we cannot know his sovereign will for tomorrow.

2. **God's will of command** God's revealed will....

His will is what he commands us to do... This is the will of God we can disobey and fail to do. The will of decree (Sovereign) we do whether we believe in it or not. The will of command we can fail to do. (it doesn't mess up the Sovereign will of decree!)

Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4:3, "**This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality.**" Here we have a very specific instance of what God commands us: holiness, sanctification, sexual purity... This is his will of command. But, oh, so many do not obey.

So... two wills of God... One we can call **God's will of decree** (or his sovereign will) and the other we can call **God's will of command**.... His will of decree always comes to pass whether we believe in it or not. His will of command can be broken, and is every day.

So which will is Romans 12:2 talking about?... His will of command... I think it was John Piper that said *you don't need a transformed mind to know the sovereign will of God, you need a crystal ball...*

How can we know God's will of command in that He doesn't tell us His will for every situation in life?... this is important... three stages... this is what we want to know... it's a progression... one build on the previous.

1. **God's will of command is revealed with final, decisive authority only in the Bible.**

This is the work of the Holy Spirit.... We need the renewed mind to understand and embrace what God commands in the Scripture. Without the renewed mind... we won't get the Scriptures right... we will distort the Scriptures to avoid their radical commands for self-denial, and love, and purity, and supreme satisfaction in Christ alone.... God's authoritative will of command is found only in the Bible.

So... we indulge ourselves...immerse ourselves in God's word.

2. **We apply biblical truth to new situations that may or may not be explicitly addressed in the Bible.**

Who should I marry?... what job should I take... what should I do with my life?... where should we live?... not going to find that specifically listed in the Bible... but you can know biblical truth which will shed light on your decision... one that would please God.

We read the Bible to find out who God is... what He likes what He dislikes... His attributes... the more time you spend learning about someone, the more time you spend with them... the more you are going to know what they like and dislike... what their will is.

3. Operate from the subconscious...

I read a statistic this week that said 95% of all our actions, decisions and choices we make are not from premeditated thinking.... In other words... we operate daily making most of our decisions subconsciously...

Most of your thoughts, attitudes, and actions are spontaneous.... They are just spillover from what's inside. Jesus said, **“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak”** (Matthew 12:34–36).

This is where you live in the will of God... you've filled yourself up with this amazing treasure!

This year... wouldn't it be great to be able to be able to do **all things through Christ who strengthens you?**....live in His will... Immerse yourself in the written word of God... saturate your mind with it. And pray that the Spirit of Christ would make you so new of a creature that the spillover... the subconscious life you live most of the time.... would be good, acceptable, and perfect — the will of God.

That's a transforming mind!... that's Romans 12: 1-2... that is how we LIVE the will of God for our lives... that is how we can say... *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

The bottom line in Paul's message is this: *I can do all things—everything that is within the will of God, as God enables him to do so.*