

What You Didn't Know 'I Can Do All Things' Means

"I can do all things through Christ" is one of the most famous and beloved declarations of the faith. We see it on posters and wall art, on bracelets and greeting cards and even painted on the faces of sports personalities.

At first glance, Paul's words seem to bolster our American idea of personal empowerment—that we can achieve whatever we set our minds to. We use these words to build self-esteem in our potentials to acquire great wealth, ace tests, lose weight, win games or get jobs. I've even declared it before a bench press, which only resulted in suffering from an inflamed rotator cuff for the next year and a half!

While it might be very inspirational to apply Philippians 4:13 to whatever we desire, we must be careful not to twist Scripture for our own convenience. What Paul actually means when he says, "I can do all things" provides so much more hope than perhaps you know.

The Real Meaning

To understand my suggestion, let's look at what Paul says just before the infamous verse. In verses 11-12, he writes: "I do not speak because I have need, for I have learned in whatever state I am to be content. I know both how to face humble circumstances and how to have abundance. Everywhere and in all things I have learned the secret, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need" (Phil. 4:11-12).

In this context, it's clear that Paul's words weren't those of self-empowerment. He didn't suddenly become a superman who was able to bust out of the prison from which he was writing. Rather, Christ's Spirit in Paul empowered him to endure the difficulties and challenges of his calling—to be strengthened

to achieve exactly what God ordained him to achieve. And most importantly, to go through it all with the joy of contentment and the assurance that God would finish what He started.

Power to Do What God Asks of You

As I further explore in my book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, what "I can do all things" means for you today is that the Holy Spirit will supernaturally empower you to do whatever God asks you to do. It means, if God calls you into ministry, He'll provide the funds and opportunities. If God asks you to stay in a difficult job, situation or relationship, He'll provide the grace to stick it out with a hopeful attitude. If you're in a crisis or challenging circumstance, God will provide the wisdom to help you navigate through it.

What is it that you have to do? Know that whatever it is, God never planned for you to do it on your own. No, He'll do the heavy lifting if you'll do the heavy trusting. So declare this now, "I can do whatever God wants me to do!" {eoa}

Kyle Winkler equips people to live in victory. His mobile app, *Shut Up, Devil!*, is the #1 spiritual warfare app; and his book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, uncovers 16 strategic declarations to transform your life. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.