

Will You Pursue God's Heart for Your Dreams?

Do you remember discussions in grade school about what you wanted to be when you grew up? I never knew how to respond; I usually came up with something that sounded cool just to satisfy the teacher asking. Maybe I did not have high aspirations; I was never one who knew exactly what I wanted to do.

One famous motivational statement I remember hearing a lot when I was a child was "You can be anything you want to be." This sounded awesome at the time! You mean I can be an astronaut, NBA player or even the president? According to my 3rd grade teacher, yes.

When I got older, I quickly realized that this statement was not accurate. There are huge factors at play as to whether someone has the opportunities or skills to achieve whatever they want, along with scarcity of some jobs that only have a few openings. If every kid wanted to be the president of the United States, just simple math can assure you that this is impossible.

I believe this statement was used with good intentions. You don't want to tell kids that they can't be what they want to be, but I think it could have been done so in a less misleading way. It's important to encourage kids to pursue their dreams, to take the right steps to get there, and to share success stories of people who overcame tremendous odds to achieve their goals.

One of the many verses in the Bible I feel is frequently misused by Christians is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things because of Christ who strengthens me." It's easy to read this verse and think, "Wait a minute! I have accepted

Jesus in my heart. This means I can do anything, indeed all things! This is awesome! I'm going to ____ (fill in the blank with: apply to that school, pursue that job, learn that sport, pursue a relationship, play the lottery, ignore the doctor's advice, any other extreme response without praying)."

When reading the Bible, context is extremely important.

The verse right before uses the Greek word for contentment, *autarkes* (αὐτάρκεια). In the Greek ethics of the time, this contentment referred to something that was the ideal self-serving virtue of the time.

What is interesting here is that Paul, who knew the Greek language and culture used this to describe his relationship with Jesus.

God will give us the strength if it is His will and timing. We need to submit our plans and dreams to Him and follow His path one step at a time while being content in knowing Him, regardless of circumstance.

It's easy to get so caught up with our own dreams that we fail to pursue God and what He wants for our lives. My guests, the Benham Brothers, describe what happens when following your dream costs more than you are willing to pay. In this episode of *Everyday Discernment* on the Charisma Podcast Network, we also discuss the importance of discerning the will of God in your family and your career. Make sure you listen today. {eoa}