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I Can Do All Things
Philippians 1:10-13

I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it.

11 *Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have.*

12 *I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need.*

13 *I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

Philippians 4:13 is one of those amazing verses in the Bible that inspires courage and strength to those who follow Jesus.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!

Who doesn't want that?

That IS an amazing promise, right?

But it's always tricky to take verses of the Bible out of their context.

Remember that this is a letter to a congregation, a congregation that has experienced their fair share of ups and downs, peace and conflict.

And Paul's message to them at the end of this letter is a word of encouragement about finding contentment—no matter what your circumstances.

How?

How do we do that?

We can only do that through Jesus who strengthens us, who enables us to be content.

This verse is not a command, or a bumper sticker!
It is the end of a conversation about being content with what you have in this life!

And Paul assures this church that they can find contentment, because of the amazing grace of Jesus.

And contentment is something that no one can take away from us. It's a gift, a grace, and a foundation upon which we can build our faith and life. Alfred Nobel once said "Contentment is the only real wealth."

Being content is a gift of God that changes our whole life perspective!

Presbyterian Pastor Tim Keller, in his book, *The Two Advocates*, writes this about our life as Christians:

*Imagine you're a **billionaire**, and you have three ten-dollar bills in your wallet. You get out of a cab, and you hand the driver one of the bills for an eight-dollar fare. Later in the day you look in and find out there's only one ten-dollar bill there, and you say, "Either I dropped a ten-dollar bill somewhere, or I gave the taxi driver two bills."*

What are you going to do? Are you going to get all upset? Are you going to the police and demand they search the city for the cabdriver? No, you are going to shrug. You're a billionaire. You lost ten dollars. So what? You are too rich to be concerned about that kind of loss.

This week, somebody criticized you. Something you bought or invested in turned out to be less valuable than you thought. Something you wanted to happen didn't go the way you wanted it to—these are real losses. But what are you going to do, if you're a Christian? Will this setback disrupt your contentment with life? Will you shake your fist at God? Toss and turn at night? If so, I submit that it's because you don't know how truly rich you are. If you're that upset about your status with other people, if you're constantly lashing out at people for hurting your feelings, you might call it a lack of self-control or a lack of self-esteem, and it is. But more fundamentally, you have totally lost touch with your identity. As a Christian, you're a spiritual billionaire and you're wringing your hands over ten dollars.

Tim Keller, *The Two Advocates* (Encounters with Jesus Series) (Penguin Group, 2014), Kindle Locations 242-244

We are spiritual billionaires as followers of Jesus Christ!
 We have been given a gift of grace and salvation,
 worth more than all the money in the world!
 And no one can take that away from us!

But do we realize this?
Do we live this way?

What would it mean for us to believe it?
What would it mean for us to be content with what we have,
because truth be told--we have EVERYTHING.
All because we have Jesus Christ.

Does that mean our lives are automatically a success?
Does that mean we won't struggle?
Does that mean we won't face the same challenges and tragedies that
everyone else faces?
No.

It simply means that when we follow Jesus Christ,
we can be content, regardless of, in spite of, our circumstances---
all because it is Jesus who helps us do all things.

But Philippians 4:13 is not a slogan.
It's not a poster on the wall of a religious gym.
And it's not a 'key to success' in life.

It is a truth, that it is Jesus Christ who helps us to be content,
in plenty and in want, in sickness, and in health.
It is Jesus who sustains us.
It is Jesus who gives us those incredible riches in the form of mercy, grace,
hope, peace, and love.

Sometimes we don't seek contentment, even though that's what we need.
Sometimes we want to "win" in this life.
We are looking to be right.
To be #1.
We are looking to be better than the rest.

And in that search for success,
we can easily miss the value of being content.
Of knowing that what we've been given through Jesus Christ,
is worth more than anything in the world.

Bernard Williams once said “We may pass violets looking for roses. We may pass contentment looking for victory.” Pastor Denn Guptill, I Can Do All Things, Oct 30, 2016

Friends, hear the Good News of the Gospel today from the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:

We CAN do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthen us,
we can even be content with what we have,
for we have EVERYTHING when we follow Jesus!
May we know this and believe it!
And all God’s people said, Amen.