

# “I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST”

## Philippians 4

It is estimated that worldwide there are over 25 million people who have Alzheimer's Disease and that by 2050 there will be over 100 million sufferers. Although there is no scientific proof of its efficacy, it is believed by many that Alzheimer's can be prevented by mental stimulation, physical exercise, and good diet. Too many Americans have very little mental stimulation in their daily routine. Their work is repetitive and routine, television is completely passive intellectually, and there is very little meaningful conversation. Mental stimulation can be achieved through puzzles, creative activities such as writing, drawing, painting, playing a musical instrument, and by memorizing.

Philippians is a treasure trove of Bible verses worth memorization.

(Philippians 1:6) being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; (NKJV)

(Philippians 1:21) For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (NKJV)

(Philippians 2:12b-13) ...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. (NKJV)

(Philippians 3:7) But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

(Philippians 3:13b-14) ...one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (NKJV)

(Philippians 3:20) For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, (NKJV)

(Philippians 4:8) Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things. (NKJV)

(Philippians 4:12-13) I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (NKJV)

(Philippians 4:19) And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (NKJV)

1.) Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life. Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:1-7 NKJV)

There was trouble in the Philippian church and there were two women who were at the center of the controversy. Both of these women had worked with Paul in the past. They had also labored with Clement, a prominent leader in the early church. Each of these women had reason to be proud of her past accomplishments and probably expected a certain amount of respect and deference from others. When they found themselves on opposite sides of this issue that had come up in the church, it became a tug of war.

We can speculate that there were heated arguments, grumblings, accusations, name-calling, disparaging remarks. If Paul is exhorting them to let their gentleness be known to all men then that means that the exchanges between the two women and those siding with each of them had been anything but gentle. He even warns them that the Lord is nearby and can hear their salvos at one another.

What was the cause of this controversy? It seems to have been money. Financial problems is one of the chief causes for divorces and it is one of the chief topics of church disputes. The causes of the heated debate were genuine concern and anxiety for the church's well-being.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

2.) Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.

The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:8-9 NKJV)

The quickest and surest way to restore peace to the church is for everyone to start thinking about those things that bring peace. Consider what thoughts keep you awake at night – you rehearse in your mind the wrongs that someone has done against you or said about you. OR you lie awake worrying about what has gone wrong or what might go wrong. OR you remember accusations others have made against you. Or maybe some movie filled with violence or some horrible event on the news or some wild music or even a party with excitement and loud talking. Everyone may experience one or more of these occasionally, but our mind and emotions can only take so much.

The best medicine, the way of good mental health, and a spiritual life which is walking close to God is by following Paul's recipe: Filter what you allow into your thoughts and mind. You put screens up to keep bugs out of your house. Put up similar screens to choose what you will allow into your thoughts and mind. Whatever things are true (not gossip, not speculation, not prejudice), whatever things are noble ( does it make you a better person, does it make the other person look better), whatever things are just (are you being fair, just it measure up to the Golden Rule), whatever things are pure (could you show it to Jesus and talk to Him about it), whatever things are lovely (sinful things are never lovely – desirable, appealing but never lovely), whatever things are of a good report (listen to the opinion of other Christians), if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things and you will sleep like an innocent baby.

3.) But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in regard to

need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:10-19 NKJV)

When Paul first came to Philippi, he met Lydia a seller of purple. He stayed in her house and taught the Gospel in that city. He was followed around by a young woman who was demon possessed. When he could not stand the things the demons were making her say, he cast out the demons and the young woman had her right mind restored. Her owners had made money using her to tell fortunes. They stirred up such mob against Paul and Silas that the magistrates ordered them beaten with rods and thrown into prison.

That night there was an earthquake and Paul and the other prisoners could have gone free. The jailer was about to kill himself when Paul told him that they were all still there. This was the Philippian jailer who asked "What must I do to be saved?"

After Paul left Philippi the church continued to send money to him to support his work. Then for a long time they had stopped, but recently they had begun to do so again. Paul says that he is happy because he wants them to receive rewards from Christ for the fruit of his ministry. When a soul comes to Christ through Paul's preaching, God will credit the account of the Philippian believers whose gifts made it possible for Paul to continue preaching. God will repay their gift by supplying all their needs.

