

## ENGAGING GOSPEL DOCTRINE (EPISODE 166)

### LESSON 40

#### "I Can Do All Things through Christ"

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| Hook        | "I can do anything" sounds more like the boast of a child than a useful gospel principle. In what way is the idea "I can do all things through God who strengthens me" useful? |
| Manual Goal | To encourage class members to develop the characteristics of true followers of Jesus Christ.   |
| EGD Goal    | To encourage class members to cultivate thriving and empowerment through following the "admonition of Paul" and fostering humble gratitude.                                    |
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Business: I tweaked the PayPal settings, making my OlamInstitute gmail primary and adding our EIN. Remember that we are working to be 501c3 status by the end of the year!

We can do all things... but what about when we can't?

Lesson 40: "I Can Do All Things through Christ"

Manual Goal: To encourage class members to develop the characteristics of true followers of Jesus Christ. (vague much?)

EGD Goal:

#### I. Sunday School

- a. Framing (We are looking at three quite different letters: one to a congregation (Philippians), one with quite a different feel (Colossians), and our only letter by Paul to an individual (Philemon).
- b. Two minute take-home
  - i. How does God empower, strengthen, and help us? What are the limitations of this promise? (Phil 4:13)
  - ii. What does it mean to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling"? (Phil 2:12)
  - iii. How do we seek out what is true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise?
- c. Reading commentary
- d. Lesson:
  - i. "I can do all things" a key lesson we learn as children is that we can't do everything. It is important to understand our gifts, strengths, and

abilities, but also our weaknesses and limitations. How can we discuss this principle in a productive way?

- ii. “work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2.12)
- iii. “admonition of Paul”. How do we seek each of these traits in our life? True, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, excellent, worth praise
- iv. The Christ hymn: humility, love, and unity (2:6-11)
- v. How do we rejoice every day? (4:4), four things we can do.
- vi. Faith & Knowledge: Being “deceived through persuasion” (and philosophy) When is human thought and arguments constructive? When are they not? What is the relationship between faith and knowledge (all things should be for edification, sometimes need to break down before building up in a healthier, stronger way. Think about seer stone and translation of the Book of Mormon for example. Academic and critical analysis deconstruct, take apart, help us understand the pieces. Faith and I would add art, creativity, stories—these build up again. (Colossians)
- vii. Philemon: Other people being “useful” for us (meaning of Onesimus’ name) fitting for Columbus day. Treating people as whole, respecting them as beings with their own needs, feelings, views. And before you cavalierly dismiss objectification, we need to think about the subtle ways we all do this. (do we expect those close to us to defer to our needs? Do our needs often come first? Do we expect our loved ones to stay the same instead of growing and challenging the status quo?)

## II. Scripture Study

- a. Again, what do we make of the fact Colossians is likely forged? It is often inspiring, pleading to do good... and yet the author adamantly claims to be someone he is not.

## III. Study Notes

- a. But... we can’t. In what ways is this promise true? In what ways is it not?
- b. Limitations and how much we can overcome them

(find those four things to do to be happy/well) from “The Upward Spiral”

1. Ask: What am I grateful for? (Worrying and gratitude both trigger reward centers of the brain)
2. Nonjudgmentally label your feelings (note what you are feeling, sit with it)
3. Make a “good enough” decision
4. Safe touch with loved ones

Here’s what brain research says will make you happy:

- Ask “What am I grateful for?” No answers? Doesn’t matter. Just searching helps.
- Label those negative emotions. Give it a name and your brain isn’t so bothered by it.
- Decide. Go for “good enough” instead of “best decision ever made on Earth.”
- Hugs, hugs, hugs. Don’t text — touch.

Elder Neal Maxwell: (thought of this talk as I was reading; I have never forgotten the phrase “other forms of anatomical allegiance”)

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1995/04/deny-yourselves-of-all-ungodliness?lang=eng>