

“Philippians 4:13—Part 4”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigsandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of March 2, 2024.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible-study on Wednesday night, I concluded a series about Philippians 4:13. This was part 4.

Philippians 4:13—“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Reasons for choosing

Why would a pastor give a Bible study series about the words found in Philippians 4:13?

Here are four of my thoughts.

- I believe that a merciful Heavenly Father readily answers prayers.
- But I do not believe in the “name it, claim it” approach—where people can push God to do what they want Him to do and cause Him to submit to them.
- Our loving Father gives us so much—every need and many of our wants.
- One of the greatest gifts a dad gives to his children is a can-do, positive attitude, and the perfect Heavenly Father does the same—He helps us to succeed in times of adversity.

God answers prayers

In two recent studies, I discussed three concepts about how God answers prayers.

1. I believe that God (as a perfect Father) will supply our personal needs—because He is trustworthy and because He loves us.
2. I believe that God will often give us the desires of our heart—because He loves us.
3. I believe that God sometimes says “no” to our requests (often the desires of our heart)—because He loves us.

Enduring and succeeding

At the end of the previous Bible study, I concluded with the following comments.

We can learn a few lessons when a loving Heavenly Father says “no.”

- He wants us to grow and to learn.
- He will teach us how to endure.
- He will teach us how to succeed.

Trials for children of God

It is important in life to realize that children of God will have trials.

- Genesis 50:20—When Joseph’s brothers meant to do evil against him, God meant the situation for good.
- 1 Samuel 26:21-24—When Saul apologized to David, David advised Saul to send a servant to come over to retrieve the king’s spear.
- Hebrews 5:8—The Son of God “learned” through His experiences.
- Acts 14:22—Paul strengthened the disciples with exhortation: “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of heaven.”
- 2 Timothy 3:12—Paul mentioned that all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus “will suffer persecution.”
- James 1:2-3—James wrote that disciples should count it all joy when they had various trials.
- 1 Peter 1:6-7—Peter reminded the disciples that trials were more precious than gold.
- 1 Peter 4:12-16—Peter reminded the disciples about the difference between trials from sin and trials from being a partaker of Christ’s sufferings.

Two powerful sources

- 1 Corinthians 2:11—Paul reminded the disciples in Corinth about two sources of power.

Spirit of the man

- Proverbs 14:15—An unwise person believes every narrative, while a prudent person wisely sizes up every situation.
- 2 Timothy 2:3-4—Learn lessons from soldiers.
- 2 Timothy 2:5—Learn lessons from athletes.
- 2 Timothy 2:6—Learn lessons from farmers.

There is much excellent advice from people who talk about dealing with adversity. In January 2022, Elizabeth Perry wrote an article titled “Adversity: What Is It and How to Overcome It.” Following is a list of her 10 points.

1. Stop making excuses.
2. Write.
3. Change your state of mind.
4. Stay disciplined.
5. Use your sense of humor.
6. Have faith.
7. Let each success energize you.
8. Don't take "no" for an answer.
9. Surround yourself with people who have a positive mind-set.
10. Spend time in nature.

Spirit of God

- 2 Corinthians 12:9—The Lord told Paul: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."
- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4—The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ comforts us in all our tribulation.
- 2 Corinthians 1:8-9—When Paul was burdened above strength, he learned to trust in God.
- 2 Corinthians 1:10—God has delivered us, does deliver us and will deliver us.
- 2 Corinthians 4:7—God has given us a treasure, that the excellence of the power may be of God (and not of us).

2 Corinthians 4:8-9

- We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed.
- We are perplexed, but not in despair.
- We are persecuted, but not forsaken.
- We are struck down, but not destroyed.

Philippians 4:10-13

- Philippians 4:10—Paul rejoiced mightily in the Lord, because the people cared for him.
- Philippians 4:11—Paul did not focus on his wants, because he learned to be content in his life.
- Philippians 4:12—Paul learned how to be abased and how to abound (to be full and to be hungry)—both to abound and to suffer need.
- Philippians 4:13—"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."