

## WITH GOD'S HELP

Scripture reference: I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. Job 42:2

I saw this scripture on a devotional I received last week and it made me look at a very similar sounding one in the New Testament. They sound alike but they are different in a concrete way. What scripture did you first think of when you read the focal passage for today? I thought of Philippians 4:13 which says "I can do all things through Christ who strengthened me."

We often see Philippians 4:13 on motivational posters encouraging us to believe that we can do whatever we put our minds to doing. Tim Tebow made it the most google-searched verse when he wrote it on his eye-black when he was a quarterback for the University of Florida. I have even recited it out loud as I ran a marathon that, because of less than favorable conditions, I wasn't sure I was going to be able to finish.

I think that is where the problem comes with our interpretation of Philippians. We tend to say it for things that we want. We think that God is going to automatically give us that promotion, that fancy house or car, that winning lottery ticket or whatever else it is we want. We think that we could automatically accomplish any feat because Paul said we could.

But let us take a deeper look at both of these scriptures. In Job 42:2, he is saying that God is the one that can accomplish anything. Job goes even further to add if it is part of God's will or purpose. Take a moment to think about this book and the writer. Remember what Job had been facing? He had lost his possessions, his family, and his health but he continued to worship God. He knew that if it was God's purpose to restore him, then it would happen.

In the verse from Philippians, we have to remember that Paul was writing these words while he was a prisoner in Rome. Don't you think if he was saying he could accomplish anything he wanted, his first choice may have been to get released from jail? That was not the meaning he was looking at when he penned verse 13. Let's add a few more verses and get a better picture. In 4:11-13, Paul wrote "I'm not saying this because I need anything, for I have learned how to be content in any circumstance. I know the experience of being in need and of having more than enough; I have learned the secret to being content in any and every circumstance, whether full or hungry or whether having plenty or being poor. I can endure all these things through the power of the one who gives me strength."

Paul and Job both were facing dire circumstances but neither gave up on God. They knew, because of their faith, they could endure any struggle they may face. They know that the real strength is God and they also realize he will not abandon them in bad times or be absent during good times. God is always going to be there for us, the question is whether or not we will accept him being there in good and bad times.