

July 24, 2022 AM  
Pastor Ken Hepner

*Living As A Community of Joy:*  
18. “In Life There Are Canters and Can’ters!”  
Philippians 4:10 – 13

**Introduction:**

This morning as we turn to the Word of the Lord, we are looking at the letter to the Philippians for the final time in this series of messages, “Living as a Community of Joy,” no matter what the circumstances are that we face in life. We have been studying this letter from Paul to the Philippians as a message containing timeless truth for the people in Mifflintown, PA.

Paul encouraged his readers to live out the Gospel of His kingdom of the heart in honesty and integrity, even though they walked in adversity. He wanted them to understand their calling to be real and authentic pictures of what a life looks like that has been given the gift of God’s mercy through our faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Paul wrote to these believers to encourage them to walk with the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. One of Paul’s major themes of this letter is that he called them to “live a life of joy,” regardless of the circumstances they faced. **Christianity is at its very core, a Kingdom of the Heart.** It is a living relationship between two people who love each other, the One is the King of Glory and the other is His child, in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior.

In the message this morning, **I’d like us to consider together something that is very, very important for us as believers in Christ to be asking of ourselves and our God. What is God doing in my corner of the world?** And what am I doing to leave my family, my church, and my community better than it was when I came? Do I have a heart attitude after God that is causing me to act in faith and optimism? We’re looking at Paul’s words together today – *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”* Philippians 4:13

Pentecost Day as described in Acts 2:1 – 47 is that day in the calendar year that we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to live in the lives of believers to empower us to do ministry for Jesus Christ our Lord in our world; even as Jesus Himself had promised His disciples before and after His death and resurrection.

Before He died and rose again from the dead, Jesus promised His followers in John 14:15 – 17: *“If you love me, you will obey my commands. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter to be with you forever—the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for He lives with you and will be in you”*

After Jesus rose again from the dead, He reiterated His promise: *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

These promises my Lord Jesus fulfilled as in recorded in the book of Acts in the second chapter. And with the infusion of **Power** from on **High** into the lives of men and women who were born of God, the Lord Himself began the process of ministry through the church with the goal being the evangelization of every person in His world.

There is a marvelous underlying in what the Lord Jesus did for His disciples on Pentecost Day. Before the coming of the Holy Spirit in His mighty power to dwell in them you find them locked up in an upper room filled with doubts, fears, and apprehension about their tomorrows. They had all the facts they needed to represent Jesus, they knew that He wanted them to be a church body for Him but there they sat day after day paralyzed with doubts, fears, and apprehension.

Now the question that comes to my mind is what was their lack? What was it that they needed in order to be what Jesus wanted them to be? **The only response that seems to fit for me is that they needed to have someone help them be moved to action by taking the fear out of their eyes and removing their doubting and apprehensions deep within.**

And this is what the Lord Jesus did in sending them His Holy Spirit to be with them and in them. It was an infusion of divine power and strength and enabling into their lives that immediately moved them out into the streets to begin the process of witness, preaching, and evangelization of their world and Luke records in Acts 2:41, “*And that same day the Lord added 3000 souls to their number.*” He took the **Fear Out** of their **Eyes** and removed the doubts and apprehensions from their hearts and replaced that with a holy fire and a zealous, passionate, desire to glorify Him in their world.

In this light there is a marvelous illustration from college BB in the mid 1970’s. The UCLA Bruins led by 7’1” Center Bill Walton and all-American forwards Sydney Wickes and Curtis Rowe were coming to South Bend to play Notre Dame the following week. The Bruins were 4” taller to a man, had won 88 straight games and were considered by many to be invincible. As the Notre Dame squad entered the week of preparation their eyes were dull and they lacked enthusiasm: because of fear they were demoralized and were merely putting in the days. But coach Digger Phelps had an idea.

He gave them an unusually tough workout every day and then after practice got out step ladders, knives, and scissors and had them practice cutting down the nets while his assistant Coaches ran video cameras and interviewed them. At first, they felt terribly self-conscious about it but as the week went on, they actually began to look forward to practicing the victory celebration after practice, and as they practiced winning little by little the fear of UCLA left their eyes.

Saturday’s game was on national TV and strangely Notre Dame played them within 5 points in the first half and left the court with high-fives and great excitement, they actually thought they could win to most people’s surprise. In the second half they came out and played well and they beat UCLA 71 – 70.

At the end of the game on national TV they knew exactly what to do and what to say. They had practiced it all week, they were old pros at cutting down the nets and being interviewed on camera. The application of this illustration is this: Coach Digger Phelps did for his basketball

players what the Holy Spirit does in the lives of believers. He removes the fear from our eyes and the doubts from our hearts by strengthening us with power from within to think and act differently.

My dear church family of Cedar Grove, Acts 1:8 gives us a strategy for evangelism of the world that we must never lose sight of: *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* The strategy is that the power is of God’s Holy Spirit in our hearts moving us to witness and ministry to our world. And secondly, the strategy is that we will start here in Mifflintown, Juniata County, and then broaden in scope.

The late Dr. A.W. Tozer talking about missions appeal and world evangelism cited this verse of scripture and then gave a powerful quote: “The gospel beacon that shines the farthest shines brightest closest to home.” When I first read that quote back in the early 1980’s I was gripped by it and compelled to action as a man who would seek to make a **Kingdom Difference** on earth!

And his point is that we must not fall into the trap of missionary zeal that is all focused out there somewhere and fails God in the passionate desire to see my lost neighbor saved. And the adverse is also true...there is also the trap of being so bound up in ministry close to home that we do nothing in the broader world. Both are ditches on the side of the narrow road of righteousness we must not fall into.

Paul says in our text, *“I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.”* I believe God is desirous of raising up this church as a beacon of world evangelism, starting in Mifflintown and going to the uttermost parts of the earth in the strength and power of Christ, and as your Senior Pastor, I have committed myself to being a “Can-Do-Person” like Paul. I not only believe this is a futuristic view but I believe God has already begun to do it according to His Word.

And the ultimate goal for ministry here is that we will be a body of people who know what missions is all about because we learned how to be “Can Do People” in ministry at home primarily, and then secondarily we will have more people, resources, and financial capabilities to **Send Out Workers** into our world for evangelism.

My dear church family, we need to look at these wonderful problems we confront as opportunities for God to do miracles among us - after all every **Miracle** in the Bible begins with a **Problem**! We need to be people of the power and strength of His Spirit within who refuse to cave in to fears, doubts, and apprehensions nor be paralyzed by them. We need to be becoming a “*Yes We Can in His Power*” church!!

### **I. Paul’s Attitude to Win “I Can:”**

Folks there are basically two kinds of people in the world: There are Canners and Can’ters! “**Can’ters**” are **Pessimistic** people who have created their own mental limitations, who have erected fences in their minds that keep them locked into pessimism, and who constantly see what’s wrong and find fault with what’s going on around them.

These mental fences really paralyze people with a “can’t” mindset and force them to believe that because they can’t do it, it can’t be done but that simply isn’t true. Just because I can’t do it doesn’t mean it can’t be done. Like the people of the 1960’s thought putting a man on the moon by 1970 was ridiculous when President Kennedy said it, but by 1969 there was Neal Armstrong walking on the moon!

I “can’t” attitude is really **Contagious** too. Usually if a person has a what’s-wrong-with-everything mindset it’s a good indicator their home life was not blessed with praise and parental encouragement to be excelling as children. That ought to be a very straight word to our hearts about our parenting and the loving encouragement our kids need to be constantly trying new things even if they fail. Are you encouraging your child to grow by his failures and mistakes and try again or paralyzing him with fears and apprehensions through criticism?

“**Canners**” on the other hand are **Optimistic** people like the Apostle Paul. It just doesn’t matter what comes my way I know I am in Christ and He is in me and in Him I am a “Yes I can man.” For Paul, he was able to say in this context that no matter what the circumstances, exalted or debased, he was content because he wasn’t living on his own strength or power but by the power and enabling of His Holy Spirit.

He could say though shipwrecked, snake-bitten, beaten, imprisoned cold, hungry, thirsty...no matter what the outer circumstances nothing will dampen my enthusiasm not stop me from exalting my Lord Jesus.

Yes-I-Can people are as **Contagious** as maternity dresses at Cedar Grove church have been recently. Their “yes I can” attitude becomes a “yes you can” attitude to others: Paul to Timothy Luke Titus and Silas ... Digger Phelps to Notre Dame Basketball team ... You and me to our children and to one another!

“Canners” have an Attitude to minister God’s grace to people for Jesus Christ by choosing to **Bear Witness** to His work in our hearts and souls, to share words of testimony to others, like the Apostle Paul. They understand this truth: What you think you can do you will most probably do and what you think you can’t do something; you will most probably not even attempt to do it.

Good people of the Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Congregation, our community needs a church packed full of people clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives who have a “yes-we-can” mindset, ready to minister for Jesus Christ no matter what the obstacles: A **Winning Attitude**.

## **II. Paul’s Commitment to Win “I Can Do Everything:”**

Paul says not only am I an “*I can do all things person!*” when he begins this verse of Philippians. He says panta ischuo. For everything I attempt to do, I have strength, might, the ability to attempt it and to succeed at it! His world, his words can be rendered “for everything I am serviceable” and that tells me that he had a commitment to Jesus that ran really deep.

There was no time more intimidating in his life than the time in Damascus and later in the desert of Arabia when he decided to do his God-ordained life's work of Apostle to the Gentiles. But, praise God, he came through with flying colors, for when he wrote Philippians, he had the right attitude but beyond that he had the right actions.

People of God at Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church you are facing some rather intimidating days. You have a very specific mandate from Jesus as **Witnesses** of **Becoming** all that God wants you to be in Jesus Christ in your world. Now it's time to swallow our intimidation and get on with doing what you've said you will do.

Ecclesiastes 8 TLB has two great lines in it: "*One who talks about doing is not wise.*" "*He who dreams instead of doing is a fool.*" So, the truth is, we must be people of **Truth** and **Integrity**, people who do what we say we will do, in the eyes of the world. We have said we care and we want a ministry for Jesus Christ that will meet man's needs and introduce them to Him and it's time to do something about it.

Those disciples in the upper room on Pentecost Day became doers of the Word of God in their world. They were moved into action...no they did not do everything perfectly, they made some mistakes, but folds they got on with the task at hand, they did something about their commission from the Lord.

We, together, must be a place of doing righteousness in our world out of a proper heart attitude to win for Jesus...Like the little league baseball player: He can't hit the ball till he swings the bat so if he swings the bat, sooner or later, by coincidence or divine intervention he will meet the ball with the bat. My job as a caring volunteer coach is to get them to swing the bat ... As Senior Pastor and teacher in this congregation it is my job to equip and mobilize this people into an army of spiritual warriors who will do great exploits for Jesus Christ in your world!!

### **III. Paul's Empowerment To Win: "I Can Do All Things Through Him Who Gives Me Strength."**

Finally, Paul clues us in as to the power source of his life to think and act rightly, when he says endounamounti mou, "in the one constantly empowering the one constantly effusing me with His power in my life." Like the disciples at Pentecost had been enflamed with blazing powerful love in Christ at the out pouring of His Spirit, even so Paul recognizes the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit as his source of inner strength, giving him both the Spirit's courage and power to obey the voice of God.

The Holy Spirit in him had set Paul's heart on fire with desire to please God by filling up His holy calling to reach the lost and dying people around him with the gospel, regardless of his circumstances he was in, or the personal cost to himself. That is the context of this statement, here Philippians 4:10 – 13!

People of God at Cedar Grove Church, we must remember who we are, what we are, but most importantly **Whose** we are. We have been washed in the blood of Jesus and His Spirit dwells in our lives as our inner source of strength and power to live and act in righteousness.

We must also remember the truth that this church is the supernatural **Organism** of God, one part of the global body of Jesus Christ on the earth. This church is not a humanly managed business. It must move in the power of the Spirit of God not through programs or personalities. In the words of Zechariah, *“It is not by might, not by power but by my Spirit says the Lord.”*

Paul’s attitude and commitment produced a soul-winner who would not quit because he vowed never to rest in his humanity but rather to be a man of God; a clean, open channel through whom He could flow in mighty power to **Minister** the grace and healing love of Jesus and to **Save** the souls of people! How desperately needed in our world today are visionary men like Paul, who, **Effused** with power from on high, **Refused** to let anything beat them.

Is the Spirit of God flowing through your life today in power to make you like Jesus? Has he whispered God’s passion in the inner sanctuary of your soul lately? Is He calling you to action (some kind of ministry) for Christ in your world today? Is the calling of Jesus to your inmost being, to be a passionate witness of what Jesus Christ has done and is doing in you?

### **Conclusion:**

There is a story in to O. T. that touches my heart as a person who is after God’s heart. There is a key difference between the first two kings of Israel that I believe God wants us to see and fully understand:

King Saul had a huge physical body, powerfully built man who stood *“head and shoulders above every other an in Israel.”* He was chosen on the basis of his physical appearance and power people could see.

King David was about 14 when he was chosen, voice crackly, from too much Coke, and skinny as a rail. He was not chosen for any physical reason people would see but for a reason God, alone could see. He had a huge heart after God, a powerful man of faith and worship.

Both of these men were confronted with a giant-sized problem named Goliath, who would make hamburger out of any man. Saul the huge physical man in God’s army who should have been out there in the valley for God, with the giant-sized problem named Goliath sat in this King’s commander-in-chief tent day after day in fear, doubt, and apprehension – paralyzed to act. He looked at Goliath and said, “he’s so big I can’t win”!

David the little man with the huge heart after God, took one look at the giant-sized problem named Goliath and said “who does this uncircumcised clown think he is?” The Lord came upon him in power and his heart of faith and worship said as he walked toward Goliath, “he’s so big I can’t miss!” David by God’s power in him won that victory he was a giant killer. Saul left no legacy as a giant killer among his peers! David, because he was one, raised up Abishai, Sibbecai, Elhanon, and Jonathon who were also giant slayers II Samuel 21:15 – 22

July 24, 2022

**“THE COMMUNITY OF JOY:  
18. “In Life There are Cannors and Can’ters!”  
Philippians 4:10 – 13**

**Introduction:**

We are studying the Letter to the Philippians under the general topic of being a community of joy no matter what life may throw at us! We must be personal partakers of the **K**\_\_\_\_\_ of the **H**\_\_\_\_\_ that is on the foundation of what Jesus Christ has done to redeem us!

Today we are asking the question, What is God doing in our corner of the world? What am I doing to leave the world I live in better?

Pentecost Day is recorded in Acts 2:1 – 47; we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit into believers. It happened just as Jesus promised, John 14:15 – 17 and Acts 1:8.

Jesus fulfilled the promises with the infusion of **P**\_\_\_\_\_ from on **H**\_\_\_\_\_ poured into men and women.

Before the Holy Spirit came into them, they were locked behind doors, filled with fears, doubts, and apprehension about the future. Acts 2:41 the Lord moved through them to help people come into the kingdom of God. He took the **F**\_\_\_\_\_ out of their **E**\_\_\_\_\_.

The illustration of the 1974 basketball game between UCLA and Notre Dame ... This illustrates what the Holy Spirit does in the lives of believers. He removes fear and doubts by strengthening us with His **P**\_\_\_\_\_.

Quote by Dr. A. W. Tozer “The gospel beacon that shines the farthest shines brightest closer to home.” He calls us to be people who make a **K**\_\_\_\_\_ **D**\_\_\_\_\_. Paul spoke of this, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*”

The goal for our ministry at Cedar Grove is two-fold: One is to be “can-do” people in our community and then to **S**\_\_\_\_\_ out **W**\_\_\_\_\_ into the world for evangelism. We need to confront the problems we face today as a church with faith. Every **M**\_\_\_\_\_ in the Bible begins with a **P**\_\_\_\_\_!

**I. Paul’s Can-Do Attitude:**

There are essentially two kinds of people in the world:

**C**\_\_\_\_\_ are essentially **P**\_\_\_\_\_ people! They create mental fences that paralyze them. I can’t can be **C**\_\_\_\_\_.

**C**\_\_\_\_\_ are essentially **O**\_\_\_\_\_ people! Paul was this kind of man no matter what came into his life. Paul’s testimony is Philippians 4:11 and 12. Can-do people are **C**\_\_\_\_\_ too!

Can-do people who are living in the Holy Spirit’s power are choosing to **B**\_\_\_\_\_ **W**\_\_\_\_\_ to His work in our lives, sharing words of our testimony with others.

People who are clothed with the power of the Spirit operate in a yes we can mentality, develop a **W**\_\_\_\_\_ **A**\_\_\_\_\_.

**II. Paul’s Commitment: I Can Do Everything:**

Paul’s testimony is in the Greek text panta ischuo, “for everything I have strength, ability, might, I am serviceable.”

People of God at Cedar Grove- we have a mandate from Jesus to be His **W**\_\_\_\_\_ by inviting Him to **M**\_\_\_\_\_ us His instruments!

Ecclesiastes 8 TLB – two great words: The truth is we must be people of **T**\_\_\_\_\_ and **I**\_\_\_\_\_.

### **III. Paul's Empowerment to Win Souls for the Kingdom:**

Paul clues us in to his power source when he says in the Greek text, endounamonti mou, “in the one constantly empowering me, effusing me with power in my life.” The Holy Spirit set his heart on fire with love!

We must remember who we are and what we are but more importantly **W**\_\_\_\_\_ we are!

We are not a business. We are a supernatural **O**\_\_\_\_\_ of God.

Paul's attitude flowed out of the Spirit's mighty power to **M**\_\_\_\_\_ the grace and healing of the salvation of the Lord to others.

Because Paul was **E**\_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit's power he **R**\_\_\_\_\_ to quit when others would have given up!

### **Conclusion:**

The key difference between Israel's first two kings, Saul and Dav

## **Discussion Starter Questions for Home Groups**

1. How would you define what it means to rejoice in the Lord Jesus regardless of our circumstances?
2. What are some reasons why God Almighty has committed the message of salvation to His children? Why is testimony so important?
3. Why do you think Jesus promised the presence of the Holy Spirit to his followers and delivered on that promise?
4. Do you agree or disagree that fear is an issue for us when we are bearing witness to Jesus, giving testimony? Why? Why not?
5. Do you agree or disagree that there are essentially two kinds of people in life: Canners and Can'ters?
6. What does Paul give to the Philippians and us as the reason why he was willing to serve Jesus in the most difficult circumstances?

7. Where does Paul say he got his strength and ability to do the work of ministry Jesus called him to do? What should we learn from Paul's testimony of his source of power for ministry?

8. Read together aloud Acts 26:12 – 23 and discuss insights you have regarding Paul's testimony of conversion to faith in Jesus.

9. Read together aloud II Corinthians 11:16 – 33 and discuss insights you have about how Paul endured suffering for the Gospel of Jesus.

10. Share testimonies with one another of how the Lord has enabled and gifted you by His Spirit to do works of ministry, or share words of testimony, or pray for someone who was in great need?