



*NEW YEAR'S REVOLUTION: "Motivation"

Biblical Text: [Philippians 4:12-13,19-20](#)

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* (play "Series" clip) In my day, the Beatles sang, ***"We all want to change the world..."** I've been keying off that message for my new year's sermon series.

*When I started thinking about our hope and dreams for the new year, and our new year's resolutions, and how we get in our own way, it just seemed to fit. Most of the time it seems like we need a revolution and not just resolutions.

I'm not the only one to resonate with the Beatles' message. Twenty-five years later it came to life in a campaign that captured the imagination of a whole new generation. Some of you will remember it. * (play "Here's to the Crazy Ones")

***"People who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do."**¹ What a great ad! It's legendary, in some ways it changed marketing history. But it almost wasn't. Steve Jobs hated it when it was pitched.²

It was an Apple marketing guy and his team, who had the creative genius to actually write and develop the ad. *Rob Siltanen – not Steve Jobs – he's the guy I admire. He is the one who changed the world of marketing.

So, how do we believe in ourselves, our ideas, and stick with them when somebody like Steve Jobs tells you your idea is (*expletive deleted*) awful?

How to stay motivated, in a positive direction - I want to talk about that today.

There are seven Biblical promises that I count on when life is tough. God has engraved them on my heart. And you've heard them before. I've given them away to many people including some of you. If you want to write something down this morning, they are a week's worth of encouragement worth keeping.

Jeremiah 29:11: ***"I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans to help you and not harm you. Plans to give you a future with hope."**³

John 10:10: ***"I came that you may have life, and have it more abundantly."**⁴

¹ From Rob Siltanen's creative 1997 "Here's to the Crazy Ones" Apple TV ad that launched the campaign that year.

² "Steve Jobs and the 'Think Different' ad: The untold story," by Chris Matyszczyk, December 15, 2011, cnet.com.

³ Jeremiah 29:11, paraphrased by the author from the NIV, NRSV and other English versions of the Bible.

⁴ Ibid. John 10:10, paraphrased by the author.

Romans 8:1: ***“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”**⁵

Romans 8:28: ***“In all things God works for good, for those who love him, and are called according to his purpose.”**⁶

Ephesians 3:20: ***“God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.”**⁷

And from our text today ... two of the most powerful:

Philippians 4:13: ***“I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.”**⁸

Philippians 4:19: ***“My God will supply your every need according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus...”**⁹

We need those promises when life is tough, when we are discouraged. And after the last year, facing this one, more than most, we need them a lot!

*In this series, we’ve been looking at 5 components that are necessary to move us forward in life: ***Identity - Capacity – Motivation – Endurance – and Security.**

In the last two weeks, we claimed our ***identity** as God’s beloved children our ***capacity**, the gifts and graces we were given when we were created by God.

Today we’re talking about ***motivation**. And motivation is what helps us believe those things. Motivation helps us believe in ourselves, and our dreams, even when no one else does, or when someone tries to keep us back.

There are lots of motivational quotes. Most are on the Internet somewhere. A few I love, like author Nikos Kazantzakis: ***“In order to succeed, we first must believe we can.”** Or tennis great Arthur Ashe: ***“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.”** But none are better than this one from a PreSchool classroom: ***“Put on your positive pants, not your cranky pants!”**

*Open your Bibles with me to Philippians 4. Our text this morning, as I said, contains two of my favorite verses of Scripture from more than a hundred thousand verses that I could have chosen from those available in the Bible.

But it also is a window into how we can find the motivation to stay positive, even when we’re discouraged. The first words of the chapter tell us two things. Paul loved the Church at Philippi and they were going through a hard time.

⁵ Ibid. Romans 8:1, paraphrased by the author.

⁶ Ibid. Romans 8:28, paraphrased by the author.

⁷ Ibid. Ephesians 3:20, paraphrased by the author.

⁸ Ibid. Philippians 4:13, paraphrased by the author.

⁹ Ibid. Philippians 4:19, paraphrased by the author..

Look at Philippians 4:1: ***“Therefore, my brothers and sisters ... stand firm in the Lord.”**¹⁰ You don’t need Paul telling you, “stand firm,” unless things are shaky.

They had issues at Philippi. Verse 2: ***“I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.”**¹¹ The Revised Standard says ***“agree in the Lord.”**¹³

But Paul doesn’t linger on this disagreement, which is getting in the way of their ministry, for long. Verses 4-9 are some of the most powerful in the Bible.

Verse 4: ***“Rejoice in the Lord always;’ again I will say, ‘Rejoice...’”**¹² Paul emphasizes the positive. Verse 8: ***“Whatever is true - honorable - just - pure - pleasing – commendable - excellent - worthy of praise - think on these things.”**¹³

*Then Paul turns to his own experience to encourage the Philippians. While thanking them for their financial support, he begins to teach them in verse 12.

He reminds them that he has faced hard times, *“I know what it is to face success or failure, having everything, having nothing. Everything going right; everything going wrong.”* - ***“In any and all circumstances, well-fed or hungry, having plenty or being in need, I have learned the secret.”**¹⁴ *ANY AND ALL.

If we could learn that secret, we could stay positive, motivated, most of the time. Then he tells us the secret. Verse 13: *** “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”**¹⁵ But I like it best in the King James Version. *** Christ!**

***“I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.”** Say that with me. If you believe that, you can survive every challenge. If you believe that you can stay motivated through every time of discouragement.

Friends, I have needed that verse more times than I can say. It’s why I quote it so often. And in my heart and the experiences of a lifetime. I can tell you without a shadow of a doubt that it is true. And you can believe it too.

***“To God be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”**¹⁶

¹⁰ Philippians 4:1. *New Revised Standard Version*®. Copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

¹¹ Ibid. Philippians 4:2.

¹² Ibid. Philippians 4:4.

¹³ Ibid. Philippians 4:8.

¹⁴ Op Cit. Philippians 4:12. Paraphrased by the author.

¹⁵ Op. Cit. Philippians 4:13. *New Revised Standard Version*®.

¹⁶ Op. Cit. Philippians 4:20. Paraphrased by the author.