

Discussion Starter: Have you kept your resolutions so far this year? Has it been easy? Looking to years past, what is the fastest that you have broken a resolution?

### Prayer

#### Key Passage: Philippians 4:10-14

Based on the surrounding verses, what was Paul experiencing when he wrote the famous words of Philippians 4:13?

Have you ever heard someone apply this verse to a context/situation that is so far removed from Paul's that it made you uncomfortable? Describe it.

#### Discussion Questions:

Pastor Ramel made the point that we often say we "can't" do something when we really mean that we "won't" do it. What are some things that you have seen people (or you have done yourself!) refuse to do by offering the excuse that they cannot do it (*lose weight, quit an addiction, handle anger/temper better, establish a daily quiet time with God/Bible, etc.*)?

What is the difference between the Philippians 4:13 attitude and the power of positive thinking that is often presented by such figures as Oprah Winfrey (*check out the ideas in her company's own words at [www.oprah.com/spirit/75](http://www.oprah.com/spirit/75)*)? What safeguards/checks do you have in place to prevent yourself from having a "blank check" or "genie in a bottle" mentality towards God's promises?

How do you discern/discover whether an idea/desire you have is something that God wants you to do or just something that you want to do (*Bible verses, prayer, other Christians as sounding boards, etc.*)? Instead of allowing ourselves to be paralyzed with indecision because of being unsure about the previous question, how does the mindset of **James 4:13-15** shed light on how we should make plans for the future?

When is it okay to say "can't," "impossible," and other similar words/phrases? Be sure to give some specific examples (*buy a house in Beverly Hills today, make the roster of an NBA team, grow wings out of my back and fly, earn God's favor on my own, make my child obey me consistently and happily the first time I ask him something, etc.*). Why is it essential to recognize our limitations?

Tell the story of "The Little Engine that Could" (*a complete version of the book has been put online at [www.childrensbooksonline.org/Little\\_Engine\\_that\\_Could/index.htm](http://www.childrensbooksonline.org/Little_Engine_that_Could/index.htm)*). Describe a time in your life when you fell into the train's mentality of "I think I can" when you should have been thinking with Paul that "I know He can." What is the huge difference between these two similar phrases?