

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mr. Dowling, Mr. Garner, Mr. Hadley, Ms. Donna Law, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Ms. Cindy Newsome, Mr. Gary Newsome, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Mrs. Siota, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

Out of Town: Mr. and Mrs. Dowling.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: [www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com](http://www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com)
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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## Thinking We Can't When We Can

By Derek Long

Have you ever had something you needed to do or were supposed to do but thought you were incapable of doing it? Maybe you have allowed yourself to get behind on things around the house, in your schoolwork, in your Bible reading plan, with tasks at your workplace, etc. It is easy to start thinking I have so much to do and I am so far behind it is impossible for me to accomplish what I need to complete. Maybe other people have placed upon you some sort of responsibility which you think is more than you are capable of bearing. Maybe you expect something out of yourself but it seems you are not capable of reaching your own expectations. Most of us probably have had times in life where we think we cannot do what we really are capable of doing.

It is possible for us to think we cannot do what we can do when it comes to serving God as well. The Bible tells us of people who thought they could not do what God was telling them they could do. In Exodus 3-4 God appears to Moses in a burning bush. God gives Moses the following instructions, "Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt" (Exodus 3:10, NKJV). God obviously thinks Moses is capable of accomplishing the task He is sending him on. Moses, however, thinks he is not capable of bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. He responds to God's instruction with statements like these: 1. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11, NKJV). 2. "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" (Exodus 3:13). 3. "But sup-

pose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, 'The Lord has not appeared to you'" (Exodus 4:1, NKJV). 4. "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue" (Exodus 4:10, NKJV). 5. "O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send" (Exodus 4:13, NKJV). Moses questioned whether he was the right man for the job, whether he had the necessary knowledge and skill, etc. God assured Moses that with His help Moses could accomplish the task. Are we like Moses when it comes to doing what God has told us to do? Do we sit around and think about how we are not capable of doing what God has told us to do instead of doing what He tells us to do? Exodus 4:14 tells us God's anger was kindled against Moses when he acted the way he did. God's anger will be kindled with us too if we think we can't do what He has told us to do. Men may expect more of us than it is possible for us to do but God knows what we are capable of and does not expect of us more than we are capable of doing with His help.

Another example of people who thought they could not do something when they could are the ten spies who spied out the land of Canaan in Numbers 13-14. In Numbers 13:31 they told the people, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we" (NKJV). The ten spies show us a danger of thinking we cannot do something we are capable of doing. If we think we are incapable, we may convince others around us they are incapable of doing what God wants them to do as well. Moses would later say of the actions of these individuals that, "they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, so that they did not go into the land which the Lord had given them" (Numbers 32:9, NKJV). If we think we can't do something we can do, we might discourage others around us from doing something which they are capable of doing as well.

In the parable of the talents the one talent man thought he could not do what he was capable of doing. The one talent man simply dug and hid his lord's money (Matthew 25:18). When the lord returns he attempts to explain his actions by saying, "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours" (Matthew 25:24-25, NKJV). The one talent man appears to

be saying in part that his lord expected of him things which were unreasonable or things which he was incapable of doing. If we think God's expectations of us are more than we can do, we will fail to do what He expects us to be doing. The lord was angry with the one talent man (Matthew 25:26-30) and God will be angry if we think we cannot do what we are capable of doing. Was the one talent man really incapable of handling the talent entrusted to him? Matthew 25:15 tells us the man gave talents to his servants, "to each according to his own ability" (NKJV). In other words, the one talent man was capable of handling the one talent but simply thought it was something he was incapable of handling. How many times do we maybe feel like God has placed more responsibility on us than it is possible for us to handle and as a result we do nothing for the Lord?

A couple of additional thoughts come to my mind on this topic: 1. Sometimes something may seem like more than we can handle. If we think that way, we need to remember with God's help we are capable of doing whatever it is He wants us to do (Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 3:20-21). 2. There may be times in life where we know people are capable of doing more than they actually are doing. Maybe you expect a person to be able to do something but they feel they cannot accomplish it. Remember we can easily expect more out of others than we expect out of ourselves and might even expect more of them than is reasonable unlike God. If our expectations are reasonable and the person truly is capable of doing what we expected them to do, it can be hard to accept a person thinking they can't do what we know they can do. When we experience something like that, it may be good for us to reflect and consider whether we have done a similar thing to God and how that must make Him feel to know we are capable of doing more than we think we are capable of doing.

Let's avoid thinking we can't do something when it is something God commands us to do!