

I Can't

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

The phrase "I can't" is often used and, I believe, is used in place of "I don't want to." When people say, "I can't" it implies that they would like to do it, but are not able to do it. They may go on to say that they don't have the time, the know-how, or the ability. It also says, "I'm not willing to even try." While it is true that there are some things that a person can't do, I don't buy into the idea that a person can't do anything. To some it's just easier to say "I can't" and to not take the time, or effort, to do anything for the Lord.

In Genesis 18:14 God asked this question, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" Anyone who believes in God would say that he can do anything. Reading through the scriptures we see that the Lord gave men wisdom, strength, and other abilities as they had need. The person who believes in God and trusts him can do most anything, but the one who doubts and doesn't really want to serve the Lord does nothing.

To say, "I can't" and to not try is to say that God called me to do something that I don't have the ability

to do. If that were true then the Lord would be unfair in asking a person to do something that he couldn't do. God is not cruel and will not give us a task that we can't do. If he called you to do it then you can do it. All you have to do is to trust the Lord and do your best. Someone once said, "Where God guides, God provides." How true that is, God does provide his servants that which is needed.

What is the key to serving the Lord? It is simple if we stop and think about it. First thing is to trust in God and in him alone. If he has called a person to serve in some way then God will help him to do the task. He that trusts in himself will fail. Why? His pride will get in the way, showing that he is not in the right spirit.

Second, it is not only what we do, or try to do, but why we do it. Are we trying to look important and want folks to think that we are good? Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31. We are to serve God and to glorify him and not to seek praise for ourselves. As the song says, "To God be the glory." It is sad to see a person who may sing, teach, or even preach thinking that he, or she, is the best that has ever done it. I remember a joke that I read once, at least I think it was a joke, where a preacher and his wife was going home after church. She asked

him, "Who told you that you were the greatest preacher that ever lived?" Surprised he said, "Why, no one!" She said, "Where in the world then, did you get the idea?"

God calls us to step out on faith and to leave our comfort zone. Why are so many nervous when they do something for the Lord for the first time? I believe it is a fear of failure. We don't like to fail at anything, but especially in the Lord's work. We don't want to be embarrassed at not doing well and so it is easier to let somebody else do it.

Doesn't that come back to the issue of pride? We're worried about how we look in the eyes of other people.

I have seen those who, when asked to do some service, answered, "I'll try." They went on to do the task at hand. We may not be able to do something as well as another person can do it, for we are not all the same. God desires that we do what we can according to the ability that he gave us. That's all he asks, that we step out on faith and do our best for him. We are to be concerned with what he thinks, not what other people think or say.

Let each of us do what we can to serve the Lord. We can't do everything, but each of us can do something. The Lord won't accept "I can't" as an excuse so we shouldn't even try to use it as one.

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LEGEND OF THE DOGWOOD

WHEN JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED HE FORGAVE ALL THOSE WHO TOOK PART IN THIS HORRIBLE EXECUTION (LUKE 23:34). AT SOMETIME IN THE EARLY YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY A LEGEND STARTED THAT, SO COMPLETE WAS HIS FORGIVENESS, EVEN THE WOODEN CROSS WAS INCLUDED! IT WAS SUPPOSED THAT THE TREE FROM WHICH THE WOOD CAME WAS THE DOGWOOD AND BECAUSE OF THIS FORGIVENESS THE TREE NEVER AGAIN GREW LARGE ENOUGH TO SUPPLY WOOD FOR SUCH A TERRIBLE PURPOSE—AND AS COMMEMORATION, ITS FLOWERS WOULD FORM A CROSS WITH A NAILPRINT AT EACH PETAL'S EDGE, WITH THE CENTER RESEMBLING A CROWN OF THORNS STAINED WITH BLOOD.



TODAY'S BEAUTIFUL DOGWOOD TREES GROW TO A HEIGHT OF EIGHT TO FIFTEEN FEET—NOWHERE NEAR THE SIXTY OR SEVENTY FEET THAT THEIR ANCESTORS ARE SAID TO HAVE ATTAINED, AND ALSO....

...THE PETALS OF ITS LOVELY FLOWER DOES HAVE WHAT APPEARS TO BE A NAILPRINT ON THE EDGE OF EACH PETAL, WHILE THE FLOWER'S CENTER IS A BLOOD-RED COLOR—NEXT TIME THEY'RE IN BLOOM, TAKE A LOOK FOR YOURSELF!



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