

WE CAN WORK IT OUT

Inspired by The Beatles' Song

Week #5 of a 6-Week "Songs of Life" Series

Rev. Richard Maraj

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SONG LYRICS TO 'WE CAN WORK IT OUT'

Try to see it my way

Do I have to keep on talking till I can't go on?

While you see it your way

Run the risk of knowing that our love may soon be gone

We can work it out

We can work it out

Think of what you're saying

You can get it wrong and still you think that it's alright

Think of what I'm saying

We can work it out and get it straight or say good night

We can work it out

We can work it out

Life is very short and there's no time

For fussing and fighting, my friend

I have always thought that it's a crime

So I will ask you once again

Try to see it my way

Only time will tell if I am right, or I am wrong

While you see it your way

There's a chance that we might fall apart before too long

We can work it out

We can work it out

Life is very short and there's no time

For fussing and fighting, my friend

I have always thought that it's a crime

So I will ask you once again

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WORSHIP MESSAGE:

So how many people have someone in your life that you don't always see eye-to-eye with? [Congregants laugh] Anybody? And how many people have some serious conflict and disconnect with someone to the point that you doubt if it'll ever improve or get better? Anybody? And how many people know that the relationship issues you have with that individual -- and all individuals -- would be absolutely better and so much happier if they just listened to you and did it your way? [Congregants laugh] Okay ...

You know, every single one of us is on a spiritual journey; that we are on a spiritual path to know the fullness and the allness and our oneness with God. We are here to unify our hearts and minds; to bring forth and express the light and the love and the glory of God in all areas of our lives. And one of the greatest ways that God awakens us and calls us deeper is through relationships.

I would say relationships are the greatest gifts that God has given us. They are powerful; they are wonderful; they are meaningful. And they're also difficult, painful and challenging. You know, as wonderful as relationships are in our spiritual fulfillment, that relationships are not easy.

It reminds me of my favorite relationship joke ... [congregants laugh] ... of this husband and wife. They're in the middle of a massive argument. They haven't been talking for two or three days, giving each other the silent treatment to the max. Then suddenly the husband realizes that he needs his wife to help wake him up at 5 a.m. so that he can catch an important business flight. And he doesn't want to break the silence; he doesn't want to admit defeat. So he comes up with an idea to write her a note and put it in a place that she can find it the note says, *"Please wake me up at 5 a.m."*

The next morning, he wakes up at 9 a.m. And he had missed his flight. He is so angry and wants to know why she didn't wake him up. And he's about to leave the bedroom, he sees a little note and it says, *"It's 5 a.m.; wake up."* [Congregation laughs]

So, how many people would agree the relationships can be hard? They can be tough. Tough! And how many people -- and let me ask this question: Why do you think that's so? Why are relationships so hard? Why are relationships so difficult? Why is it that we struggle so much in that area?

And so I thought of four reasons of why relationships -- there are hundreds, but I've thought of four! [congregants laugh] -- that I want to share with you.

And the first one is: **we always want it our way**. But only all the time we want it our way. [Congregants laugh] We want to be right. You know, we want that person to think the way we think; behave the way we want them to behave ... And sometimes we are very rigid in our standards of how we think people should behave and how our partner in a relationship would be. We can be a little bit self-serving and self-centered, and a bit controlling. So, I think that that's the first reason why it's hard. We always want our own way.

And the second one is: **poor communication**. Sometimes we don't always share what's really going on with us. You know, not any hurts or pains ... but also our needs and our desires. We don't always share those with our partners. Sometimes we tell ourselves, *"If you really loved me, you'd know."* You know, but the truth is: we don't always express and share in an honest way what's really going on with us. And sometimes are even unwilling to ask for what we want.

And then the third one is: that **it takes work**. Relationships take compromise and change. It takes a willingness to listen and understand and have compassion. You know, it takes a willingness to be forgiving and to let go of things. You know, It takes a desire to be loving and thoughtful and caring about the needs of another person.

And then the fourth one has to do with our **past experiences**: our upbringing; our culture; the family dynamics we had; the kind of relationship we had with our parents, with our siblings and with our friends. All of those things. And some of the wounds that we've had of abandonment or rejection; they all play a role and affect the current relationship and relationships that we have. Because sometimes we can repeat certain relationship patterns in our lives that are affected by what happened to us in the past.

All relationships take work and some of them can be very hard ... but if we want to, we can work it out!

So we're in Week #5 of our six-week "Songs of Life" series where we take famous song -- songs we love -- and extract a spiritual message from them. Last week, we looked at The Eagles' hit, "Take it Easy." And if, by chance, you missed any of these, they're on YouTube; you can check them out and enjoy them there.

Today, we're going to look at "We Can Work It Out" by The Beatles, written by Paul and John. In 1965, it was released. And it is about, obviously, the challenges in relationship and trying to work those things out. It was inspired by a Paul's relationship with actress Jane Asher. And they were going through a tough time, and so he wrote this song, and was inspired to start it with John from that. And in it he is saying: **Try to see things my way.**

And so, he wants things to work out, but he liked them to work out my way. In the line that he says, **Let's see it your way**, is saying that you run the risk of this love being gone. And so, it is a very interesting thing. In an interview, Paul McCartney admitted that the song slants to the selfish side, but it is also a song of hope. It is a song of optimism: that there is a path to healing; there's a path to connection and reconciliation; that we can work things out.

And so, it's got a nice peppy, bubbly energy about it. The only time it slows down is that waltz part; that's what George Harrison added. And then it picks up the speed and that energy again. Stevie Wonder did a cover of this song. And he heard it for the first time when he was 15 years old in 1965. And he said, *"One day I'm going to do that song, but I'm going to funky it up a little bit."* [Congregants laugh] And in 1970, it was on his album, *Signed, Sealed and Delivered*, and he definitely funkyed it up a bit. Almost 50 years later, Stevie Wonder sang, "We Can Work It Out," to Paul McCartney at a tribute for him and the Beatles.

This is a powerful and wonderful song about relationships. But I think it's also a powerful message about how to live life and realizing -- in all things that aren't working in our lives -- that we can work it out.

And so, let's look at some lessons we can learn from this great and fabulous song.

And the first one is let's just look at the line:

We can work it out

When you hear that -- "*We can work it out*" -- to me, that is a statement of faith. That is a statement of knowing that, even though the situation isn't going as great as we'd like, that we can work it out. This will get better; this will improve. Things will change. Things can be transformed to something greater, compared to what is going on right now.

I think "*We can work it out*" invites us into a deeper awareness of God's truth; of the faith of the unlimited possibilities of good available to us. In the Book of Romans it says, "*We all know that all things work together for good for those who love God.*" Jesus said, "*With God all things are possible.*" And Jesus also said, "*In this life there will be trials and tribulations, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.*"

And the message with all that is: we can work it out. Things will work out for the highest and best through the Christ in us; that things will work out for the highest and best.

You know, Jesus knew the power of this faith; that things would work out. In the story of the Loaves and Fishes, they were short bread; you know, there were short fish significantly. And the first thing -- you want to you know what he did? Okay, let me tell you! [Congregants laugh] He had the people sit down on the grass ... which is to symbolize in the first situation when things aren't going well, is to take a deep breath and calm down and just relax. And the second thing he did is he looked up. He looked to a higher place. He looked to a higher level of consciousness. He looked away from the conditions and the

appearances of lack, and he looked to a higher consciousness of the allness and the goodness and the abundance of God. And in this spirit of giving thanks, he knew that things would work out. And in the end, there was still an abundance left over of bread and fish.

We can work it out. It is a symbol and a recognition of the power of our faith in changing and transforming situations that aren't working as well as we would like.

Henry David Thoreau said, *"I believe there is a subtle magnetism in nature which, if we consciously yield to it, will direct us aright."* And he's saying that there's a Spirit and a Power and a divine Presence available in and around and through us, and we can tap into it.

Wayne Dyer said recognizing that this power exists -- and whether you call it God or Spirit or Intelligence of the Universe -- that it is always available to us. And recognizing it is the first step in activating it.

To me, we can work it out. The message is: **ACTIVATE YOUR FAITH.** Know that things will work out in whatever area of your life; that there are more solutions. There are more possibilities. You know, there is more healing. There are new opportunities. For whatever is going on in your life, that it will work out. It will work out for the highest and for the best.

So, if it's in your relationship, that we need to affirm that all things will work out for the highest and best. That we can work it out; that it will work out; that God is greater than this situation and this condition. So, the first message from this great song is activate your faith; we can work it out. It will work out.

The second thing is to look at the "we." WE can work it out. You know, the biggest part of the "we" that we can influence to make things work out is me. Somebody once said, **IF IT IS TO BE, IT IS UP TO ME.** You know, individually we play the largest role in our experience and the outcomes in our own lives. And so, we need to look at: What in me is contributing to this not working well, and what are the things that I would need to change or add or let go of that can bring forth a greater possibility and a greater experience?

Ralph Waldo Emerson -- who said my favorite quote when I was a kid, *"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm"* -- said that one of the key things to things working out in our lives is for every single one of us to understand that we are endogenous. And that means that we have an internal causation energy; that from within we can create and develop our own environment.

Now, indigenous means like a plant that is indigenous to a particular place ... when it's indigenous, it means that it needs that particular environment. When you're endogenous, it means whatever the environment is, you can create your own environment.

So, let's say you transplanted a palm tree or a cactus from Arizona or California to Alaska or Siberia. The indigenous -- It may not live; it may suffer because the environment isn't there. But when you're endogenous, you can create your own environment.

And so here's what Emerson said. He said, *"We are not merely indigenous to a particular society or part of the world. We are endogenous, and that means we can create our own environment through our thoughts, our perceptions, our beliefs. Everywhere we go, we take our environment with us: our divine magnificence, our spiritual potential goes with us everywhere we go."*

And so, what he's saying is that the difference between those who express their greatness and their goodness, and who things work out for, are the ones who take care of their affairs; who take care of their spiritual business; who are making sure that they take care of their environment. And particularly their internal environment: of the quality of thoughts and faith and belief that we have in reaction to

whatever may be around us.

So, think of a situation in life that isn't working as well as you'd like, and ask yourself: What role are you playing and contributing to it not working as well as it could work? And what would you need to change? What would you need to add for it to create a greater possibility and to bring forth something more positive into your life?

For most of us, when life isn't working, our first response is, "*If they would just change and get their act together, things would go great.*" But the truth is, you know, the most powerful part of the "*we can work it out*" is the me aspect of it.

So, I want you to think of your relationship or a relationship in your life, and ask yourself: What would you need to do to make it work out or to work better? And would it be to listen more? Would it be to be more compassionate? Maybe to judge less? To be to be more encouraging? To be more forgiving? To be more gentle? To be more understanding? To express more love and more care?

Or maybe we ask ourselves a question: What do I need to heal? Or what is it that I need to let go? What do I need to accept? What do I need to change? What way do I need to be more understanding or maybe more honest?

"*We can work it out*" is a powerful thing. You're endogenous; you have it within you: that Spirit of God that is within you! That you can make new choices. You know, you can see things in a new and different and better way. "*If it is to be, it is up to me.*" We are the ones who share in this opportunity of making our lives work and making our lives and our relationship work even better.

And then the last thing is: to **BE OPEN THAT THE BET AND HIGHEST MAY LOOK DIFFERENT THAN WHAT YOU THINK!** You know, Paul McCartney wanted that relationship to work, but it didn't work out that way, because she ended the relationship. But it did work out, because he met Linda McCartney and got married less than a year later, and had a 30-year marriage that really was storybook. And she was the love of his life. [Jane] also met a guy named Gerald Scarfe, and they had three children and had a great marriage and a great life. It didn't work out the way he thought it would, but it worked out for his highest and his best and her highest and her best.

I love this story of a woman who wanted to get married, and she had her long list of qualities of what she was looking for and demanded in a partner: tall, dark, handsome; loves to travel; charming; intelligent; articulate ... it was a long list. [Congregants laugh] And she went to a barbecue and met a really nice guy, but he was short, fair and not so handsome. [Congregants laugh] And then she found out that he couldn't travel; that he got air sick or something, and he couldn't fly. And she loved flying! She was disappointed on many levels. In fact, she was almost devastated! But she kept chatting and they kept getting to know each other. And she would laugh, and they had such connection and a good time every single place they went, over and over again.

And she came to the decision point: Is this list and standard that I'm holding greater than the joy that I'm feeling, even though the package and the look is different than what I expected? And praise the Lord, she made the decision. And they got married and continued enjoying that.

Sometimes things turn out differently than we expect, and we need to be open enough to recognize that God may bless us with something that looks different; that might be better for us than we have conceived for ourselves.

Kevin Bacon and Kyra Sedgwick: of course, you know, famous and successful they are. They lost millions of dollars in a Ponzi scheme and ended up buying a farm. And they were spending time there, and they raised pigs and goats. And they grew their stuff in the garden. And they found themselves loving that life

so different than they ever imagined! But they found that simpler farm life was healthier; they found themselves more happy and more engaged. Sometimes things turn out differently, but they turn out to be better than we imagine.

And so, you know, when I was in high school, I was a captain of my high school basketball team. I was a high jumper. I was a volleyball player. I got a letter to play volleyball. And then my life changed, as you know. And I was studying kinesiology -- the study of human movement; I wanted to go into physical therapy. I mean, everything in my life was physical, and then it changed abruptly and permanently.

And I kept thinking, *"Man, I can't do nothing! There's nothing that I can do!"* And I was working for my dad in his income tax preparation business ... not because I loved income tax preparation, but because I love my dad. And I thought it would be cool to work with him. And it was something I could do. And so I did that, and I volunteered a lot at prisons and all kinds of places. And then I became a professional speaker for a while.

And then I was guided to ministry: to become a minister. That was the last thing in the world I would have ever chosen to do! But fast forward 27 years, and I would say: other than my family, it is the joy and honor of my life to do ministry. It has been such a gift and such a blessing. [Congregation applauds and cheers] And so, things worked out! And they worked out way differently than I expected, but in some ways better than I ever imagined.

Can you remember what you were worried about five years ago on this date? Can you remember what you were really worried and stressed about two years ago on today's date? Can you remember what you were worried and stressed about one year ago today on this date? And I would suggest the reason you can't remember is because it worked out. And however it worked out, it must have worked out good enough, because you're here today and you're smiling and you're nodding.

And that's the truth: things will work out! Can you trust the universe enough can you trust that God loves you enough that you don't have to hold a tight grip on everything, and try to control it? And maybe just allow life to happen more. And see where the adventures and how the intelligence of God and the inner calling and purpose of our lives will unfold to lead us to something greater; to something better than we can imagine. Just because it looks different, give it the opportunity. Maybe it is better on levels that you can't imagine right now.

You know, I love that line:

**Life is very short and there's no time
For fussing and fighting, my friend**

And it's true! Life is short; it's too short to waste on stressing and arguing and fighting against ourselves; fighting against life; and especially fighting with others. You know, to open our hearts to more compassion and to be a little bit softer. It's a better way to live and for things to land for ourselves and in our relationships.

We deserve better than just dwelling and being stuck in negativity and fighting. And we not only deserve better, but the person to give us better, and to help support us in having a better life, is ourselves. And it's by doing three things. Number one: we can work it out is to activate your faith. Know that all things truly work together for good. God is greater than whatever is going on There's still more solutions; still more opportunities; still more love still more healing; and still more good for to come forth.

Second is to change the "me" of the "we." To know that you're Indogenous; that in you -- that your choices, your perceptions make a difference. And look at where life isn't working and start making a few shifts with ourselves to see how we can impact and create something greater.

And then, be open that life might show you something different. It may work out differently, but it may and more likely to be better than you can have imagined.

This is a song about improving our relationships and working them out. But it's also a message that life can get better; that all areas of your lives can improve. And that is the simple but powerful message from the song "We Can Work It Out."

God bless you all!

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