

Confidence Transcript

You know, it seems in our world today, there is a lot of arrogance but not a lot of confidence. And there's a difference. Confidence is being sure of yourself and sure of what you're doing, where arrogance is trying to appear like you're sure of yourself and what you're doing.

And because of that, there's a lot of brashness, rudeness, even sometimes meanness as people try to make their point. They yell over one another, they attack one another, yet deep down, you wonder, are they really confident? Maybe we think of the same thing about ourselves. You know, confidence is a power.

People that are confident can get things done. People that are confident don't let things stop them. So how can we become more confident in the things that we do? Well, the Bible does give us a little bit of advice on that.

And today, we're going to look at what Paul has to say about confidence from Philippians 3:4-14.

INTRO

If you want to open up your Bibles to Philippians 3:4-14, here we see an interesting take that Paul has on confidence. It starts in verse 4 when he says, *“Although I myself might have confidence in the flesh, if anyone has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I have far more. Circumcised on the eighth day of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the law, a Pharisee, as to zeal, a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness who is in the law, found blameless. But whatever things were to me, for those things I have counted for loss, for the sake of Christ.”*

Now notice there, Paul starts off by listing his resume. And he has a lot of, as we might say, skins on the wall. I mean, he was the Pharisee of Pharisees. He'd done everything right. He went farther and harder than anyone else. But notice here, Paul says, I might have confidence in that, but that's not true confidence. You got to make sure your confidence is in the right place.

See, many people try to put their confidence in their circumstances or their accomplishments. If I do enough, or if I've accomplished enough, or people think highly of me enough, or whatever metric or standard the

world puts out there, if I live up to that, that will give me confidence. But it doesn't work that way.

That confidence is in the wrong place. Because all those things can fall away. And even all those accomplishments can prove to be nothing.

But what Paul said he truly had confidence in, what was a gain to him, was that he had it for the sake of Christ. You see, to have true confidence, you have to have it in the right place.

And it's not in yourself. It's in Jesus Christ. It's in God. The confidence that we should have is not because of us, but because of who we serve.

Let's continue what Paul would say there, by where you need to put that confidence. He says, *“More than that, I count all things to be lost in the view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, from whom I have suffered the loss of all things. And I count them but rubbish that I might gain Christ, that I might be found in him, not deriving a righteousness of my own from the law, but through that which is in Christ. The righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. That I might know him and the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death, in order that I might obtain the resurrection of the dead.”*

Notice in that passage how Paul starts off by saying, I count, even though I would have all these great things, he said, I know what's best is what? Knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

And he said, even if I lose everything else, all my accomplishments fade away, all the praise that I get is gone. On all the things that seemingly are important to this world pass away, he says, I don't worry about it a bit. He said, I count it but rubbish.

It's interesting the word that he uses there. The “rubbish” that the New American Standard translators use there, that counted but loss, as some would say. But really the word that's there describes what we would throw down a sewer. You think about what you flush away, that's the word that he's using there. He says, I count it as it was absolute, total waste. Why? He said, it means nothing to me. I would throw it down the sink. He said, nothing matters as much as gaining Christ.

And if I'm found in him, not because I have developed a righteousness of my own, and once again, it's not because of what I've done, but what Christ is doing through me.

You see there in that passage, we see that he has the right priority. And true confidence has the right priority. It's not putting self first, it's putting the **right thing first**.

It's putting Christ first. It's putting what's truly important first. Sometimes we want to have confidence in our success in this world.

And we think that if I've somehow failed to live up to what the world says, then I'm worthless. But the truth is that if we are in Christ, if we are found being conformed to Jesus and his life and his death and his resurrection, then we have something far greater and something that we should absolutely be sure for. That's why he will continue in 1 Timothy 1:12, by saying, *"For this reason I suffer these things, for I'm not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed in and am convinced that he is able to guard that which I've entrusted him to that day."*

Paul says, I don't worry about what I suffer because I know who I serve. And that gives Paul the right perspective. Let's go back, he says in verse 12, he says, *"Not I that have already obtained it, or I've already become perfect, but I press on that I may lay hold of that which was also laid a hold of me by Christ Jesus."*

You see his perspective there? His perspective there, his confidence is, is I'm completely successful, but I'm becoming completed. He says, not that I've already gotten there, but that I'm taking a hold of it.

When the Bible talks about perfection, it doesn't talk about it as we sometimes use it as a state. You know, oh, if I don't do anything wrong, I'm perfect. But perfection in, in the Bible is used as a, as a means, a goal. It's what we're attempting to be. It's what we're becoming part of. Perfection is something that we are moving towards, not something that we hold on to. That's why Paul says that I may lay hold of that which was laid a hold of me in Christ Jesus.

We've been given something because of our state in Christ Jesus. And it's something that we want to live up to. We want to conform to.

Paul says, not that I've already obtained it because he knows he's not there yet. He's moving in the right direction. He's making sure his confidence is in the right process.

Notice what he says in verse 13, *“Brethren, I do not regard myself as laying a hold of it yet. But this one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead. I press on towards the goal of the prize of the upward call in Christ Jesus.”*

I think we have to remember the, what the two great philosophers, Timon and Pumbaa used to say, you have to sometimes leave your behind in the past. You know, what it comes down to is we, we may not be there yet.

You know, we haven't achieved that. Sometimes we lose our confidence because we think, oh, I failed. I've not done what I'm supposed to do, but you're, you're never going to be there.

I'm not confident because I don't know it all yet. Well, you're never going to know it all, but you can be moving forward. You do know what you can do. You're moving forward. You're moving ahead. And that's exactly what Paul is talking about.

His confidence doesn't come because he's sure of himself. His confidence comes because he's assured of what God has done for him. *“I press on to the goal of the prize of the upward call in Christ Jesus.”*

You see, if we put our confidence in the right place, in Christ, and we put our confidence in the right priorities, by putting heaven and spiritual things first, and we make sure that in that confidence, we are looking towards the right destination, the right place and doing it the right way, the right process, not living in the past, but moving towards the future. We can be confident. We can be confident of our future.

We can be confident in what we do today. We can be confident because we look to Christ to set our standard. Our confidence doesn't come in ourself, but it comes in the one that we serve.

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