

## Our confidence in God

Many people are reckless in their self-confidence. They make reckless decisions and do reckless things often overestimating their own abilities. Some get away with it and get through what they have done. Others are destroyed by their reckless behaviour. What is the difference between such behaviour and a missionary leaving all to follow Christ in another country on nothing but faith? Or a Christian businessman giving more than he can afford from his profits because he knows that that's what God wants of him? The difference is the one is confidence in themselves, and the other is confidence in God. The one is rooted in pride, the other in humility.

1 John 5: 14 – 21 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him. If you see any brother or sister commit a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray and God will give them life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should pray about that. All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death.

We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them. We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

### 1) Our confidence in approaching God

- God always accomplishes his will and desires that we align ourselves to it.
- We cannot approach God with everything that we want and expect him to answer our prayers.
  - We so often hear prayers for bigger and better cars, boats, and many other luxury items.
  - Sometimes it's prayers for healing when God isn't going to heal a person.
- We need to approach God in prayer and his word, hear from him to find out what his will is on a particular matter, then prayer with confidence according to his will.
- In some matters his will is clearly stipulated in his Word and we can always approach God with confidence for them
  - We are confident that God wants all people everywhere to repent so we can pray for those who don't yet know Jesus to believe and be saved. We can pray for that unsaved friends and family believe.
    - Acts 17: 30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.
    - 1 Timothy 2: 3 – 4 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.
  - We are confident that God wants missionaries to go into the mission field so we can pray confidently for workers to go everywhere
    - Matthew 28: 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
    - Matthew 9: 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.
- In other matters it isn't clear what the Lord's will is as it changes from person to person and situation to situation, so we need to ask the Lord to reveal his will before praying with confidence in it.
  - If we know for sure that God wants to heal someone, we will pray with confidence that he will do so. However, God doesn't heal everyone and we need to know how God wants us to pray for a sick person.
  - We often need direction in major decisions and can't assume that we can tell God which decision to make. Sometimes God wants us to go in the direction that's against all logic. C. T Studd gave up a cricketering career to become a missionary.
- The basis of our confidence in approaching God is the blood of Jesus that opened up the way for us into the Holy of holies.
  - Hebrews 10: 19 – 22 Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings

## 2) Our confidence in God's sustaining power

- We are commanded to pray for a brother or sister who commits a sin that does not lead to death.
- What does "a sin that does not lead to death" mean?
- Aren't the wages for all sin death? Isn't that why Jesus died?
  - He died to take all of our sin on himself and die our death that we may live.
- A sin that leads to death is a rebellion against God, rejecting his salvation, and being hardened to the conviction of the Holy Spirit of sin in their life so as not to repent therefrom.
- A sin that does not lead to death, by a believer, is a stumbling into sin from which the believer would be convicted of and then repent from realising that it is detestable to God.
  - 1 John 1: 9 – 2: 1 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.  
My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.
- The one born of God does not continue to sin
  - This doesn't mean that we have become completely sinless or without the ability to sin when we are born again. It means that we are free from bondage to sin and the power of God keeps us from sinning
  - It means that we no longer live a sinful lifestyle although we may still happen to sin. We may still give in to temptation when we haven't remained alert to the prowling of the evil one.
  - But when we do sin, we recognise it as sin and repent. We don't remain in sin and we don't allow sin to remain in us.
- Our confidence to be kept from sin is not in us, it's not in our own willpower. It's in God
  - We have the sustaining indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, not only keeping us from sin, but making us Holy, transforming us into the image of Jesus
  - He is the One who keeps us from the wiles of the devil and He's the One who is our sustaining power to keep us to the end.
- We aren't only saved by grace, but are sustained by grace
  - Titus 2: 11 – 14 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

## 3) Our confidence in hope

- If God is our confidence in prayer, confidence in us being sustained by grace, then he is also our confidence in hope
- 1 John 5: 20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.
- Jesus came that we may know him who is true, be in him who is true, and he is true and eternal life.
  - If we are in him, then we are in the truth
  - If we are in him, we are in eternal life
- This is our confidence in hope – being in him
  - Colossians 1: 27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
- John ends off by saying "Dear children, keep yourselves from idols."
  - This seems random, but he's just been speaking about Jesus being the true God. So, let's not follow or worship anything false
  - Idols and falsehood cannot give us hope
  - We cannot put our confidence in a dead idol. We can only put our confidence in the true and living God or draws us into his presence, sustains us by his power, and gives us true hope for eternity.