

FAITH THROUGH CONFIDENCE

September 15, 2010

Matthew 8:5-10 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

Mark 2:2-5 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

Mark 5:25-34 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

Mark 10:46-52 And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying

unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

What do these four stories have in common? Your answer would naturally be “faith”. They had faith in Jesus’ ability to heal. But what was that one motivating factor that gave them the ability to believe that Jesus would and or could heal? That one word is confidence. They had to have the confidence that if they asked Jesus for this miracle, that he could, and would perform it. Let’s take another look at each story....

You go to your boss for a raise. You feel you have worked hard, put in your time, and that you deserve the raise. What is the motivating factor for you to overcome your fears and step into his or her office and ask for that raise? Faith? Probably not. That motivating factor is confidence. Confidence in the fact that you have earned the raise, and confidence that when you ask for the raise that your boss won’t laugh you out of the office. You go in confidence. Jesus would have us come to God in this same manner. The Bible uses the term, “boldly”, **Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.**

Let’s use the chair analogy again. You are all sitting these chairs again? You had faith enough in these chairs to sit on them without taking the time to do stress tests and make sure they will hold you. But do you have the confidence that they will hold you for the entire hour? How do you know that in the next 5 seconds one won’t collapse? Perhaps you should stand up and inspect the legs, or the cross bars, or the back. Are you confident they will continue to hold you up?

When we get saved we have the utmost confidence in God that through faith, He can, and will save us. We bow our heads and pray for the forgiveness of our sins, confident that he can, and will forgive us. We believe in our heart that Christ was raised after three days and then have the confidence that if we ask Christ into our hearts, the Holy Spirit will move into our heart and Christ will become Lord and Master of our lives. Faith, yes. For we are saved by grace through faith. But it is in confidence that we believe our salvation is real. Think back to that moment. For most of us, if not all, at that moment the feeling of confidence in our salvation, and our God was visible. The Bible said that Jesus SAW their faith. It was the evidence of things unseen to human eyes. But confidence in our Lord shows in our lives. It is visible and apparent. There is a big difference between a confident Christian and an insecure Christian. And the difference is striking. It is obvious.

What happens after that moment in salvation? Where does our confidence go? We get saved by faith, but then our faith leaves us?

You all sat in those chairs with confidence that they would hold you up. Why aren't you checking them continuously to make sure they will continue to hold you up? Because you have confidence in their ability to hold you up. Why do we lose our ability to be confident that God will continue to supply all our needs, or get us through some storm in our life, or heal our diseases or to save our family? Why do some of us all of a sudden doubt God's ability to maintain our salvation? Do we lose confidence in His abilities? All of a sudden those chairs aren't going to hold you? They have held you for every service since we purchased them. We don't give it a second thought. God has held us every day of our lives since our lives were purchased on the cross of Calvary with the blood of Christ.

We would say, "yes, I have faith in God's ability to supply all of our needs". Of course we would say that. But do we have confidence that He will? There is a big difference in those two statements. "I have faith in God to solve this problem .. I just don't know if he will!" Really!" It is trick of the Devil himself.

Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

There is no equivocation in that verse. But look at the verses leading up to that "but" ...

Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Oh how I love to quote vs 13. It is my life's verse. And I most always quote it without context. But you put it into context along with vs 19, it is powerful and instructive. God is not required to supply all of our needs according to OUR riches in glory, thank goodness. Just because he does not jump at our commands is no reason to lose confidence in His ability to answer prayer.

Having confidence in the Lord should not be something we either have or have not. It should be part of our being. Who we are. Our daily makeup. It should be reflected in our daily walk, our countenance. As Christians we should exude confidence. People should be able to "see" our confidence just as Jesus could see the faith of those four men that carried in the lame man on the bed. Not arrogance. Confidence. Not pride. Confidence.

If I were to ask you if you thought God was able to provide us a new building, I would venture a bit that all would raise their hands to the affirmative. If I were to ask if you had faith that God will provide us a new building, most would raise their hands but only after seeing if anyone else had their raised. But if I asked if you were CONFIDENT that God is going to provide our building .. very few hands would go up, and none confidently. OH, we don't want to get our hopes up! Show me that in the Bible!

Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. SHALL! NOT MIGHT! Go into the day with confidence!

Ephesians 3:10-13 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. Paul had confidence in God's abilities. Do we?

1 John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

How important is confidence when it comes to our relationship with God? I told you of my "catch the kid" game with my Dad. I was totally confident in his ability to catch me as I jumped off the garage roof. How might he have felt if I got up on the roof and said, "umm, Dad, I just don't have confidence in your ability to catch me, so I'm going to climb back down". Or .. Dad, I've lost my confidence in you ..maybe you should ask Jerry to catch me. God is real. We are made after His image. I believe our relationship is strained when we have no confidence in God's ability to answer our prayers according to His will for our lives.

1 John 3:20-22 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

A pure heart (one that does not condemn us) will give us the confidence in God that produces big faith! We can have no confidence in God, nor can we have any faith in Him, if we are hiding sins in our lives. When we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight, we will have the confidence toward God that whatsoever we ask, we will receive of him.