

THE BREAKTHROUGH MINDSET PRT 3 – RIGHTFULLY POSITIONING YOUR CONFIDENCE

Philippians 3:2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision party. 3 For we are the circumcision who worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh; 4 though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other thinks that he has reason to trust in the flesh, I more. 5 I was circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. As regards the Law, I was a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; regarding the righteousness in the Law, blameless. 7 But whatever things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

If you are joining us for the first time, you find us going through a series teaching titled **THE BREAKTHROUGH MINDSET 3**. This morning I want to talk to you on the subject **RIGHTFULLY POSITIONING YOUR CONFIDENCE**.

Confidence is a mindset, which refers to the feeling or belief that one can have faith in or rely on someone or something.

- Whatever you rely on will determine the outcome of your life. Where we have read, Paul starts off by making a brave statement which can be viewed as being mean and abrasive.
- In this statement he calls certain people dogs and was warning the church to watch out for the dogs and for the dangers of taking everything on face value – he was telling them to develop the ability to discern the real deal from the fake.
- He was talking about the danger that the dogs (Pharisees – religious leaders) posed to their faith.
- For these pharisees, your outward expression determined your levels of spirituality and Paul was warning the church to be careful not to be deceived to place their confidence in the wrong things.
- He told them that when it came to the things of God, it was about *worshipping God in the spirit and to rejoice in Christ Jesus and not having confidence in the flesh*.
- Every believer needs to assess where his or her confidence lies in:
 - what makes you think that you will make it until you are 70yrs old,
 - what makes you confident that you will get the job you applied for,
 - what do you rely on when you say your kids are going to be the best among their peers?
- Many times, we walk around with misplaced confidence – misplaced confidence is a source of emotional stress in ones life.

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- Nothing is as tempting as having confidence in your natural abilities. The bible has a great deal of warnings in this regard.

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus says the LORD: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD 6 For he shall be like a juniper in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall live in the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land that is not inhabited.

- Misplaced confidence places reliance on the creature and not on the creator.
- At the center of misplaced confidence is the spirit of idolatry – it forces you to trust in something other than God.
- Confidence is like the soil upon which your life is planted and established – when the soil is good, the crop is going to be good.
- Misplaced confidence will cause you not see opportunities and good times when they come – these come through the impartation of the word and spirit.
- The breakthrough mindset places confidence in its right place.
- Last week we started looking at the make up of the breakthrough mindset as set out in Philippians 3 and today we are going to glean into the second mindset.

1. Mindset 1 - Make Christ your chief joy

2. Mindset 2 – Rightfully position your confidence

- This is a make-or-break mindset:
 - it will determine your level of success as a believer,
 - it will determine your stress levels,
 - it will shape your expectations
- In order to make the shift that ensures that your confidence is rightfully positioned, lets briefly explore signs of misplaced confidence.

Signs of misplaced confidence.

i) Confidence in observing religious rituals

- Some religious rituals are fundamental to the fullness of your walk with God but are not the source of your salvation.
- Baptism fulfills all righteousness but if someone dies without being baptized, it does not mean that they won't make it into heaven.
- Baby christening is highly regarded in certain quarters but if that child does not come to the knowledge of Jesus, no number of rituals will cause that child to be saved.

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- Paul could have trusted in his adherence to rituals for his success but he discovered that every ritual falls short all the time.

Philippians 3:4...If any other thinks that he has reason to trust in the flesh, I more. 5 I was circumcised the eighth day

- Paul was circumcised the eighth day – in his body, Paul had the sign of God’s covenant.
- When an overemphasis is placed on religious rituals, they can easily become a tripping idol for you.

ii) Overreliance on Birthright privileges

- If you do not pay attention, you can lean on what look like advantages based on your origins, looks, inheritance and such like things. Paul had it all to rely on:

Philippians 3:4...If any other thinks that he has reason to trust in the flesh, I more. 5 I was circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

- Paul was not about to disregard or to despise his birthright advantages, but he was not about to lean on them for progress in his life.
- He was the purest of the Israelites (both mom and dad were Israelites); the tribe of Benjamin stood in support of Judah when all tribes revolted, Benjamin was the favorite son and tribe.
- His purity as an Israelite would have boasted his confidence – I don’t know about you; what birthright privileges do you count on to open doors for you.
- Instead of trusting God, it is possible to trust the pigmentation of your skin to get you a job or a contract. We are in a society that was brought up to think that your outward appearance is what determines where you end up in life.
- You can trust in your gender and your looks to make room for you.
- Every time you depend on your birthright privileges, you miss out on divinely appointed breakthroughs.
- Goliath trusted in his stature until he met someone who had his confidence rightfully placed in the Lord of hosts.

iii) Confidence in ones intellectual capacity

- There is nothing that can ensnare God’s people as much as an accumulation of knowledge does.
- One would think that the more someone has studied theology, the more spiritual they become – there is nothing that is as far from reality as that.

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- The Bible says knowledge puffs up – the more educated one is, the more you need to watch out for pride and arrogance that comes with it.

1 Corinthians 8:1, NLT: "Now regarding your question about food that has been offered to idols. Yes, we know that 'we all have knowledge' about this issue. But while knowledge makes us feel important, it is love that strengthens the church."

- Your progress in life is not so much how much you know but rather who you know.
- Paul was a biblically knowledgeable person to the degree of a Pharisee and yet no amount of knowledge could satisfy his hunger.

Philippians 3:5 ... As regards the Law, I was a Pharisee

- He was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, an eminent doctor of the law and the son of a Pharisee (Acts 23:6)
- Your knowledge of something does not guarantee your success in it

Proverbs 21:31 The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.

iv) Confidence in ones moral uprightness

- How often do we feel that heaven owes us some victory because we have been behaving well recently?
- It is possible to make it about performance on the outside, whereas the Lord judges each one based on the intentions of our hearts.
- We cannot attain to God's degree of righteousness by striving for it – our righteousness is attained by resting in Jesus and His finished works of calvary.
- Before encountering Jesus of Nazareth, Paul had his own definition of righteousness – he thought he was hitting the target.

Philippians 3:6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; regarding the righteousness in the Law, blameless.

- Everytime you define your own measure of righteousness, you become vulnerable to the deception of sin.
- In conclusion, your confidence can only be correctly positioned when Christ is highly esteemed above all.

Philippians 3:7 But whatever things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.