

58-10-05.wpd --The Confidence of Our Perseverance
confidence, faith, encouragement, sin, perdition, choice
Heb 10:19-39

God wants us to stay confident of succeeding in His salvation plan.

INTRODUCTION: (text as Scripture reading)

--Today's Scripture reading speaks about confidence. Mark Twain wrote, "All you need in this life is ignorance and confidence -- and then success is sure." He meant that to be funny. But I found another quote of his that speaks about today's sermon: "I admire the serene assurance of those who have religious faith. It is wonderful to observe the calm confidence of a Christian with four aces." If we hold "four aces," then we win. Hebrews teaches that in Christ we are dealt four aces, but we must *hold on* to them till the end of the game. That's where ***persistent confidence*** comes in, and that's why the **title**.
--Rosalynn Carter (wife of President Jimmy Carter) said about ***success***, "You have to have confidence in your ability, and then be tough enough to follow through." That might be good advice for those seeking worldly success, but for success in salvation, I would change that quote to say, "You have to have faith in God's offer of salvation, and then have confidence enough to follow through." This passage in Hebrews tells us that **HOM.idea**.

I. Our Confidence Starts at the Cross, v.19-22

- A. Christian confidence gives us an **experience** that is "out of this world"-- "we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place" (Behind the curtain inside the Tabernacle, we step into a realm that makes our life on this planet look like a tiny grain of sand on a seashore or a little drop of water in the Pacific Ocean. [the Wardrobe in book one of The Chronicles of Narnia: a passageway to another world full of excitement and adventure, but especially the presence of Aslan])
- B. Christian confidence is based on **Cross**, where the Incarnation of God's Son made it possible for Him to die in our place-- "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" (What's a curtain for? It hides what's behind it. Behind the curtain of Christ's fleshly body was hidden the Creator of the universe)
- C. Christian confidence encourages sinners to **take God up on His offer of salvation** (As long as our faith is sincere, the way is open -- "let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith" (It's

not about seeking a peaceful place in heaven, but about a peaceful heart with God).

TRANS: There are many religions on Earth, but none has a faith is like this one, where God promises so much to us and requires so little of us. BUT He does require confidence, a **persevering confidence**-- v.23, *Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful*. God is 100% confident that His salvation plan will work for us. **God wants us to stay 100% confident of succeeding in His salvation plan**. There is a practical way this happens....

II. Our Confidence Grows by Exhortation, v.24-25

- A. Christians have a dual responsibility: one *for themselves* AND one *for other believers*-- Gal 6:1a,2, Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently.... Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. / Gal 6:4a-5, Each one should test his own actions.... for each one should carry his own load. (others come first...)
- B. Fellowship in the Church should not be *passive*, but *active*. (We need to give careful thought to how we can help stimulate other Christians in their confidence-- "*let us consider how we may spur one another on...*" [sharing time in the church service ought not to be spontaneous but an event we *consider* and *plan for* during the week, as if it was going to be our turn at "shoe-and-tell" time in grade school.]
- C. What kind of stimulation does every Christian need? "...let us consider how we may spur one another on **toward love and good deeds**" (Our confidence grows strong as we reflect the God in whose image we are made and whose character is *love* and *goodness*,)
- D. What is the main purpose of going to church? The sermon? the singing? the offering? or sharing time? IT'S SHARING TIME!-- "*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another...*" Missing church is a bad habit because of what's supposed to happen there: the building up of confidence.

TRANS: Sermons from the pulpit aren't enough. We have a common need for mutual exhortation and encouragement to "*spur one another on toward love and good deeds*." But there is a further stimulus that helps us to persevere in confidence. We are to "*encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching*." That "*Day*" is the 2nd Coming of Christ.

III. Our Confidence Anticipates Christ's Return

- A. This passage warns believers *not to let go of their confidence* in God's plan of salvation, because when we do, they begin to live ungodly lives again-- v.26-29, If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? (Christ found us in a lost condition; He does not want to find us again in that condition when He comes back for us.)
- B. To help this not to happen, the writer of Hebrews tell us to *remember-- "Remember those earlier days after you had received the light..."*
1. Remember "*when you stood your ground*" in the face of suffering, when the hand of Jesus supported you as you held it in prayer.
 2. Remember when "*you were publicly exposed to insult*" and called a dreamer for claiming that Jesus had given you a new life.
 3. Remember those answers to prayer, those miracles that others called coincidences, those times when the Word spoke peace to your heart in the midst of life's storms. *Remembrance is the key!*
- C. In this review of how you got where you are in Christ, "*do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.*"

CONCLUSION:

--God wants us to stay confident of succeeding in His salvation plan. Our confidence in His promise must persist until we hear the last trumpet and see Jesus coming back for us on the clouds, "*For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.*" As we anticipate that day, if we have **persevering confidence**, we can say, "Even so come, Lord Jesus!"

Heb 10:19-39 (NIV) Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, {20} by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, {21} and since we have a great priest over the house of God, {22} let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. {23} Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. {24} And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. {25} Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching. {26} If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, {27} but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. {28} Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. {29} How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? {30} For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." {31} It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. {32} Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. {33} Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. {34} You. {35} So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. {36} You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.