

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 5/24/92
II Timothy 1:12-14 "A Model of Confident Living"

Scripture: II Timothy 1:8-14

Intro: It's great to hear accounts of people who are confident even in the face of bleak circumstances.

Illust: Story of Colonel Sanders

Q: Are you a confident person? Do you live your life with confidence?

This morning, I want you to hear the words of a confident man. He had every reason NOT to be confident! He was a convicted felon. He was staring death in the face. He would soon be executed. He was all alone in a dingy, Roman dungeon. And yet as we read the letter he wrote to his friend and spiritual son Timothy, we can't help but see and feel his sense of confidence and stability.

Note: Let me say up front that Paul's confidence was not in himself. It was not his money, not his education, not his friends, that produced confidence in his life. In fact, remember what he said about himself in Gal 2:20? "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me..."

Here's the key to Paul's confidence--Jesus Christ lived in and through him.

Q: What was Paul's secret? How could he be so confident in such a bleak situation? How can we learn to experience confidence?

Proposition: In II Timothy 1:12-14, Paul shared 2 things with Timothy which reveal for us his secret to confident living.

I. Paul's Confession (12)

Confident people live with 4 things in mind:

- A. God's Purpose
- B. God's Person
- C. God's Plan
- D. God's Power

II. Paul's Concern (13-14)

- A. Preserve the gospel (13).
- B. Protect the gospel (14).

Review:

Last week, in II Tim 1:8-11, Paul challenged Timothy and us about our Perspective in life. We learned we must develop a proper perspective of 3 things.

- I. Develop a Proper Perspective of the Gospel (8).
- II. Develop a Proper Perspective of God (9-10).
- III. Develop a Proper Perspective of Yourself (11).

That's where we left off. Paul exhorted Timothy, "Don't be ashamed Tim. Don't be afraid to suffer for the gospel."

Now lest we think, "Well that's easy for you to say Paul! What right do you have to tell Timothy and us to be willing to suffer for the cause of Christ?!"

Do you really want to know? Listen to Paul's Confession in v 12.

I. Paul's Confession (12)

V 12 "For which cause I also suffer these things..."

Timothy, I'm not asking you to endure something I'm not willing to endure. In fact, right now, I am suffering for Christ. Paul knew what suffering was all about.

Note: Verses dealing with suffering in II Timothy--1:8, 12, 16; 2:3, 9, 10, 12; 3:10, 11, 12; 4:5, 6, 7, 14, 16, 17, 18

Problem: We have a deficient view of suffering. We don't understand what Paul did--the purpose of suffering, even the value of suffering. We try to avoid it, even pray to get out of it. Paul accepted suffering. He viewed suffering for Christ as an opportunity to share Christ. He viewed suffering as God's refining tool to sharpen his life (Phil 3:10). He knew that God could use affliction to keep him humble (II Cor 12).

II Tim 3:12 "All who will live godly will suffer persecution..."

Illust: Fox's Book of Martyrs, 23--story of 6666 Christian soldiers killed

Q: How could they exhibit such confidence? How could Paul?

A: Look at Paul's confession in v 12. It's very autobiographical, very personal. Notice how many times he refers to himself: "I suffer...I am not ashamed...I know...I have believed...I am persuaded...I have committed."

Confident people live with 4 things in mind:

A. God's Purpose--Confident people live with God's Purpose in mind.

V 12 "For which cause"

Confident people live with a cause in life. Now some people are confident because they live with a cause, but it's the wrong cause. It's a cause that one day will crumble.

Illust:

Q: What was the cause Paul had in mind? See v 11...

V 11 "Unto which I am appointed (by God)...preacher, apostle, teacher..."

Here's the cause that consumed Paul's life. He lived with God's purpose in mind. What was God's purpose for Paul? God told him, "I have chosen you to be my representative to the Gentiles. I want you to invest your life making Jesus Christ known to them. That's My purpose for you."

Paul lived with God's purpose in mind. That's why he could be confident when the hostile mob of angry Jews wanted to rip his head off in Jerusalem. Remember? The Jews hated the fact that Paul preached Jesus. They hated even more that he preached Jesus to Gentiles. Why did he do it? Listen to what he told the frenzied Jews in Acts 22:21, "And He said to me, Depart, for I will send you to the Gentiles."

That statement caused Paul the next 4 years in prison! Yet he knew that was no waste. That too was God's purpose. Paul knew the reason he suffered was because of his commitment to preach the gospel.

Paul knew that being a preacher was God's will for his life. That was God's purpose.

Q: Do you know what God's purpose is for your life? Do you?

Listen. It isn't God's will for every Christian to be a missionary or a pastor. But God DOES have a purpose for each of us. He wants to use our lives for the cause of Jesus Christ. It's God's will for some to be Christ honoring school teachers, and engineers, and housewives, and nurses, and salesmen.

Q: Do you view your job as just a job? It puts bread on the table. Or can you say, "I know this is God's purpose for my life! I know I am doing what God wants me to do with my life." Paul could. You can too.

Caution: If you make a commitment that you're going to live your life with God's purpose in mind, don't expect the world to be impressed!

Illust: Former manager of Dayton Daily News, Dennis Sherer

B. God's Person--Confident people live with God's Person in mind.

V 12 "...for I know WHOM I have believed"

Q: What gave Paul confidence?

A: What He KNEW. Rather, WHO he knew.

"I know WHOM I have believed."

He knew a Person. He had a relationship with a Personal God. He told us about his view of God in vv 9-10.

V 9 God the Father's Plan

1. He saved us
2. He called us by His own purpose and grace

V 10 God the Son's Work

1. He abolished death.
2. He secured life.

Key: Confident people live with God's Person in mind.

Christianity is not a religion. It's a relationship. It's personal.

Q: Why do we come to church?

A: To put in our time? No! So we can get to know a Person better!

Objection: "Why do I HAVE to come to church for SS, or on Sun PM, or Wed PM?" Wrong question. Ask yourself, "How much do I really want to get to know the Person of Jesus Christ? Is it important for me to grow in my relationship with Jesus Christ?" Listen. If something is important to me, I'll make sacrifices to make it happen.

Illust: When Sherry and I were dating I'd sacrifice my sleep gladly. Why? I wanted to spend time with Sherry. I wanted to get to know her.

Listen. Confident people are the ones who make it a priority in their lives to get to know God better.

C. God's Power--Confident people live with God's Power in mind.

V 12 "...He is able to keep"

We serve a God who is ABLE! The word translated "able" is "dunatos". We get our english word dynamo, dynamite, from the same root. It's translated elsewhere "power".

Paul didn't live life trusting in his own abilities. What gave Paul confidence? The Power of God.

Illust:

What was God able to do? To keep something. What?

D. God's Plan--Confident people live with God's Plan in mind.

V 12 "I am persuaded that He... what He has committed to me against that day."

What did Paul mean by "that day"?

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Paul lived this life with an eye on that coming day. He saw beyond the chains. He saw beyond the lash marks on his back. He knew His God had a plan!

What is God's plan? Simply stated, this. God created this world. Mankind rebelled against Him. Judgment was inevitable. But God loved this world. He devised a plan whereby sinful people could be rescued from their plight. He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die the death we deserved, to pay our penalty for sins. That was God's plan. It was also God's plan that His Son would conquer death, and return to heaven. Why? To prepare a place for His followers. And then one day, He is coming again, to judge the world in righteousness, and establish His eternal kingdom.

Listen. That's God's plan. And Paul lived his life with that plan in mind. It was always on his mind.

There's something else about that plan. Look at the phrase in v 12...

"that which I have committed unto Him"

It's true that Paul had committed everything in his life to God. And we should too. But it's possible to translate the phrase differently. In fact, in the greek, there are only 2 words: lit. "my deposit" (same word in v 14 "the thing committed unto you").

Here's what Paul's saying. God is able to keep "my deposit" until that day. Paul's not thinking about what he has committed to God, but what God has committed to him. What had God given to Paul? What had Paul passed on to Timothy? What has been passed on to us? THE GOSPEL.

Key: It's God's plan that people like Paul, Timothy, and us pass on this sacred trust, this deposit, this gospel, to a desperate world.

Q: How do we know this plan will succeed? What if the church fails?

Here's the basis of Paul's confidence. "I know God won't fail! True, He has entrusted this gospel to us. But He'll take care of it Himself." Jesus said, "I WILL build my church."

Q: Do you ever get discouraged when you look around and see how increasingly secular our society is becoming? How the public tries to snuff Jesus Christ out of existence? I do.

But Paul would say, "Be assured of this. It may get dark. But God will never allow the light of the gospel to be extinguished. His plan will succeed!"

Quote: Harold Morris, "I know who I am, where I am going, and Who's going to take me there."

Confident people keep these things in mind: God's purpose, God's Person, God's power, and God's plan.

Illust: Jesus before Pilate--John 19:10-11 Pilate, "I have power..." Jesus, "Thou could have no power...except it were given thee from above."

Tran: We've seen Paul's Confession to Timothy. Paul bore his soul to Timothy. He told him what things generated confidence in his life.

Q: Do confident people ever have concerns? Sure!

Q: What concerns gripped Paul's heart the most? He told Tim in vv 13-14.

II. Paul's Concern (13-14)

If most of us have been in Paul's predicament, do you know what we'd have been concerned about in v 13? Our own problems! Paul had plenty! He was chained like an animal in a hole in the ground. He was not given fair legal treatment in the court room. He was abandoned by his Christian friends. He had every right to be concerned about himself.

Note: He will be practical about his needs in ch 4 (he was lonely, 9; he needed warm clothing, 13; he missed his books, 13)

Paul's not a robot. He had feelings. He had needs. He didn't ignore them. But it came to what was most important, do you know what his greatest concern was?

He was concerned about the future of the Gospel after he was gone!

So he told Timothy to do 2 things...

A. Preserve the gospel (13).

V 13 "Hold fast..."

"hold fast" = a command

"form"--interesting word; "pattern, outline; sketch"

It's what an architect makes before he gets down to the detailed plans of a building--the sketch. It's what a writer puts on paper before he arrives at the final production--the rough draft.

"sound words" = that which is sound or healthy; lit. "healthy doctrine"

Q: Where did Tim get this healthy doctrine?

A: "which you heard from me"

Here's what Paul is saying. Timothy, remember where you got your message. You got it from me. I got it from the Lord. Now hold on to it. Preserve it. I gave you the outline, the draft, the sketch. Now wherever you go, remain true to that message. Preach the gospel. Teach the gospel. Preserve the gospel.

But notice something. Paul told Tim not only what to do, but HOW to do it.

V 13 "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

Tim, it's not enough merely to have the right message. You must also have the right attitude. Resemble Christ not only in what you say, but also in how you say it.

Yes, we must be zealous to stand up for the truth, but also temper our zeal with both faith and love.

Illust: Militant Christian groups

Quote: "Love without truth is hypocrisy. Truth without love is brutality."

A second concern...

B. Protect the gospel (14).

V 14 "That good thing...keep"

What's "that good thing"? The GOSPEL

What's Tim to do with it?

"keep" = guard, watch

Listen. Paul was adamant. To Tim, and to us. What should we do with the gospel? Guard it. Why? Because heretical teaching is a constant threat to the church.

Illust: John MacArthur at Pastor's day, "Men don't become heretical in one big leap... but in small steps. It happens when they become sloppy in the way they handle the truth..."

Eg--Praying and thanking God the Father for dying on the Cross

Eg--God, be with us.

Be accurate in the way you present God's truth.

SS teachers, it's OK to be creative in your teaching methods. Use a variety of methods. There's more than one method you can use to present truth.

But guard the message. Don't distort it, dilute it, delete it, or add to it. Don't try and be fancy and clever and innovative when it comes to the message. The message must never change.

Illust:

Q: Who will enable us to preserve the gospel?

A: V 14 "by the Spirit who dwells in us"

Conclusion:

Are you a confident person? Do you know where you're going in life?