

Our Confidence

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[0:00] Psalm 118 I want to talk this morning about confidence.

About confidence. And where we can put our confidence. And especially in times of crisis. We're living in days that some, the media, the world would paint as days of crisis.

Days of trouble. And where do you place your confidence when you're in such a world as this? The psalmist says, don't put your confidence in the flesh. Have no confidence in the flesh.

That's talking about this skin. Last time I looked I was flesh. I'm not spirit yet. I'm looking forward to that. But we've still got flesh. We're clothed in flesh.

The Bible says, have no confidence in the flesh. In your human effort. In your own strength. Don't have confidence in it. So to start with, let's look at some things not to have confidence in.

[1:27] Some things that we're not to have confidence in. And we're living in an age where we're told there's various situations going on.

Where there's crises. Crisis going on. And one of the supposed perils, the supposed perils of these days is the peril of climate change.

Climate change. Global warming. I don't feel like it today. But, you know, it's climate change. It's global warming. And, you know, people today, I want to tell you climate change is scriptural.

It's in the word of God. If you'd like to turn to 2 Peter 3. The Bible talks about climate change. There certainly will be some climate change. One day.

2 Peter 3. Verse 10. Now, of course, I wonder about some of the ways that the world is saying the climate is changing. Because sometimes it's quite cold.

[2:24] In fact, the seasons are somewhat colder. So the supposed global warming, I don't know that that's a certainty by any means. And you wonder whether it's really a bit of a scheme to make people want to have more control and change from the government control, really.

But 2 Peter 3 certainly tells us about some real climate change that will happen on planet Earth. From verse 10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away.

There goes the ozone layer. With a great noise. And the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved. What manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, there's global warming, shall be dissolved.

And the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

[3:45] Wherefore, beloved, seeing that you look for such things, be diligent that you may be found of him in peace without spot and blameless.

That's 2 Peter 3 verses 10 to 14. Climate. You can't put your confidence in the climate. You don't know what's going to happen, brothers and sisters.

There's perils in the climate. But certainly, we're talking about the perils of the end time. And the climate that really is in peril is the moral climate of planet earth.

That's where there's some climate change and it's all downhill. There's a climate change of a moral slide into decadence and sin and corruption. And we can't have confidence in the climate.

Secondly, we can't have confidence in cash. James 5, we're hearing that we're living in a world where there's recession. Listen, James 5 tells us about cash.

[4:42] And people today, I want to tell you, you can't put your confidence in cash. You've got money in the bank, you'd be better putting it in your mattress, I think, at the moment. Or buying some gold with it,

if you can find any.

But, you know, not that we need to be worried about that, brothers and sisters. But you can't put your confidence in cash. We can see people have put their confidence in the stock market.

You know, some people have lost billions in their investments. And we know there's a financial decline in our world today. And there's people really and truly losing their jobs.

And that's no laughing matter. It's just a reality. As we know, even in our own community, with changes with Holden's, there's suffering today. Because people have put their confidence in cash. People have thought, oh, there's money in the bank. I've got a steady job. And they've got mortgages. And they're finding, wow, things aren't as rosy as I thought they were.

[5:36] And there's a global recession in many industries. They're feeling that downturn in the economy. The world economic system is in a state of upheaval. This is a reality. And it is happening.

And yet, it's a sign of the times, I think, again. As it says in James 5, of the end times again. James says, Bucket loads in the bank in the last days.

They've heaped the treasure. You know, some of these canny Scotsmen. They've got their money stashed away. And, you know, they look like they're poor. But they're really, you know, it's just pouring out of their pockets.

They've just got it stashed away in their mattresses and under their floorboards. And they've heaped together treasure for the last days. And that's the danger, brothers and sisters, of putting your confidence in cash.

Because it's just going to be cankered and moth-eaten. And it's going to be corrupted. And it's going to be a witness against you. The gold and silver is going to canker.

[7:03] It's going to be destroyed. And our confidence cannot be in cash. You know, the recession can be a time when really and truly it can help us to take stock of what really matters.

What really counts. It's not so much our material wealth. As in, are we investing in God? Are we investing our heart and life, our soul, our confidence in Christ?

Our confidence in Him. So, don't put your confidence in cash. It's just going to evaporate. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

And another thing that we shouldn't put our confidence in is the control of government. And we can look at Luke 21 for this one. Again, about the end times. And we see with all these perils that are supposedly afflicting planet Earth, things like swine flu and the earthly disasters, which aren't real. Some are real. Some are, I suppose, more of a media beat-up than anything. Having a bit of a different strain of flu. And it's the end of the world. But Luke 21, verses 9, it says about the control of government.

[8:15] Some people would try to put their confidence in that. When there's danger, when there's peril, when there's wars, when there's plagues or potential pestilences. And Luke 21, 9, it says how, But when you shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified.

For these things must first come to pass, but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nations shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in diverse places, and famines, and pestilences, and swine flus, and fearful sights, and great signs there shall be from heaven.

Brothers and sisters, when these things happen, the government's not going to be able to help you. As much as they might try, you know, they might have their tamiflu in their refrigerators, and they might try to vaccinate big mobs of people.

But when the pestilence has come, the control of government isn't going to stop it. When the beast comes, the control of having the mark is going to be one of his features of his reign on planet Earth. There's going to be people bowing down to a man called the beast, or the 666, the Antichrist, or in other words, the one who's the substitute for Christ. This word anti means it's in place of.

[9:39] It's a bit like the vicar of Christ. He's in place of Christ, the Pope of Rome. And the Antichrist is a false Christ. He's a substitute for Christ.

He's going to come and bring control about the chaos. It's like the theme of the new world order. It's order out of chaos is their slogan. And this is what happens sometimes when there's chaos.

The order happens. The supposed order where the government tries to bring order. But really it's just an excuse for more control. So when chaos threatens our world, sometimes the government steps in.

Maybe well-meaning in part, but also with an added control. Control. As we see, I don't mean to exaggerate these things, but I believe there is a very real emerging police state where there's a control, there's a domination.

There's certain things that are allowed, that are politically correct, and certain things that are not allowed. They're politically incorrect. And that means having a Bible.

[10:44] That's politically incorrect. This book actually talks about sin. It talks about a saviour. It talks about one way. No combination, but one single way of salvation.

One person who can save you. And yet the government would have you believe all manner of things as we were talking earlier about creation. That's a dirty word.

Creation. Evolution is what they want our kids to be indoctrinated in, as well as all manner of moral decadence and immorality.

That's what our world would want our children to be conditioned in and our grandchildren. God forbid that that kind of control should dominate our world.

And yet we're seeing whether there's earthly disasters, whether there's wars, famines, plagues, swine flu, people sometimes turn to the government. The government's going to help us.

[11:44] Kevin Rudd will help us. Barack Obama will help us. Really? Will they? They might be nice people, but deep down, I don't know them personally.

I can't say, you know, so speak not evil of dignitaries. But, you know, you wonder, you wonder sometimes, brothers and sisters, you wonder what's really behind, who's really behind pulling the strings behind some of these things.

Government control. It sounds good. Maybe it will help us sometimes. Of course, governments do help us. Thank God for where governments have intervened on the people's behalf to protect us from enemies that have threatened our shores.

And I'm not meaning to say that everything that government does is wrong. You know, they help pay our way. They help keep our world in relative calm. But when this time comes, I wonder whether people will turn to the government, to the beast.

And they'll think, the beast will help us. He's a nice kind of guy. He talks well. He looks good. He's got a charisma. And they might turn to the government for confidence, to have their confidence in the government, in intervening, in regaining control, in restoring order on citizens' behalf.

[13:03] But we know, really, it's in vain. Sometimes it's corrupt. And the only government that you can put your confidence in is that government that's going to be on his shoulders. One day, the government is going to be on his shoulders.

His name is wonderful. Counselor. The Almighty God. And yet, in these days where there's so much chaos and confusion, when people are looking for something to put their confidence in, whether it be the trouble with the climate, whether it be cash, whether it be this concern about the welfare of the nation, there was a US pastor who said this.

He said, the church is a stimulus package. I think people are reaching out for God because he has established a storm shelter for people in need of hope.

He's there for the hopeless when there is no hope. We can be the stimulus package. We can be that, that which really gives people hope. That really gives people something to hang on to and to help them.

To have something beyond anything that our government can pay out or dish out or a plan to do that might be in our nation's interest, what really is that which can give us confidence is that which God can do.

[14:26] Not in man, not in our confidence in our flesh. As the psalmist said, our confidence, our trust is in the Lord. It must be in the Lord. That is where our confidence can be found.

The basis for our confidence is God with us. God with us. In our struggles, in our troublesome times and people today, I'd like to encourage you to look at some things that you can have confidence in

today.

We talked about these troublesome times about the world's end which is looming. It's closer today than it was yesterday. You can have confidence in some things today in this world of chaos and confusion.

One of those three things is you can have confidence in the Gospel. You can have confidence in the Gospel. If you want to turn to 1 John 5, the first letter of John, chapter 5, back of your Bibles there before Jude and Revelation.

1 John 5, verse 13. In a world of confusion, in a world of untruths, in a world of lies, you can have confidence in this truth that you can hold in your hands thanks to the blood of the martyrs who bled and died that we can hold this word in the English language and read it today and understand it, I pray.

[15:48] 1 John 5, verse 13. It says, These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God.

You can have confidence in the Gospel. Confidence in the Gospel. The Word of God. It gives us great confidence. It's our source of blessed assurance, of eternal confidence, of the confidence in our salvation.

This book is jam-packed with pearls of precious wisdom and grace and understanding that we need.

We need the Word of God. And we can put our full trust in God, in His Word. The Bible, it's verbally inspired. It means that each word was breathed out by God through the pen of the writers, but God was the author inspiring their writing.

And it's inerrant. There's no error, not one error. It's infallible. It cannot lie. It cannot be incorrect.

[17:05] It's fully infallible. In other words, there's no fallacy.

There's no error. No falsehood in it. And it's unique. It's authentic. It's authoritative.

And it's completely reliable. This is the Word of God. Amen. And soon you want to take it to heart, people today, I encourage you, take the Word and find time for the Word.

It's important. It's so important. Psalm 33, the psalmist said, For the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth.

Proverbs 30, verse 5, the writer says, Every word of God is pure. He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. What a confidence you can have.

You can have full confidence in the truth of this book. As much as many have tried to demolish it and cast doubt on it, the Word of God stands supreme.

[18:07] It stands as an anvil that cannot be damaged by the attacks that are thrust against it. And you can meditate on it, consider it, apply it, and place your entire confidence on it.

You can stake your eternity on this book, on the message of this book, on the life-changing power of the Bible, because every word it contains is the Word of God. And it can come alive in us too.

That's the beauty of it too, is that this book is alive, it's living, it's one that brings life to us. And the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, you can make it real and personal, the Gospel.

And in 2 Peter 1, verse 4, it says, there's exceeding great and precious promises. Not just great promises, exceeding great and precious promises unto us, given unto us.

That's 2 Peter 1, verse 4. If you had some great promises, some exceeding great and precious promises, wouldn't you want to find out what they were?

[19:21] You can only find it out if you read the Word. Take it and read it. You can have confidence in the Gospel. You can have confidence in faith. Confidence in faith.

As we read there in 1 John, that this is the record in the context there. You can have confidence that you can know that you have eternal life. You can have confidence in faith. Not in just some kind of airy-fairy kind of faith.

Some fuzzy-wuzzy kind of faith that's in nothing in particular or not in the Christ of the Bible. The God-man who bled and died for your sin. You can have faith in a block of wood that you carved yourself and bow down and scrape down to it and offer sacrifices to a block of wood that you can

stick in your barbie or in your log fire.

My dad could burn it for a firewood. And people bow down and worship things like this. And some people think that, hey, we should restore the culture.

Restore the culture. Why would you want to restore an animist culture that worships nature that bows down and worships blocks of wood or other material things or animals? You know, it's a falsehood.

[20:33] You can't have confidence in that, but you can have confidence in faith that is in Christ. And it talks about that in 1 Timothy 3.13. It says of deacons they can have great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus or great confidence in the faith.

You can have confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. You can trust Him. There's no other that is worthy of your confidence and there's no other that can give you that God-centered life other than Him.

There's so much more we could say we're to rely on the Lord with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, with all of our strength, and it says where we're told that trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy past. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding but in all your ways acknowledge Him.

Our heart means our inner self. We referred to it earlier of our heart. It's our emotions, it's our thought, it's our will and it's our character. God wants your heart.

[21:43] He wants all of your heart. Don't just give Him a part. Give Him that all. God has a plan.

God has a plan. God has His grace and we can be energised by that faith that is our confidence. And that faith that as our Lord says to us, He says to you, without me you can do nothing.

John 15, 5. As much as we might try in our own vain efforts at times to do something, Jesus says unto you, without me you can do nothing.

And we need to have that faith, that confidence that is in Him. Our trust is in Him not in our own ability. In fact, 2 Corinthians 3, verse 5, Paul says, our sufficiency is of God.

Now that's a beautiful scripture. If you look into that word sufficiency, it says, our sufficiency is of God. That word sufficiency, you could translate it our ability.

[22:43] Our ability, even our ability is of God. It's not of ourselves. It's not that we can big note ourselves or put any confidence in the flesh. Our sufficiency, our ability is of God.

And it's in finding that living relationship with Him, of doing what He says, of being what He says we are in Christ. You are His and He is yours. And thirdly, you can have confidence in prayer.

Confidence in prayer. As 1 John, it talks about how verse 14 of 5, and this is the confidence that we have in Him that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us and if we know that He hear us, we know whatsoever we ask that we have the petitions that we desire of Him.

We can come boldly before His throne. We can come with confidence before Him and pray and our trust is in the Lord with all of our heart.

Total trust, a total commitment, a total confidence. Not relying on our own strength, in our own thinking, but in all our ways. Acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.

[23:51] Lean not on your own understanding. It's got the sense of intelligence or insight. Sometimes we can even rely on our own intelligence. But God says, in all thy ways acknowledge Him and lean not on your own understanding, your own intelligence.

There's some intelligent people here today. There's people more qualified than me. Here today, there's many people who are qualified with life experience much more than me. And yet, as much as you might have so much wisdom, whether schooled wisdom or learnt! wisdom through jobs or life, don't lean on your own understanding and your own intellect and your own knowledge or intelligence in all your ways.

Acknowledge Him. Put your confidence in Him today. And just lastly, in terms of praying, Matthew 7, the Lord Jesus told how we are to ask, seek and knock.

It's like the children's chorus how we're to ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, knock and keep on knocking. That's the sense of the Greek word here. For everyone that asketh,

receive it.

[25:03] He that seeketh, find it. And to him that knocketh, it shall be open. There's prayer there. It's what our Lord Jesus is speaking about. Friends today, brothers and sisters, you've got the privilege to pray.

You've got the privilege to all our needs and all our sins and griefs, all of our anxieties, all of our cares. what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.

The privilege of prayer, we sometimes miss it, don't we? The privilege that you have to come to your heavenly Father and to bring your petitions to him, to ask, to seek, to knock, and to ask and keep on asking, to seek and keep on seeking, to knock and keep on knocking.

It's got the sense of, as someone has described it, there's numbers of things you could draw out of Matthew 7, 7 to 8, there's a dependency. You come to your Father, your heavenly Father.

There's an intensity where you ask and you keep on asking. There's an expectancy that it's promising to you that everyone who asks is going to receive.

[26:13] There's an expectancy and there's a constancy to him that knocketh. It shall be open. It's like an escalation where you just ask and you seek. Then you knock. There's an intensity, a degree of intensity there that our Lord pictures in those threefold things of ask, seek and knock.

And friends today, I just want to encourage everyone here today. What is it that you put your confidence in? We can all make the mistake of being self-confident and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

confidence in our confidence is much, much more than a self-confidence. It's a God confidence, isn't it? It's a confidence that's beyond in this chaos of our world where there's so many scare tactics happening with climate, with cash, with the control of government coming in and supposedly helping us as much as there might be an element of that.

Our confidence is not in any of that. It's going to pass away. It's going to burn up with fervent heat. It's going to melt. It's going to be gone. We're looking for that day of the Lord, that we're looking unto Him who's the author and the finisher of our faith.

We're looking with that confidence that is a confidence that's based in the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, a confidence that comes from faith in Christ, our Saviour, and a confidence that we have in prayer to bring our needs to Him, to rely on Him, that privilege of prayer.

[27:46] Don't miss it today.