

# Christ Our Confidence

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, it's good to see all of you, and it's also, it's good to be part of an association of churches. Marinette Baptist is a part of association of churches with the Ohio Association! of regular Baptist churches, and we have a chance this morning to be able to enjoy some of the benefits of that fellowship as Brad Rickert will be coming and sharing the word with us.

Brad and his wife served for 33 years in ministry. Four of those years was in camp ministry, and then 14 of those years was in ministry as a pastor at Emmanuel Baptist. He also served on the Council of Twelve for four years. He and his wife have two grown children and five great, not great grandchildren, but I'm sure they're great too, but five grandchildren, not great grandchildren. And it's a joy to have him here this morning. Brad, thank you for bringing the word to us today.

I think we already preached our message in song. Let's pray and go home, shall we?

A fantastic, fantastic music, amen? Because our Savior is fantastic. Because we sang about the Lord, we're here because of Him. That's why. If you love the Lord this morning, say amen. Amen. Let's bow our heads together. Let's pray, talk to the Lord, and then we'll start together. Lord, we thank You. Thank You for this week that we've had. It's been another vivid reminder that our life is all about Christ. Lord, You came to this earth. You willingly submitted Yourself to the will of Your Heavenly Father, and You lived in the muck and the mire and the grime of sin. You became sin for us, and You went to the cross, and You took our sin upon Yourself. You rose from the dead victorious, and we have a living Savior. God, we thank You for Your great love for us and for Your grace.

[ 2 : 13 ] I pray that as we open Your Word this morning, that we would meet with You and see our Heavenly Father. May the Spirit of God touch our hearts and move our hearts. God, without the Spirit of God at work, we accomplish nothing. But if You are at work in my heart, and if You are at work in our hearts, then God, this is profitable, and this is good, and this is life-changing. It is helpful to us in every way. We pray, Father, that You would meet with us, that we would listen to You and give You the glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. I want to thank Andrew for allowing me to be here, and thank Andrew for his friendship, and we pray for him, and you have prayed for him too as well, and for your staff, and continue to do that, how important that is.

We're going to be looking at this idea of confidence, Christ being our confidence. The music that we just sang was perfect, wasn't it? It was all about the Lord Jesus Christ. Our life as a believer is all about Christ. And this morning, I want to look at this thing called confidence. I remember when I first started in the ministry, my first ministry endeavor was at Silo to Hills Baptist Camp. Ever heard of it? Gary Storm was the director then, and I was in high school, and then I went to college, and I continued to work at camp, and then we went on full staff when we left Cedarville. Becky and I got married. By the way, I met Becky at Silo to Hills, and we dated five years. That was my best gift from Silo to Hills, and then we went down there full time. Gary Storm was instrumental in my life. He showed me how to have confidence in service and in ministry. He pushed me like the mother bird out of the nest. That's what he did. And he was constantly encouraging me, but he was also pushing me in front of people all the time. And it scared me to death all the time. There were moments when I was quite angry at Gary for making me do what I was having to do. But you know what? That was the best thing that happened to me. Not only did he give me self-confidence, but he showed me confidence in the Lord. He had a love for the Word. The staff under him learned to have a love for the Word. That was one of the best things that I gained from Gary was his love for the Word. And then God called us into ministry. And you know what? You can't live life for the Lord, and you can't go into ministry and have self-confidence. Amen? It's not about self-confidence as believers. It's not about our own confidence. It's about who Jesus Christ is in our life.

I know you love the Lord this morning. Amen? I know you believe Him. If you know Jesus Christ is your Savior, He is your confidence. He is your strength. He's your encouragement. You're convinced of that this morning. But how many of us, in honesty, might say in a moment, there are

times in my life when I struggle, there are moments in a day when I struggle to trust the Lord the way I should.

Can I get a witness? I love Him. I believe Him. But I struggle. So this passage is as much for my heart as it is for our hearts collectively. God has been working this passage over in my heart for years.

[ 5 : 36 ] I need it. I need it. I need it. I need it. I need it. I need it. I need it. I need it. I need it. I need it all the time. We are going to be in 2 Peter. So take your Bible and turn to 2 Peter. And we're going to look at this reality of Christ being our confidence, the need for Him to be our confidence as a child of God. And I want us to look at that this morning and learn from what Peter has to say to us.

I want to begin by looking at Peter's life. I'm going to be specifically in verses 1, 2, 3, and 4 this morning. So let's begin and read verse 1 and 2.

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, I'm reading from the ESV, to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Here's what I find interesting as we begin these verses. If we were doing an exegetical look and going through the book of 1 and 2 Peter, my introduction might be different. But I want to look at Peter here a moment. As Peter's writing these verses, there's some things that come out simply about who he is.

You know Peter, right? Have you ever heard of him? He was brash. He was upfront. He was not intimidated easily, right? He acted before he thought. Anybody here ever do that? He spoke before he thought. He was a proud man in many ways. He was a leader, but he was quick to act before he thought.

[ 7 : 25 ] Peter did many things before of the cross, didn't he? He said, I can walk on water, right? Yeah, he did.

He said, Lord, I'll never betray you. He did. Peter often would say, when the guards came to arrest Jesus, Peter says, I'll take care of this, right? He took off the servant's ear. Now that's reactionary, right? Peter was that way. As they were going to the upper room, what were the disciples doing? And Peter was among them. What were they doing? They were arguing about who would be what? The greatest. That was in their mind and heart and soul as they were going to the upper room. That was in Peter's heart and mind and soul. The disciples multiple times would be jostling for position. Who would have the greatest position in heaven before the Lord? Who would sit on the throne with the Lord? There was pride very much involved in that. Peter was very much an outspoken man.

Now we come to verse 1 and 2, and we see Peter, I think, very much a different man. He is now, he refers to himself as a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ. That's who Peter is. The word servant there, you know, is *doulos*. He says, I'm not just a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. I have no rights. I have no rights. I have all these riches that we're going to talk about this morning. I have all these things that God has done for me.

[ 9 : 05 ] All these things that God has made available to me. But I have no right to any of them. It is God and God alone. And Jesus, and Peter begins, as he writes to these churches, he says, you know what? I'm coming to you as a servant of Jesus Christ.

There is a humility in Peter's heart. He says, I am an apostle. I am one who is sent. I have no rights. My only right is this. It's to do what Jesus asks me to do. Whatever he desires for me to do, that's what I want to do. He is one specifically sent by God here, one of the original apostles who saw the resurrected Lord, who is specifically sent by Jesus Christ to lead. We are also sent, are we not? We're not apostles, but we are sent by the Lord. If you know Jesus Christ as Savior, you're sent. He has sent us. That's who Peter is. Peter is a changed man. There is something amazing, and it never ceases to be amazing to see how God changes people. Amen? You think about your own testimony. Has not God changed your life? Has he not done a great work in your life? Are there people that you are praying for that God would change their lives? Yes? Amen? That God would do that.

People you have been praying for. Peter is that man he has changed. There is a humility in his heart. As he writes, he's writing with humility. He's writing with purpose. He is sent by the Lord for a very specific purpose, to help build the church. That's what he's doing. He continues in verse 1. He says, not only is he a servant and an apostle, but he is of Jesus Christ. He's writing to those who

obtained a faith of equal standing with ours. That tells us that Peter has changed. Peter, in Acts, we see in Acts 10, Peter is called to go see Cornelius. Before he does, he's given a vision. God says, he brings a sheet down of clean and unclean and says to Peter, kill and eat. And three times he does that. And Peter says to the Lord, what? There's no way I'm touching that. Right? Ain't no way I'm touching that. And then he goes to minister to Cornelius, and he understands what the Lord was doing. The gospel is now going out, not just to the Jew, but to who? Us, the Gentiles. Peter had to learn that. See, he had some prejudice against Gentiles. Do we have prejudice in our lives? Peter had prejudice against the Gentiles.

He went to the, he was at the Jerusalem Council, where they determined that the gospel should go, not just to the Jews, but to the Gentiles. And then in Galatians 2, after Peter had been ministering many years, Paul comes to Antioch, there's Peter. Peter has, when Paul comes, Peter separates himself from the Gentiles because he's afraid of the Jews coming from Jerusalem. And Peter has to rebuke him.

[ 12 : 25 ] Right? How many of you who love the Lord still have an issue in your life that you struggle with? Can I get a witness? Amen. Come on, say amen. Come on, you're human, right? You've served the Lord and loved the Lord for 10 years, 50 years, 100 years. Okay, not 100 years. Right? We've all got issues, right? Peter had an issue. But here's what we see. The gospel now, as he's writing it, he says, it's to everyone of faith. We have an equal standing. We are one together. Peter has learned and is learning that it's about everyone. That's what he's learning. He continues on here in verse 2.

The gospel is going out by and because of and through the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He has an exalted view of the Lord. Okay? Jesus Christ, who is our God and our Savior in the Greek there, makes it explicitly clear. There's one article to govern both words there. Jesus is God and Jesus is Savior. He is both one and the same. Peter understands that, who Jesus Christ is. He understands that Jesus Christ is absolutely righteous. When he first met the Lord, he was fishing, and they had been fishing all night, and they hadn't caught any fish. And Jesus comes to the disciples, and Peter's there, and he says, cast the nets out again. And Peter said, what? We've been doing it all night.

And you know what happens. And their boats are so full of fish, they begin to sink. What does Peter do? He falls at his feet, the feet of Jesus, and he says, Jesus, depart from me, for I am a sinful man. He understands that Jesus is righteous. Peter has a high view of Christ. Peter's the one who acknowledged, Jesus, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. He continues on in verse 2, may grace and peace be multiplied to you. Peter understands the preeminence of grace. Everything that we have is by grace. All that we have is by grace. It is all of God. Peter understands that grace and peace. Peace always follows grace when they're together. We don't have peace without grace. Amen? There's no peace without grace. It is of the Lord. Peter says, all that I'm writing about here is about grace. We're going to see that. And then he says this in verse 2, grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. He understands the need to know Jesus Christ as a Savior. I think Peter understands two things here. If we were to boil the scriptures down to two commands, what might they be? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, right? And love your neighbor as yourself. It's obvious here that Peter is in love with Jesus Christ. Amen? He is a changed man. It's obvious here now that he has learned to love his neighbor, the Gentile, right? We all have equal standing before the Lord, Jew and Gentile alike.

[ 15 : 46 ] Our standing is of the same value. We are equal together before the Lord. I know that the greatest call of my life is to love the Lord with everything that I've got. To yield to him, to submit to him.

And as a result of that, to love the people in my life, to love difficult people in my life. Do you have any difficult people in your life? We're called to do that. How do we do that? How do we have confidence when life often gets turned upside down? Where do we turn? How do we maneuver the challenges that are thrown at us day in and day out? We never know what a day is going to bring, but we know Christ is always there. Let's look at Christ this morning. I'm going to look at seven reasons why Jesus Christ wants to be, is, and can be your confidence and my confidence.

This is so helpful in my personal life. I come back to these verses all the time. They are a foundation in my life, and I want us to look at them together. Verse 3 and verse 4, let's pick that up and read that.

Peter writes, His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence, by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. There are seven reasons, I suggest seven reasons here, why Jesus Christ is the confidence of every believer, the strength of every believer, no matter what He calls us to or through, whatever it is we're facing, Jesus is our confidence. He's our rock. He's our foundation. How does Peter show us that?

[18:01] Well, first He begins and He reminds us, the first thing He shows us is this, our confidence is in the Lord because Jesus, number one, is power. He is power in our life. That's what He is. He's powerful in our life in every way. Verse 2, He begins and He says, His divine power. Hebrews 1.3 reminds us that Jesus upholds the universe by the power of His hand, power of His word. By the word of His power, Jesus upholds the universe. He holds the universe together. I mean, my world gets torn apart sometimes.

How about yours? He's holding the whole universe together. Are you not amazed by creation? Is there still an amazement factor in your mind, heart, and soul when you think about creation? Amen? It is amazing. It is vastly far bigger than any of us. We can't understand it all. It's wonders are, we can't even describe the wonders of creation. God in Jesus Christ holds it all together with simply His word. That's power, isn't it? He holds the universe together. If the Lord can hold the universe together, can He handle your life? Can He handle my life? Can He do that? Yes, He can. He created all things by the power of His word. He holds and sustains the universe together by the power of His word.

The only reason our molecules just don't go, because Jesus is holding us together, right? He's holding you together. How often do we make it through the day simply because Jesus has held us together? Amen?

That's what He's done. Jesus is power. He holds this universe together. Paul tells us in Ephesians 6.10, finally be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might, right? I mean, there's three Greek words there referring to the power of God. It reminds us that Jesus Christ, His power is miraculous. [20:10] It is explosive. That first word is the word for dynamite, right? Even though Paul didn't know what dynamite was there, right? Deuteronomy, right? He didn't know what dynamite was back in the day, but that's how we would use it, right? It is strong. It is powerful. It is miraculous. Not only that, though, it is authoritative. He has authority over all powers. And the verses to follow there in Ephesians 6, the enemy, Satan, is our great enemy. Jesus has authority over him. Are you not glad?

Amen. He has authority over the enemy, over your enemy. He has authority over that enemy. And His might is not just strong and powerful. That last word reminds us it is inherently His. It wasn't just, it wasn't given to Him. It is His because He is God. It is divine. It is divine power. You know, the angelic world has supernatural power, all right? Have you ever met an angel?

You may know, you may not, right? Are they active? Do they serve the Lord? The demonic hosts, are they not powerful? Do they have supernatural power? Yes. What they lack is this. They do not have divine power. Only Jesus has divine power. With the word, He simply overcomes their power, right?

His power is divine because He is God. How significant that is. Jesus is powerful in our life all the time. His power is available to us. My grace is sufficient for you for my power is made what? Perfect in what? Perfect in what? My power is made what? Perfect in weakness. Who is weak here this morning?

[22:00] Come on, put your hands up. Who is weak? Don't be bashful, okay? You are all weak. Your pastor is weak. Oh, not Andrew. Not Andrew. Andrew's got it all together.

He knows, right? And I know better, too. I don't have my life together. I am a weak man. I'm going to tell you, I'm a weak man without the Lord. But with the Lord, there is a strength in my life and in your life that is divine that is better than supernatural, right? It is God Himself.

God says, my power is made perfect. It works the best. It is most productive in an environment of what? Weakness. Which means what? If God's going to be strong in my life, I have to lay my weaknesses before the Lord and be honest about my weaknesses. I would say to you grandmas and grandpas and moms and dads, one of the best things you can do in your home is convey to your children and grandchildren that you are a normal human being who has struggles in your life

and that you need the Lord. Amen?

Your kids need to see you be real before the Lord. It's okay for your kids to see you struggle when you show them Christ, right? We need to be honest about our weakness.

In ministry, as a church, in all of our ministries, wherever and however you connect, one of the best things we can do as a church is be vulnerable together with our weaknesses and bring them together before the Lord. Can I get an amen? Is that easy to do or hard to do?

[ 23 : 47 ] It's hard to do. But that's one of the best things we can do. When we make ourselves vulnerable before the Lord, then He is then able to work because we have yielded that to Him. We must yield.

I must yield my weakness to the Lord. Only then and powerfully so then can He work and do His work in my life. Our confidence is the power of God. He is powerful. He transforms our weakness, number one.

So give your weakness to the Lord. Number two, what's the second reason for confidence in God? He goes on to say, His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. The second reason is this. Jesus provides. Jesus provides in our life. He has given us all that we need. I like how the, I'm old now, right? The 1984 NIV version.

God has given us everything we need for life and godliness. I love it because it's true. God's given us everything we need. What do you need this morning? What do you need God to do?

[ 25 : 01 ] I guess the better question than that is this. What does God want to do in your life? That's even the better question. It takes confidence to be used of the Lord, not in us, but in Him. Jesus has given us everything. You know, there's a little verse that we often run by real quick, Luke 2.52, and Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. Oh, that's neat how Jesus grew in every area of His life, right? A lot of expect that of Him. He's God and He's man, right?

What He's showing us that He is growing and He's in favor with the Lord in every area of His life, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, socially. Jesus is where He ought to be in every facet of His life. When we trust the Lord and look at His Word, we understand this one thing. Jesus, through His Word, has given us everything that we need in every area of our life. Do you need the Lord to meet you emotionally? He's given you the Word. Do you need the Lord to meet mental needs, spiritual needs, relational needs? Do you know what? Jesus has promised to give us whatever we need for whatever the need is in our life. It doesn't matter what it is. I'm not against medicine. But there are times in our culture where we medicate our needs before we turn to the Lord. Amen? If we need medicine, then use the medicine that you need, but make sure your highest priority in your life is what?

Jesus Christ. Turn to Him. Jesus says, I've given you everything you need. He has blessed us with every blessing, every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. That's quite a promise.

Anyone else that would back Him up against the wall? Okay, prove it, right? Jesus says, I have everything you need. Whether you're in high school, whether you're raising a child for the first time, your first time mom and dad, right? Or you're on a new job, or you're facing something physical that's far beyond your ability to cope with, or emotional, whatever it might be. Jesus says, I am there to meet you in that need, and I promise to be sufficient in your life. It takes faith to believe that, doesn't it?

[ 27 : 34 ] It takes faith to believe that God is able. God hasn't promised always to change what we're going through. He hasn't always promised to take that test and that trial away. Paul had the thorn in the flesh. He pleaded with the Lord to take it away, didn't he? Paul says, no, this is so that you would learn my grace. But Jesus has promised everything that we need. So we need to rely on God's grace and on God's gift. The way to have confidence is to use what God has given to us. Use His Word. Rely on His Word. Rely on the character of Christ and the fruit of the Spirit. Rely on the armor of God. Rely on the spiritual gifts and enablements He's given to us as a church. Rely on all the ways that the Lord has provided for us. That's key, okay? Number three, let's keep moving. The third reason we can have confidence is this as we continue on. He's granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him. Number three, we have confidence because Jesus is approachable. How about that?

We have power and we have everything that we need when we know Jesus Christ. That takes place when we receive Jesus Christ as Savior. Before we receive Him as our Savior, we have none of that. When we receive Him as Savior, we have all of that. To know Jesus Christ is then to have access to His power and to have access to all the resources that He has promised over our life. And

so the key for us is to know Jesus Christ. But what good is it for Jesus to say, you are to know me, but you don't have access.

You don't have access. You don't have that. Yeah, you I like. You can come. You I don't like. You're not. Not today. Do you see how you've acted today? There's no way. Wait until next week, right? What if God was like that? He's not like that, isn't He? He says, I want you to know me. I want you to come to me.

All you who are weary and who, you know what I mean, right? Come unto me. That's an invitation to know Him, right? It's an invitation to come to Him, to see who He is, to lay our needs before the Lord.

He calls us to Him. The Psalms are filled with coming to Jesus Christ and finding Him sufficient for every need, whatever that might be. This is eternal life that they know you and Jesus, God and Jesus Christ. Not just eternal life, but it's life. Jesus says, I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own. They know me. Let him who boasts, boast in this, that he understands and knows me, Jeremiah 9, 24. 2 Peter 3, 18, grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

[ 30 : 35 ] To know the Lord reflects that He is approachable. Every time we open God's Word, Jesus is waiting to meet with us. Every time we come to Him in prayer, Jesus is waiting to meet with us. Jesus desperately wants you and I to love Him and to come to Him. To know Him means I must open my Word. I must slow down in my life and meet with Him. I must. To know Him means that whatever the Lord shows me and lays across my heart, then I must then respond. To know the Lord, Peter says, grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To grow means it requires that I change. To grow means to change.

If I'm going to know the Lord, I must be willing to say this to my Savior, Lord, change me. Amen? Lord, change me. That's a hard thing to say, isn't it? I would say to all of you, it doesn't matter how long you've been saved, there are still areas in your life that the Lord still needs to work on. Amen? Amen? You know, we need to see that in each other, that acknowledgement. The Lord still, you know what's that song? He's still working on me. You don't know that, do you? To make me what I ought to be. It took Him just a week to make the moon and the stars. You ever heard that song?

Yeah. But He's still working on me. To know Him is to allow Him to change me. My confidence is, our confidence together, is coming to Christ and say, Lord, I want to know you. I want to know you. I want to know your power. I want to know the fellowship of your sufferings, right? Paul put it that way. I want to know everything about you. And to know Him is to say, Lord, how you walked, I want to walk. How you responded to people in your life, I want to respond that way. How you handled difficult people, I want to be the same way. Lord, how you loved people, I want to be the same way. [ 32 : 39 ] What was in your heart, I want that in my heart. That moves us on. So, to have confidence in the Lord is to know Him, is to draw near to Him. To know Him reveals relationship. To know the Lord reveals that you are in relationship with Jesus Christ. Number four, okay? Let's keep moving.

Number four, we see this. Verse three, He called us to His own glory and excellence. We know Him, the one who called us to, there's an argument there, is it to His own glory and excellence or by His own glory and excellence?

I won't fight that fight here, okay? They're both right, right? What's key here is this. Our confidence is in the character of Jesus Christ. Jesus is good, number four. Our confidence is this.

Jesus is good. It's His character. When we were saved, when I was saved, I was drawn to who Jesus Christ was. I was a sinner and He was righteous and yet He loved me anyways. And He offered forgiveness to me and He offered to change my life and He offered to meet me where I was. That is the character and heart of a God that I want. How about you? And when unbelievers meet us, they need to see that character come out of our life. The grace of God out of poor, out of the life of a believer to every unbeliever, right? That's who He was. The fact that He even offers salvation and makes it available, it shows us how good God is. None of us deserve the grace of the gospel. None of us deserve who Jesus Christ is in eternal life and yet He makes it available. He is good all the time. He is good when we can't explain what's going on in our life. He is good when our life is turned upside down.

Right now, I know I'm speaking to people whose life is turned upside down right now. The Lord is still good. He's still good. He's the only one who can take the mess of my life and turn it around.

He's the only one who can do that. He's the only one who can meet me with power and with grace. He's the only one who can do that. Sin is a horrible thing and it has infected this world, not just our lives, but all of the world and its curse is around us. We live in a world of sin and we are all affected by it.

[ 35 : 10 ] And yet Jesus Christ is good all the time. Never forget how good Jesus Christ is in your life. Peter says this, I proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

He called us. He is good. Paul says, The life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God who what? Loved me and gave Himself for me. That is the character of who He is. That is who God is. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly. Jesus Christ, His character is impeccable in every way. That He could love me a sinner. That He could love you a sinner. That He gives us the ability to love that same way to people in our life is an amazing thing, isn't it? Yeah. Isn't it amazing that anybody loved you?

And yet we are filled with people who love us. Amen? Yeah. We are all unlovable often. And yet Jesus Christ says, you know what? I love you. I love you enough to meet with you and to change you.

He is good all the time. To have confidence in the Lord is to believe that He's good. No matter, no matter, no matter what is going on in our life, that He is good. That's faith, isn't it? He is good.

[ 36 : 42 ] As Peter said, Lord, increase my faith. Increase our faith, right? God, increase my faith. That I would believe that more and more and more.

Number five, His character, verse 4, His goodness, who He is by that character, verse 4, He has granted to us His precious and very great promises. Our fifth reason to be confident in Christ is that He can be trusted. This Word of God is a Word of promise from God to us. It is the Word of promise. It is filled with promise. That promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. It is God's promise to man. 2 Corinthians 1.20, for all the promises of God find their yes in Christ. That is why it is through Him that we utter our amen to God for His glory. Proverbs 3, 5, and 6, trust in the Lord with with all your heart. Proverbs 62, 8, trust in Him at all times, O people. Pour out your heart before Him. Jeremiah 17, 7, blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord. God says He keeps our hearts in peace, the ones who trust Him, right? We are called to trust Him, to trust Him with everything in our life. The result is this. When we trust Him, we see that God's promises never fail, never fail. He keeps His Word. His timetable is vastly different than ours. That's why we struggle at times, don't we? We struggle because His timetable is not our timetable. I want things done yesterday. He says, well, it may be a month or two or three, right? He can be trusted. His promises can be trusted. All of His promises can be trusted. Has your life not been shaped by the promises of God? Are you still not encouraged in your life because of the promises of God and all God's people said, amen? You and I, we hang on to the promises of God, don't we? We cling to those things. It is God speaking to us and saying, I have this. Not only have your life, I have your future. I have everything that you long for. We could go through promises. We won't do that now. But God speaks to us from His promises.

[ 39 : 18 ] They are precious and they are very great. Peter knows that and I know that. And if you're walking with the Lord, you know that as well. It is His promises that we hang on to. Our confidence is in God's Word. His promise is who He is, how significant that is. And so the promises of God need to fuel our lives, energize our lives, and they do. You know, when I am discouraged, when I'm discouraged, you know what I do? I go back to God's Word. It energizes my life. It really does. We've all been in moments where we don't know if we're ever going to get out of that moment, out of that experience. We've gone through moments that are just so difficult and so hard, it's hard to put words to it. And the scars are maybe still there. But then to go back to God's Word and to open your Word and to see the promises of God and the faithfulness of God, what a difference that makes in our lives. What a change that makes in our life. And I will come out of those moments, and you know what? Nothing's changed. But I have, because I've met with the Lord. And He's changed my perspective completely. Have you ever experienced that before? God doing that work in your heart. That is an amazing thing, isn't it? God's promises.

Yeah. My confidence is in Him, not because He's promised to change my circumstances in a moment. My confidence is because I trust Him. I trust Him. Number six, we've got two more, right? Number six, these promises, so that through them, through these promises, all these promises, you may become partakers of the divine nature. Our sixth reason for confidence is this, Jesus is always

present. He's always present. Through these promises, we become partakers of the divine nature. Something divine takes place in our heart and life. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature, new creation. All things have become new. All things have passed away, right?

What's the first promise to an unbeliever? Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

When that happens, the Holy Spirit comes to live in our life and seals our salvation. Ephesians 1, right? Jesus Christ comes to live in our life through the Spirit of God. Paul puts it this way, examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves, or do you not realize this about yourself that Jesus Christ is in you, right? Galatians, I have been crucified with Christ.

[ 42 : 15 ] It is no longer I who live, but Christ who what? Christ who lives in me. Yeah. Christ dwells in our hearts through faith. Colossians 1, the riches of the glory of the mystery of the gospel. This gospel, this mystery is this, it is Christ in us. Jesus says in Hebrews 13, 1, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Jesus is with us all the time. He's present all the time.

He's present in your life. He'll never leave. You know, there's a thought that just boggles my mind. As long as I've been a Christian and been in the ministry, it still boggles my mind that the Spirit of God and Christ through the Spirit lives in me and dwells in me and will never leave, and yet I sin. It's an amazing thing that God just doesn't say, Brad, I'm sick and tired. I'm gone. Are you not amazed? Do we take for granted the fact that Jesus has promised to love you so much that in spite of your sin, He'll not leave you? Isn't that, come on, isn't that an amazing thing?

God has every right to leave every one of us this morning. Amen? But He has promised not to.

Come on, that's an amazing Savior, isn't it? You're all rotten sinners, and so am I.

But we are well-loved, and we are righteous before Him, and we are His precious children, and we mean everything to the Lord because He bought us with His blood. Amen? We are precious.

[ 43 : 48 ] We are both things at the same time. I am amazed that God lives in me, but He does. He's with me everywhere I go. His Word is with me everywhere I go. That's why it's so important for the Word of God to be ingrained into our life, to take it with us into every circumstance, into every trial, so that we have the Word of God. Even if the Bible is not with me, I have the Word in my heart. The Word have I treasured in my heart that I might not sin, right, against God.

Yeah. Jesus is always present. The confidence comes. That's a reality. Is it unnerving sometimes to know that Jesus is there when we're doing stuff we shouldn't be doing, or thinking things we shouldn't be thinking? Is it unnerving sometimes? Say yes.

Yeah. If we're honest, right? But the flip side is also true. Jesus has given us the blessing of enjoying Him. Confidence comes when I enjoy the Lord.

When I sit down in my Word and I find, wow, what joy to meet with the Lord. Isn't that a blessing?

To meet with Jesus Christ? To talk with Him in prayer and know that He's right here and He's present?

And He's walking with me and He's talking with me all the time. The psalmist says, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for why?

[ 45 : 14 ] You're with me. Evil is all around us. Shadows are all around us. Shadows are in your life. Shadows are in your world. And yet Jesus is right there walking with us.

We're going to have shadows as long as we're in this life. It's a guarantee. The greater guarantee is the Lord's with us in every one of those. Creating opportunities in our life to use for the glory of God. Number seven. Number seven. And through these promises we become partakers of the divine nature. He comes to live within us. Having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

When did we escape? We escaped when we met Jesus Christ as Savior and received Him as Savior. Right? That's why that divine nature becomes a reality. This last reality of confidence is this. Jesus delivers. He delivers us. That's what He does. He delivers us from sin. That word. It is the corruption of sin. That word corruption in the Greek is this.

[ 46 : 15 ] It is a stench. Sin is a stench before the Lord. You ever have something in your garbage that just sits too long? It just stinks? You ever have your husband's doesn't put their dirty laundry away and it just starts to stink?

Right? Right? Dirty feet. You don't wash and shower and all of a sudden, wow, I better go shower.

Right? You know how that goes. Right? It is a stench. It's a stench that's internal.

It's a stench that can't be washed away. Jesus does the impossible. He delivers us from that. He washes us from that. He cleanses us from that.

He helps us to escape the stench of sin. That's what He does when we're saved. And He places us into a new relationship. We're no longer defined by the stench.

We are washed and we are clean before the Lord. Even when I sin, I'm still righteous before the Lord in my position. Right? I'm never unsaved because I sin. Praise the Lord for that.

[ 47 : 14 ] But I still need to make it right. But Jesus says here, He delivers us from sin. He delivers us from the sin of this world. We're not delivered from this world. Not yet. We live in it.

That day is coming when the Lord returns. But we are delivered from the stench of the sin. Sin no longer has control over the believer. Because the sin nature has now been overpowered by the nature of Jesus Christ.

We have the ability to be overcomers. Do you believe that this morning? We all struggle with sin. In some way, shape, or form, all of us do. Faith comes in and understands and believes.

You know what? Jesus gives me the ability to overcome the sin in my life. In His power and His strength. That's what He does. Jesus is my power. He is my strength. He's my deliverer.

I overcome in Jesus Christ. That's what happens. He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness. Psalm 31.1 And you, O Lord, do I take refuge.

[ 48 : 16 ] In your righteousness, deliver me. Psalm 34.19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers Him out of them all.

Psalm 50.15 Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me. That's His promise. That's His promise to us.

Jesus is the confidence of every believer. He's our power. He says, turn, turn, give your weakness to me. He has provided everything that we need for life and godliness.

Everything. Confidence comes when I actually use in my life what He's given to me. By faith, I begin to put into practice in my life the very tools He's given me to use.

Jesus reminds me that He is approachable. Confidence comes when I spend time with the Lord. I grow in not just knowing who He is.

[ 49 : 18 ] I grow in living who He is. It becomes experiential in my life. Jesus Christ, the knowledge of who He is in God's Word, becomes the experience of my life.

Jesus is good. Confidence comes when I believe that. When I walk through my life and my testimony shines for Christ, no matter how dark the things in my life might be, no matter how difficult the testing might be, or the persecution, or the struggle that I'm going through, or whatever it might be, confidence comes when I bring those things to the Lord and say, you know what, these things are true in my life, but I know you're good, and I trust you.

My faith is in you. I'm going to walk faithfully before you because I know you're good. I'm not letting go of that. I know you're good in my life. I'm not letting go of that in my life. I'm going to hang on to that.

Confidence comes when we trust the Lord and believe His promises, believe His Word. If those promises are true, then they shape our lives. Peter ends here, those last promises.

He delivers us not just from sin, verse 12, He delivers us to a hope and a future as well. I mean, sorry, verse 11. Peter writes, For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

[ 50 : 39 ] Peter knows that there has been a past deliverance. There will be a future deliverance to glory into the presence of the Lord forever. My prayer for you as a church, my prayer for myself as I walk with the Lord is my confidence is in Christ.

That I live that out. That I do that well. That I keep my eyes on Christ all the time. It's easy for our eyes to go somewhere else. It's easy for our eyes to go on what we're going through.

Lord, turn my eyes to you that I will see you. God, keep me focused on you. I know you love me. I know you're good. I know you've given me everything that I need.

So Lord, help me to grow in faith. Help me to be someone who lives and shines for the glory of God. So that people see Christ as a light in my life.

May the Lord be our confidence in every way. Come back to these verses. Look at Jesus Christ. He's your confidence. Not the church. Not the programs. Not the good times that we have in life.

[ 51 : 43 ] Not our families. Christ is our confidence. He's our confidence. He's our confidence. All the other things change. Jesus does not. Look at him. I have been blessed with many good things

in my life and so have you.

But those things cannot be my confidence. Only Jesus Christ. Only him alone. Let's bow in prayer. Lord, help us to turn our eyes and our hearts to you.

There may be one here this morning that needs to see Jesus Christ as Savior for the first time. To give their hearts to you and say, Lord, I am a sinner. I am in need of a Savior.

I need one to step into my life as Savior. Lord, I need you to step into my life and to change me and to wash me and to forgive me. Lord, I need your righteousness.

Lord, I need what only you can give. I give my life to you. Lord, I place my faith and my trust in you. That you might change my life forever and love me and walk with me and give me a hope and a future.

[ 52 : 48 ] To all of us here who love Jesus Christ and walk with him, we're human. Every day we need to wake up and say, Lord, you are my confidence today. Lord, I will walk with you today and I will be intentional about that.

I will turn my eyes again to you and to your word. I will listen to the Spirit of God as he moves in my heart. Lord, may that be the conviction of our heart, the intentional purpose of our heart to look to you and to live for you well.

We love you. We thank you for your great love to us. Thank you for these words of encouragement from your word. May you be our confidence in every way. And may it change how we live our life for the glory of God, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.