

Having the mind of Christ in his confidence

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[0 : 00] Thank you for your honour.

Morning, everybody. I thought we'd just start with a few exercises. So if you'd like to stand up and do a few of these, just warm up a bit, just get ourselves nicely warm, because it's a pretty cold morning in here.

Yeah, we've talked about Baltic. Well, this morning it's Arctic, I think, in here. So, yeah, pretty chilly, isn't it? But not to worry. It's good to be here this morning.

Without giving anything away, the next song that will be sung is Psalm 23. And that means a lot to me personally. I will admit, I struggle to learn Bible verses.

It is a real struggle for me to learn Bible verses, but one way that I do find I can learn Bible verses is through song. And a few years ago now, six years ago, seven years ago, over seven years ago, I had a triple heart bypass.

[1 : 11] And before I went in for that, I had lots of people obviously praying for me and I would have... And one of the things in the night times, you know, when you sometimes used to lie in the night or early morning and think, you know, what's going to happen here, you know?

Am I going to be okay? Am I not going to be okay? I mean, I knew really deep in my heart I was going to be okay, okay. But the words of Psalm 23 are absolutely, absolutely amazing and a real lift and a real comfort for me personally.

So that's the song that follows me is very close to my heart, my triple bypassed heart. And indeed, it will be one of my funeral hymns.

So for those of you who will be there, you can get some practice in. Because there we go. Right. So this morning, we're this series, Becoming Like Jesus, Having the Mind of Jesus.

And this morning, we're looking at Having the Mind of Jesus in His Confidence. And I want to read Philippians 2, verses 19 to 30. And I'll be reading on the screen from the New International Version.

[2 : 27] And it starts, it says, I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I may also be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him who takes a genuine interest in your welfare.

For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself because as a son with his father, he has served with me in the work of the Gospel.

I hope therefore to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon. But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.

For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. Indeed, he was ill and almost died. But God had mercy on him and not on him only, but also on me to spare me sorrow upon sorrow.

Therefore, I am all the more eager to send him so that when you see him again, you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. Welcome him in the Lord with great joy and honor men like him because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me.

[3 : 56] Amen. May God bless the reading of his word. So, we're looking at the mind of Jesus in his confidence. So, I thought I'd begin by just looking briefly at what was the mind of Jesus.

And if we look at John's Gospel in chapter 5 and from verse 19, Jesus said, Jesus gave him this answer, I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself.

He can do only what he sees his Father doing. Because whatever the Father does, the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement, he will show him even greater things than these.

For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so, the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. And that's the mind of God.

The mind of Jesus can do only what he sees the Father doing. Jesus knew that God's purposes were being worked out. Jesus had confidence in his Father.

[5 : 06] He knew that his Father's purposes were being worked out through his life. Through all of his life. From the birth of his life, through his growing up, his going to the temple as a young boy.

There he was. Talk about confidence to go into the temple and start to explain the Scriptures to the religious leaders in the temple. Jesus knew that he had the confidence of his Father in him to have the confidence to go into the temple and read the Scriptures and teach the teachers of the law.

So, Jesus had confidence that his Father's purposes were being worked out. Jesus knew who he was in his mind. He knew who he was.

When he got baptized, a voice from heaven said, Behold, my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And Jesus heard that voice, the voice of his Father saying to him, You are my Son in whom I am well pleased.

And we all know as human fathers how much that means when we say that to our children or we've had that said to us. How much it means when a father says, I am well pleased with you.

[6 : 23] I love you. You are my beloved Son. And there was Jesus confident because he knew that God's purposes were being worked out and he knew who he was because his Father told him.

He demonstrated who he was and what his mind was in his ministry. for several months, as most of us know, we went through the Gospel of Matthew and you only have to read passages of Matthew. The number of times that Jesus healed people. Healed the sick. Made the lame walk. Made the blind see. So his ministry, he was loving.

He was healing. He was forgiving. He forgave people. We've just prayed there about forgiving. Always forgiving. Alan was praying. God always forgives.

If we go to him, if we've done something wrong and we know we do things wrong, we know we mess up, we know we sin, but if we go to him and truly repent before him, he'll forgive and he'll forgive over and over and over again.

[7 : 33] And we see that in the Gospels. And he loves. Jesus loved the people he came into contact with. Jesus loved the unlovable. You don't have to read far in the Gospels to know that some of those people were unlovable.

The lepers who nobody would go near. Who certainly wouldn't touch and really wouldn't go near. Jesus went to them and touched them and healed them. So Jesus had that confidence in his mind. And he was completely confident in the mind of his father including to death. If we have a look at Luke's Gospel, chapter 22, from verse 42, it says, when he was on the Mount of Olives, he says, Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me, yet not my will, but yours be done.

An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly. And his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. And in John 16, in verse 20, it says, I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices.

You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come. But when her baby is born, she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.

[9 : 06] So with you, now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice and no one will take away your joy.

He had confidence. He knew that despite what he was going through, and he asked God, please, Father, take this cup away from me. He knew what he was about to go through, the agonizing crucifixion that he was about to go through.

But he said, no, if your will, because he knew that through that, people would see him again. People would know that he had died, conquered death, that he would be raised from the dead and conquered death.

And so for those of us who turn to Jesus and believe in him, that he on that cross took our sins, if we turn to him, we know that he lives in our heart because he lives.

He is raised from the dead. So Jesus had complete confidence in the mind of the Father, including to death, because he knew that he would defeat death and rise again.

[10:18] So that was the mind of Jesus. Next slide, please, George. And Paul, here's Paul in jail in Rome, but he has confidence in the mind of Christ.

He has two men also demonstrating their confidence in the mind of Jesus. That no matter what, no matter what, they will serve Christ through Paul and like Paul in their lives as Christ served his Father through his life.

So these two people, Timothy and Epaphroditus. Epaphroditus. Next slide, please, Josh. So Timothy. Timothy was a convert of Paul.

And here's a bit of encouragement for those of you perhaps who have children or grandchildren and you're praying for them and hoping that they'll come to know the Lord as their Lord and Savior. in 2 Timothy, in the book of 2 Timothy, Paul says that, looks back and says, Timothy, you have the faith that was first seen in your grandmother, Lois, and your mother, Eunice.

[11:34] And that faith has now come through to you. Now that's not to say that I'm a Christian because my mother was a Christian or you're a Christian because your father was a Christian or you've got to make that decision for yourself.

But, the witness of a parent year in, year out, month in, month out to their children does count for something.

It does count for something. So I'd just like to encourage those of you who are praying for children or grandchildren to keep on praying, keep on witnessing. Think of Lois and think of Eunice, Timothy's grandmother and mother.

and what happened then to Timothy. He was a convert of Paul. He was Paul's right-hand man.

What a great phrase that is, a right-hand man.

I love that. I've been a right-hand man for people. When I worked for the charity Whitby Network, I was the right-hand man to the director.

[12:38] I was the sort of manager of the operations, if you like, and I was the right-hand man. And I really enjoyed that role as a right-hand man and it was an important role.

And so for Timothy, the right-hand man, there he was, right at the right hand of Paul. And he went on many journeys with Paul.

He stayed with Paul and was his right-hand man. He was his sidekick. He rode shotgun, whatever phrase you want to use. There was Timothy alongside Paul.

He planted churches, the church in Philippi with Paul. He was sent out and he went out. He was tireless and he was willing.

He willingly went out. He was sent out and he went out and he was willing to be sent out. Are we willing to be sent out?

[13:37] Are we tireless? He was willing to suffer so others would know Jesus. We must be willing to change and sometimes suffer in order to make the Gospel known to other people.

We see it around the world, don't we? The persecuted church. These are our brothers and sisters. They're not distant people on a map in places that we don't know much about.

these are our brothers and sisters as close as our brothers and sisters who are sitting here. You know, whether that's in North Korea, whether it's in Uzbekistan, whether it's in Saudi Arabia, whether it's in China, and so on, and so on, and so on.

These are our brothers and sisters who are willing to suffer for the Gospel, sometimes to death. And Timothy was a wonderful example of humility.

We were talking last week. John was talking about humility. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled and those who humble themselves, like Timothy, will be exalted.

[14:52] And Timothy was exalted. And we're still talking about Timothy today. 2,000 years on, here we are still talking about Timothy. And what about Epaphroditus, if we move on, Josh?

Well, he was a Philippian sent by the church to care for Paul in prison and to deliver a gift to him. It's thought that Paul was imprisoned in Rome. He was about to face trial.

And he needed money to pay for his legal defense. And so the church in Philippi said, right, we'll sort that. That's what we'll do. We'll send some money for Paul's defense.

And who are we going to send? Well, who would like to go? But Epaphroditus, you can imagine him sitting there and what is on his heart, and he sticks his hand up and he says, yep, I'll go. And this wasn't a short journey.

This was a journey of about 1,300 kilometers, about 800 miles. You know, he didn't sort of pick up a bus on the way and there he was and he got to Rome and, you know, the next stop you can get off. [15:58] No, that was a long journey, a long way to go on a dangerous journey. He was a brother, a fellow worker, a fellow soldier.

Again, Paul doesn't just say, this is Epaphroditus, he's a soldier and a worker. No, he's a fellow worker. He's with me, a fellow soldier.

So, a worker and a fighter for the gospel. And a brother, again, that closeness, that intimacy of the closeness of Paul with Epaphroditus.

And he almost died on the journey. He almost died on the journey. It was probably malaria that he had, but he almost died on the journey. And he could have been killed on the journey. 1,300 kilometers traveling on foot probably, or maybe in a chariot or a horse and a cart.

We don't know. But he could have been mugged. He was carrying a lot of money with him for Paul's defense. Now, one day, many, many years ago, when Whitby had a Yorkshire bank in the town, which is a long time ago, I worked for Functional English, which was a Christian language school.

[17:13] It was where Cadman's Prospect, the apartments, are now on Chubb Hill. and the owner of the language school was very careful with money.

She wouldn't pay to transfer money between an account in the bank at the Yorkshire Bank and an account at the post office, which is about 100 yards down Baxtergate, for those of you who know Whitby.

It's about 100 yards between the two. She wouldn't pay to transfer the money electronically. So, she was going to Australia and she said to me, right, I want you to transfer, I can't remember the amount, it was something like £12,000.

£12,000 from the Yorkshire Bank to the post office. So, I said, fine, yep, are you going to do that? No, no, you'll have to take that. So, I had to take £12,000 from the Yorkshire Bank, 100 yards down Baxtergate to the post office.

And I had somebody, a Timothy, alongside me, with me, I tell you, I wrote a Paphroditus, with me, keeping me company, carrying 12,000 notes of money in a briefcase.

[18:33] And it was pretty, it was pretty scary. You know, 100 yards doesn't seem like much. But when you've got £12,000 in your pocket, it's, yeah, it's a lot of money.

So, that was me. There's Epaphroditus, 2,000 years ago, travelling over dangerous ground.

Who knew who was there? Outlaws, bandits, robbers, muggers, murderers, thieves, vagabonds, you know, whatever word you want to use. He was facing that sort of danger on his journey.

And yet, he undertook that journey willingly. He carried out that task willingly. He was saved and deployed.

And he wasn't saved by works, by what he did. But he was clearly saved for works. He'd been saved. He knew Jesus as his Lord and Saviour.

[19:30] And when somebody said, are you going to do something? He said, yes, I'll do it. I'll do it. Give me the money. I'll make that journey. I'll take that gift to Paul. Make sure it gets there.

And he held on. You can imagine him holding on to that money. Once we had a, I worked many years ago in hotels, in hotel management. And we'd had a busy Christmas.

We'd all had turkey until it literally came out of our ears. And one night I said to the night porter, will you go to McDonald's and get us a burger? Several of us who were working.

Just bring us some burgers and chips back. It'd be lovely. And off he went. And then he came back and I lent him a coat. It was a cold night. I lent him a coat. And he came back and there was blood all over his coat.

And he'd been mugged for the money he had, about 15 pounds in his hand. And he'd been mugged. And I felt absolutely terrible. Absolutely terrible. And again, a journey of half a mile maybe.

[20:30] Half a mile there, half a mile back. Mugged for a burger. Yeah. Wonderful. But he went willingly for me. You know, I asked him and he said, yeah, I'll go. And there was Epaphroditus saying, yes, I'll go.

Let me take that gift. So he was saved and deployed. Next slide, please, Josh. So how did Timothy and Epaphroditus demonstrate their confidence in the mind of Jesus?

Well, Timothy, through integrity, loyalty, and companionship. He had integrity. Paul knew that he could trust Timothy to do the right thing.

And it's so important, isn't it, to have integrity. To have a moral compass, if you like. And that when you say to somebody, yep, I'll do that, that you do it.

Our daughter Emma once had to go to a science day at the pavilion here in Whitby when she was at school. And I think one of her friends dropped out or anyway, and so she said, I'm not going to go.

[21 : 46] I can't go without whoever it was. And we said to her, no, you said you'll go, you must go. And she went. And that's what integrity is about.

It's about doing the right thing. Saying you'll do what you will do, and then doing it. Having that moral compass and not letting that moral compass shake.

He had loyalty. He was a son, not a co-worker. Again, we've touched on that a bit earlier. He wasn't just a co-worker. He was as a son to me, as a son to a father.

That's how close Paul and Timothy had become. So it was real loyalty. Paul knew, Paul knew in his mind that Timothy was not going to desert him.

companionship. How good is companionship? Having somebody alongside you. Being a companion in difficult times.

[22 : 48] Just to talk to, or to pray for you, or to just be with you. Just to sit quietly. Sometimes that's all that's necessary, is for somebody to sit quietly with you.

not to say anything. Just to sit in companionable silence alongside you. And for you to know that they're there. And that's what Timothy was like at times.

He was a companion. He was close to Paul. He would sit with him. I'm sure he prayed with him. I'm sure he talked to him. And sometimes he would just sit with Paul and be his companion.

But how important was that for Timothy to demonstrate that confidence in the mind of Jesus through integrity, loyalty and companionship.

And Epaphroditus. Well, courage. We just talked about tremendous courage. He was fixed on his task. He wasn't going to be shaken from that task. Off he went across that difficult, on that difficult journey, across difficult terrain, facing those threats to his life.

[23 : 56] But he was fixed on his task. He had courage. And sometimes we need that courage. Our brothers and sisters in those countries we talked about earlier certainly need courage to face what they have to face.

To face losing their job. To face losing their homes. To face losing their family. He had perseverance. You know, he was determined. He was ill.

He had malaria. And yet he was determined to press on. He persevered. He kept going. How important is that? To keep going. To press on. Persevere.

Run the race. Keep going. And Epaphroditus did that. He persevered. And he was selfless. He was willing to die. You know, he knew. He must have known what some of those risks were.

And yet, he was selfless. He went on. He was willing to put others, to put Paul above himself and to be selfless.

[24 : 56] So, those were the characteristics that Epaphroditus demonstrated for his confidence in the mind of Christ. Courage, perseverance, selflessness, and through risk.

They risked their safety. They both risked their safety for the work of the gospel, the work of the scripture, the work of getting to Paul and being with Paul and supporting Paul in his ministry.

They risked their finances. Epaphroditus with his sack of cash that he carried. And we may have to risk our finances sometimes. There may be times when God speaks into our heart and says, I don't want you to have that new house or new car or new coat or new whatever.

I want that money for something I have planned. And we have to be willing to listen to that and to hear that and if necessary obey that call that God sometimes puts on our hearts.

And to risk our hearts. To put others first. When we fall in love, we risk our hearts. We put our hearts on the line.

[26 : 10] We say to somebody, one person has got to say it first, I love you. And you're putting your heart on the line. And you're hoping that another person says to you, I love you.

But you're putting your heart on the line. And that's what Timothy and Epaphroditus were doing.

They were putting their hearts on the line. They were risking their hearts. Next slide please, Josh.

So what about me? And what about us? We can demonstrate our confidence in the mind of Jesus through those characteristics we've just been talking about.

And three of the steps we can take to achieve this are by knowing that the Bible is true and believing it. If we turn again to John's Gospel chapter 14, very familiar passage. get to it. Do not let your hearts be troubled.

[27 : 21] Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I'm going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am.

You know the way to the place where I am going. And so it goes on and Jesus says, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him. And Philip said, Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.

Jesus answered, Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you for such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, show us the Father? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father living in me who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

[28 : 32] I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name so that the Son may bring glory to his Father.

You may ask me for anything in my name and that I will do it. we need to know that the Bible is true. The Bible is not going to tell us things and let us down. How terrible it would be. Why would it be in the Bible that there are many a mansion with many rooms and ones prepared for us? How cruel would that be if that was not true? This is true. This is the Word of God, the inspired Word of God.

We are loved. We are chosen. We are redeemed. We've been bought. Bought back by Jesus. We've had our sins forgiven.

[29 : 36] We've been redeemed. We've been brought back. Bought back. This is true. This is our book of instructions. I said this before.

If you get something to do, a piece of Ikea furniture, you've got your instructions. You read the instructions. When you become a Christian, read the instructions.

Listen to the instructions. Don't just put it down and put it to one side and let it gather dust. Use it. This is the life's guide. We must embrace our weaknesses.

We are designed to need God. In John 15, it says, I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit.

Apart from me, you can do nothing. Apart from me, you can do nothing. We're weak. We're weak. We can't do anything without Jesus. We can't do anything in our own human strength.

[30 : 39] We weren't meant to. We were meant. God is strength. We are weakness. And we were meant to be weak. And we were meant to rely on Jesus for the strength.

Every day. Fill me with your strength. Help me in this day. Just give me what I need for today. Give me the strength I need. And we need to accept the free gift of God's grace.

We can do nothing to deserve the free gift. A very familiar passage in Ephesians that says, for it is by grace you have been saved through faith and this not from yourselves.

It is the gift of God not by works so that no one can boast. No one can boast. It's the grace of God that's in us.

Not deserved. I don't deserve it. You don't deserve it. You don't deserve it. But we have it. It's the time of grace and we have that grace of God in our lives that will equip us.

[31 : 42] Next slide please Josh. So, why do we need to have the mind of Jesus in his confidence? Well, as Christians we need a confident mind to see everything through Jesus' eyes.

Mike was talking the other week and he said before he became a Christian his life was awful. You know, this, that, and the other. I thought, well, mine was different.

Before I became a Christian, I had a pretty good life. I enjoyed it. You know, I just got on with things. Things seemed to go okay, yes, ups and downs as you do.

And I thought, yeah, everything's okay. And then, over a period of time, I heard the gospel and it spoke into my heart, into my life and I became a Christian.

and that's when things really became interesting. Because I suddenly found that I had to look at everything through the mind of Jesus.

[32 : 52] Everything I had to look at, I had to look at in a different way. So, whether that's politics or work or family life or whatever it might be, I had to look at it with different eyes.

And it's still the same. It's still the same. You know, whether it's the media or television or IT, whatever it is, to look at it, there's no getting away from it.

I just have to look at it through different eyes now. But it's great. I wouldn't change it for the world. Makes things much, much more interesting.

We need to have confidence in the Word of God. I've already said this. We need to have confidence confidence that this is the inspired Word of God. We need to have that confidence.

Get into it. Read it. Build your confidence in God's Word. We need to have confidence that God is in control. And that's a difficult one, isn't it?

[33 : 58] When we look at the situation in the world today, particularly Gaza and Ukraine and other conflict areas, God is in control.

We need to be in control. We can't be in control. This is way out of our control. We cannot be in control. But God is in control. God is the Alpha and the Omega.

I think again it was Alan who said it. He was there at the beginning. He's going to be there at the end. And he knows. He has confidence in his Father. He knows what's going on. We don't.

But he does. And he has confidence. confidence. And he asks us to believe that he is in control of the world. In all those things that go on in our lives, whether it's Gaza, whether it's Ukraine, whether it's things in our culture, things in our politics, that God is in control.

The Scriptures say, raises up kings and puts them down. God raises up kings and breaks them.

He's in control. You know, we look back and see the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain.

[35 : 09] You know, who would have ever thought of a certain generation that we would ever see the Berlin Wall come down, the Iron Curtain crumble? I don't think any of us really expected it.

It was just a fact of life that was there as we grew up and as we lived. So we need to have confidence that God is in control. We need to believe the Gospel and Jesus' story and to tell it and show it.

We need to tell the Gospel and we need to show it through our lives. Show it through how we live. I think it's, one of the books I've been reading is this book and I could recommend it to you.

It's by Stephen McAlpine. It's called Being the Bad Guys, How to Live for Jesus in a World That Says You Shouldn't. and it's very interesting.

It's about how we, the Christians in the world, have become the bad guys. We're no longer the good guys, we're the bad guys. I certainly recommend reading it. But one of the things he talks about is that how we can demonstrate to people who come into our church or our cafe or the alpha course or wherever it might be, in our work, in our schools, in our colleges, in our homes, we can exhibit to them and offer them undeserved forgiveness.

[36 : 41] You know, they may do something or say something that really upsets and annoys us, but we can offer that forgiveness to them. Just as we've had undeserved forgiveness offered for us. We can put others before ourselves.

ourselves. Just as we've, you know, that's been demonstrated to us, so we can demonstrate to us, put others before ourselves. Put them first.

These are powerful, powerful signals because people then, they hear so much about church, you know, a pretty intolerant bunch, a pretty narrow-minded bunch, and they're sort of confused.

When they see these things, this unreserved forgiveness, this openness, this putting others before ourselves, they become confused. This isn't what I've seen, this isn't what I've been taught.

And then they become intrigued. Well, maybe I just want to know a little bit more about this, find out a little bit more. And then attracted. Yes, this is something that maybe is better than the situation I'm in at the moment.

[37 : 50] maybe I want to know more. And then they can become compelled. And they actually take action and come and join in with us.

So wherever we're at witnessing to people, whether it's within the church, whether it's in the cafe, whether it's in our homes, in our own lives, these are things that we can demonstrate to people that just might confuse them, intrigue them, attract them, and then compel them.

And we need to be firm in our identity. Our identity is not in our gender, our work, our college, our school, our sexuality.

Our identity is in Jesus. That's who our identity is put in. Our identity is in Jesus. That if we believe he is the son of God, that he came and he died for us, for our sins, that's where our identity lies.

Our identity lies in Jesus. And that gives us confidence. And confidence and courage to stay the course. You know, this is not an easy life.

[39 : 09] Don't let anybody kid you that it's an easy life. You need to stay the course, to have that courage, to have the confidence in Jesus, that he is who he said he was, that he has confidence in his father, and we should have confidence in him to stay the course, and to get to that day when we close our eyes and awaken, absent from the body, but present with the Lord.

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