

I've Got Confidence

Phil 3:4-11

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Confidence is a wonderful asset.
- B. In this passage, the Judiazers were causing problems.
 - 1. They were basing their confidence on circumcision—on a fleshly act.
 - 2. Paul says, “OK, you want to talk about confidence; let’s do it!”

II. BASED ON THE FLESH, vv 4-6.

- A. Paul said that he had more reason to put confidence in the flesh than others, v 4.
- B. Circumcised the eighth day, v 5.
 - 1. This was in accord with God’s covenant.
 - a. This covenant was made to Abraham (Gn 17:12).
 - b. It was repeated in the Law of Moses (Lev 12:3).
 - 2. Paul said that he was superior to:
 - a. Proselytes circumcised in adulthood.
 - b. Ishmaelites circumcised at age 13.
- C. Of the stock of Israel, v 5.
 - 1. Israel was the covenant people of God.
 - 2. Paul said that he was part of the people of God.
- D. Of the tribe of Benjamin, v 5.
 - 1. The tribe of Benjamin was special.
 - a. Of the patriarchs only Benjamin was born in the Promised Land.
 - b. Benjamin was the son of Rachael, Jacob’s favorite wife.
 - c. The first king of Saul, as evil as he was, was from the tribe of Benjamin.
 - d. Only this tribe had remained faithful to David.
 - 2. Paul says, “I am from a special tribe.”
- E. A Hebrew of Hebrews, v 5.
 - 1. Both Paul’s parents were Hebrews.
 - a. It wasn’t all that uncommon for Jews to have a mixed heritage.
 - b. Timothy is a case in point.
 - 2. Paul wasn’t of a mixed race; he was a Hebrew.
- F. He was a Pharisee, v 5.
 - 1. The Pharisees devoted themselves to keeping the Law as perfectly as possible.
 - 2. Even Jesus said that one should do what the Pharisees taught (Mt 23:3).
 - 3. Paul says, “I have devoted my life to following God’s Law.”
- G. He was zealous, v 6.
 - 1. The Jews considered zeal one of the greatest attributes a person could have—it determined his faithfulness.
 - a. Paul says, “I was zealous; I persecuted the church.”
 - b. In other words, Paul loved God so much that he wanted to stamp out those he considered God’s enemies.
 - 2. Paul wanted to do right.
- H. He was blameless, v 6.
 - 1. Paul kept the Law so closely that he could say that he was blameless.
 - 2. He kept the minute details of the Law the best that he could.
- I. We—at times—might be tempted to put some confidence in the flesh.
 - 1. We’re Americans.
 - 2. We have good things—a good salary, good house, good car, good clothes, etc.

III. BASED ON CHRIST, vv 7-11.

- A. Paul’s going to tell us from where real confidence comes.
- B. It’s valuable, vv 7-8.

1. Paul counted his gains as loss, v 7.
 - a. Paul had gains—he was well thought of by Jews.
 - b. Paul counted them as loss for Christ—they didn't matter compared to Christ.
2. Paul counted all things loss for Christ, v 8.
 - a. Paul said all things—anything you want to bring up—were loss for knowing Christ.
 - b. Paul had suffered the loss of all things for knowing Christ—nothing was more valuable than he.
3. Jesus was the most important possession to Paul.
 - a. What is more important in your life than Jesus?
 - b. What do you need to give up to have him?
- C. Comes from faith, v 9.
 1. Paul wanted to be found in Christ not having his own righteousness.
 - a. Paul knew he couldn't measure up.
 - b. Rm 3:23.
 2. Paul wanted the righteousness which comes through faith in Christ.
 - a. We're talking about obedient faith—faith causes one to act.
 - b. This righteousness isn't the result of ourselves; it is the righteousness of God.
 - c. "Dressed in his righteousness alone, Faultless to stand before the throne."
- D. This confidence results in fellowship, v 10.
 1. With Christ.
 - a. Paul wanted to know Christ intimately, not just know about him.
 - b. Paul wanted to walk with Christ.
 2. With the power of his resurrection.
 - a. This is the power that enables us to walk in newness of life.
 - b. Rm 6:4.
 3. With his sufferings.
 - a. Paul knew suffering.
 - b. Everyone who believes in Christ will suffer in some way (2 Tm 3:12).
 4. With his death.
 - a. Sharing in the sufferings of Christ involves putting the one life to death (Col 3:2-5).
 - b. We can't live the same way before our conversion that we lived before it.
- E. To obtain the resurrection from the dead, v 11.
 1. This is the hope of the Christian's life.
 2. Our lives point toward the resurrection.

V. CONCLUSION.

- A. In this passage, Paul talks about what he gave up to serve Christ.
- B. What are you willing to give up to serve Christ?