

Staying Confident in Troubled Times

It seems like every week there is new chaos, new strife, and we are bombarded with difficult messages. In our own lives, we have hardships, whether it is illness or finances or relational problems. We see failures in our own walk with God and get discouraged and start to ask, "why is this so hard?"

If you were ever led to believe that your life as a Christian should be easy, or that you will be financially blessed and physically well all the time, I'm sorry to break it to you, but that isn't biblical Christianity.

I want to talk today about staying confident in troubled times.

As we get toward the end of Hebrews we see the repetition of key themes:

1. Jesus is awesome – hold on to your confidence in him
2. The New Covenant is better and God is for you
3. Don't give up even when times get hard – it will all be worth it.

Heb 10:12 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.

Recognize this means that the battle still rages. So we should expect difficulties. But now, verse 14 makes an amazing statement:

14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. Kirk talked about this last week, but it must be repeated for all of us to take this to heart. We are made perfect in Christ even while we are still being sanctified.

Sanctified – being made holy, more like Jesus

This is the first thing we need to be confident about!

Whether you are a newer follower of Jesus or an older one, grasping onto this reality and tension is a huge part of your future success.

In Christ God sees me as perfectly holy, 100% justified, and ready to receive an inheritance of eternal life.

- Even as I walk imperfectly in this life.

- Even when I occasionally sin.
- Even though I am far from perfect

This gives us great confidence to keep going in our walk with God. Knowing that I can return to him **QUICKLY** if I fail, because my place with God has not changed! But the good news is that not only am I **positionally**, legally, holy and justified. But Jesus is also actively working to sanctify me and make me **practically** holy. Again

14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

Now, how does this process of sanctification play out? What does this **NEW COVENANT** do for us?

15 And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord:

I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,"

17 then he adds,

"I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."

18 Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Our sin is forgiven and forgotten. ALL OF IT! Past, present, future – no more offering for sin is required. As God works in us to will and to do his good pleasure by writing upon our hearts this truth, his laws, that we can walk in truth. Not to earn favor but because of love and recognition of the truth.

Compare this to trying to follow the law of the Old Covenant.

Deut 11:27 You will be blessed if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I am giving you today.

In a very real sense, **failure WAS our only option.** And not many want to literally go back to following the law, but in a very real way, we set up laws for ourselves to follow.

- Do this, don't do that
- How many times did I read my bible this week?
- How many times did I share the gospel?

Not saying we shouldn't do those things, and prioritize them. But we can't make them works that become the measure of our relationship with God.

Now we walk in ***The Full Assurance of Faith*** as the Holy Spirit working in us writes his laws upon our hearts and minds. So it isn't just an outward obedience to external rules put upon us, but an inward changing of the heart.

Php 2:13 For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Col 3:10 Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.

Rom 12:2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

So what is our part in this process?

Learn to know God. Draw near. Hold fast. Stir one another up. Meet together as a habit.

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,

Why do we have confidence? Because we realize it does not, and never has depended upon our works, but entirely upon his.

20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

I'm not trying to oversimplify this, but biblical, New Covenant Christianity is rather simple.

- Draw close to God – in worship, in prayer, reading your bible
- Learn to know God – through the bible, through experience
- Hold fast to the truth – we've got to abide in truth, not winds of doctrine
- Be in community with believers – we have to stir one another up to do good works

- Meet together as a habit – not just coming to church, but meeting together also
- Encourage one another constantly

What gives us confidence to do these things?

- The risen Son of God is reigning.
- His sacrifice for our sin was 100% sufficient.
- Jesus is interceding on our behalf.
- The Holy Spirit is working in us to make us Holy.
- He will be with us until the end.

The alternative is not good.

26 For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. 29 How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

This passage clearly shows we are not talking about easy grace.

- We must not just deliberately sin. As the Lord reveals himself to us, and shows us our sin we cannot trample on the grace of God.
- If you are a child of God, if you have surrendered your life to Jesus, you cannot

As you walk with God, Jesus promised there WILL be hard times.

John 16:33 I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”

Do not expect things to be easy or without trouble as you follow Christ. Prepare your minds to do hard things and trust that it will eventually be worth it.

32 But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, 33 sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. 34 For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of

your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.

Does anyone else do a double-take when they read that. “You joyfully accepted the plundering of your property”... What was that? But why?

“Since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.” Possessions that last forever!

35 Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

What is Jesus bringing with him when he returns?

- He will give us resurrected bodies which will never be corrupted (1 Cor 15)
- Our sinful flesh will be gone forever (1 John 3:1-3)
- A new heaven and new earth restored to perfection (Rev 21)
- Rewards for those who have served well (1Cor 3:14)
- Never-ending joy in the presence of God (Ps 16:11)

Ps 16:11 You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever.

So we must walk with confidence, hold onto Christ, run to him boldly in our times of need. We must persevere to keep moving towards God and each other, especially as the days grow darker and we know that Jesus return is coming soon.

37 For,

*“Yet a little while,
and the coming one will come and will not delay;
38 but my righteous one shall live by faith,
and if he shrinks back,
my soul has no pleasure in him.”*

39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

Don’t ever give up. Don’t shrink back. Even when the hardest trials come. Jesus has conquered sin and death and as we work with Jesus to help conquer his enemies (by preaching the gospel to ourselves and others) we can face hardship with CONFIDENCE.

- Confident in the truth of Jesus.

- Confident in his sacrifice for us.
- Confident that he LIVES to continually intercede for us.
- Confident in the Holy Spirit's continued work in us.
- Confident in his future return and complete and total victory.

What a savior.