Daily Devotion #189

**Confidence in God**

**1 John 3:21-22 (NASB)** *“Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God.”*

Many people struggle with a lack of self-confidence - the condition of the heart and mind where the person has self-assurance of who they are and of their abilities. Then there are those who have an over abundance of confidence in themselves and their abilities. I was never that person but more like the first. In fact, when I was in school, I played basketball on both our JV and Varsity teams. I had a great time being on the team and enjoyed very much the thrill of the game. But one thing I remember most from those years was the coaches yelling at me to have more confidence, to be more aggressive. I can even remember one of my coaches kicking a chair across the court because he was so frustrated at me - again for my lack of confidence. I was the guy who went for a rebound and let the guy on the other team have it because I thought that would be the nicer thing to do, and because I didn’t know what to do with the ball if I did get it.

That lack of confidence followed me for many years. In fact, when I felt the call to pastoral ministry, I remember one occasion when I asked a pastor friend of mine these questions:

 “How do I do this? How do I pastor a church?

I still remember him rubbing his chin as he thought. Then he said, “Just love em.”. “Just love the people like you would want to be loved.”. I remember thinking that I could do that because I know how I want a pastor to love me. I also a conversation with my pastor. He and I sat in the middle of a basketball court, and I will never forget the statement he made. He said, “Bruce, you must have no confidence in yourself, but you must have total confidence in God.”.

As I have processed that statement over the years, I have realized that he was right. Confidence is a great quality if understood properly and used in a godly way. That’s what John was saying in our verse for today. Too often, our sinfulness condemns us so that we have very little confidence in ourselves, even to the point where we hide from the world and the responsibilities we are to carry. Often our lack of confidence in ourselves condemns us and makes us feel valueless and unimportant. So we sit and let the world go by, thinking only about what little value we have. As a result, we never see the power of God in our lives.

So what God is saying? He’s saying that our confidence should have nothing to do with us. Our confidence should be about who God is and what He is capable of through us. When we have confidence in Him, we are able to do whatever He asks of us. That could be to perform some task that we would not do normally or say something that we would not ordinarily say. It could be to fulfill some calling that He has planned for our lives. When our confidence is in Him and His abilities, we are able to face the tasks or whatever is in front of us.

Beloved, have you ever faced life with little to no confidence? Could it be that your focus is on yourself and being the center of your world. You can have great confidence in God and what He can do through you – which shifts your focus to God being the center of your world. This is especially important to teach to children. They need to know that God is to be the center of their lives and not they themselves. This teaching will instill great God-confidence in them as they navigate through their lives.

Look at your life. If you see failures and disappointments that have caused you to have a lack of confidence, surrender all that to God. Just give it to Him, and don’t take it back. Then spend your days living obediently to His Word; put your hope and trust in Him, and do what is in front of you to the best of your ability. Then your God-confidence will grow because you are trusting in the power of God working in you. This way God will get all the glory, and you will see Him do great and might things in you and through you.