

COVENANT COMMISSION

“³Yes, no one who waits for you shall be shamed. They shall be shamed who deal treacherously without cause...¹⁵My eyes are ever on Yahweh, for he will pluck my feet out of the net...¹⁹Consider my enemies, for they are many. They hate me with cruel hatred. ²⁰Oh keep my soul, and deliver me. Let me not be disappointed, for I take refuge in you.” (Psalm 25:3, 15, 19-20, WEB)

“The wicked flee when no one pursues; but the righteous are as bold as a lion.” (Proverbs 28:1, WEB)

For me, *covenant confidence* is one of the main covenant themes that emerges from David in Psalm 25. I can hear his confidence in his God and in the covenant. This is what the writer of Proverbs 28 was referring to also. God calls us as we are, but doesn't leave us that way. Gideon is an example of this during the time of the old covenant (Judges 6). In the new covenant God enables us to rise above the life of cowardice and shame and to walk boldly in His righteousness. This is spiritual boldness. It is Christ-confidence.

ADVANCING CONFIDENTLY

“³⁰Paul stayed two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who were coming to him, ³¹ preaching God's Kingdom, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, without hindrance.” (Acts 28:30-31, WEB)

Paul was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ and proclaimed it

boldly, even though it was looked upon as foolishness to most around him in his day (Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25). He proclaimed the gospel with boldness from the beginning of his ministry until the end (1 Thessalonians 2:2). He asked the churches to pray that he may continue to proclaim the truth boldly (Ephesians 6:19). He boldly commanded others to do the right thing (2 Corinthians 10:1-2, Philemon 1:8). He refused to believe that he would finish his course ashamed in the end about his life. Therefore, he lived it with expectation for the future and boldness during many life and death situations (Philippians 1:20). The very last verse of the Book of Acts is a testimony of how Paul ministered to the end with boldness (Acts 28:31). He encouraged those he led to use their spiritual gifts confidently to minister to others. He told them to walk in love, power, and self-control and not dominated by fear and shame (2 Timothy 1:7-8).

Without confidence in God and His covenant we will not last long in the battlefield of life. Fear and unbelief will overtake us and cause us to flee from the enemy instead of moving forward. Sin-consciousness will strip us of displaying the spiritual boldness God wants us to exhibit. This is not self-confidence. It is Christ-confidence. We are righteous in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21). We bow our heads in forgiveness and raise them in righteousness.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

The servant of Elisha was afraid of the enemy force arrayed against them. Elisha prayed that his servant's eyes may be opened to see what God had provided for His covenant people in the day of battle. When he saw the truth his cowardly behavior changed (2

Kings 6:16-17).

Our knowledge of God and His covenant promises will produce confidence in us also. This is Christ-confidence, not self-confidence. Remember, the new self of the believer is identified and united with Christ (Galatians 2:20). We are righteous in Him. We walk in sin and shame without His righteousness (Genesis 3:10). But, the believer is not without His righteousness. Believers are clothed with robes of righteousness (Job 29:14, Psalm 132:9, Isaiah 61:10, Matthew 5:6, Romans 10:10, Revelation 7:9, 19:7-8).

DAVID WALKED IN COVENANT CONFIDENCE

When David came to the Valley of Elah he was shocked at the timidly and cowardly response of the men of Israel to Goliath's challenge (1 Samuel 17:24). But, David knew God and knew the promises of the old covenant. His faith was strong. His confidence was high that day. The way he talked revealed his confidence. He spoke positively about the situation. He didn't repeat fear and unbelief as did the men of Israel. He spoke with enough confidence that news of what he was saying got to the king. You might even get the impression he was bragging (1 Samuel 17:26). He spoke with that much confidence.

“Let the redeemed of the LORD speak out, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy.” (Psalm 107:2, MEV)

When the king called for him he spoke the same way before him (1 Samuel 17:32-37). He made a clear reference to the covenant when he referred to the giant as, **“this uncircumcised Philistine”**

(1 Samuel 17:36). Circumcision was a direct sign of the covenant between the people of Israel and the LORD (Genesis 17:14). David displayed covenant confidence before Saul. He knew the giant was not in the covenant and therefore was an enemy of Israel. Israel's enemy was God's enemy because of the covenant. He shared what he believed with the king.

A person's level of confidence in the covenant will be directly revealed in the way he speaks (Luke 6:45). The ones with confidence in the covenant speak with boldness (Hebrews 13:5-6). They repeat the promises of the covenant (Romans 8:31). They say what the covenant promises (Psalm 91:2-13). They know how God will answer (Psalm 91:14-16).

David kept speaking confidently even when the giant began to make fun of him and threaten him. He told the giant in no uncertain terms what he was going to do to him. He was so confident that as Goliath headed toward him he charged toward the giant. The Bible says that David ran quickly toward the battle-line to meet him (1 Samuel 17:48). What a display of covenant-confidence!

“Therefore don't throw away your boldness, which has a great reward.” (Hebrews 10:35, WEB)

“Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.” (Hebrews 10:35, NASB)

Spiritual boldness is confidence in God and His Word. It is covenant confidence. God does not want us to be cowards. He wants us to walk in covenant confidence boldly trusting in His love and His promises. He rewards those who trust Him (Hebrews 11:6). He

wants us to live with assurance, to come before Him with confidence in His grace and mercy, to pray boldly, to declare boldly, and to stand boldly for what is right (Hebrews 4:16, 13:5-6, Luke 11:8, 18:5).

PRAYING FOR BOLDNESS

“When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were gathered together. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:31, WEB)

The early Christians spoke the message about the new covenant in Christ’s blood with boldness. They were persecuted for this. Instead of giving up, they asked God to help them to continue to speak His Word with boldness (Acts 4:29). From the text, it certainly appears that God delights in answering this kind of prayer. I believe He will answer us too when we ask Him for boldness to do His will.

Most of us do not become Christians and automatically become confident in God and live boldly. Generally we develop into this through prayer, the ministry of the Word and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Opportunities for increasing in spiritual boldness have a way of presenting themselves.

Our world is in desperate need for the stability and security that confident believers display. Those who know God and are confident in the covenant must exhibit true spiritual boldness in this generation. The liberal crowd in America is very bold, but is empowered and motivated by hostility and meanness. This is human boldness, not spiritual boldness. It is over-confidence and

arrogance. Or, perhaps I should say it this way, it is over-self-confidence and foolish human arrogance. The bottom line is, they want control. They arrogantly push a humanistic agenda. Believers are spiritually bold, not arrogant. Believers are bold in Christ and are therefore motivated by meekness.

At a recent meeting with the Evangelical Association of Reformed and Congregational Christian Churches in North Carolina, I heard the Benham brothers say, “Boldness without brokenness makes a bully.” We are being bullied by a bold crowd that is hostile to Christ and His followers. The brothers lost their programming for HGTV due to this kind of humanistic liberal bullying. Yet, they needed boldness to not compromise their values. God gave it to them and they speak out confidently all over the nation now about this. Our Father is also our covenant God and He gives us the boldness and the confidence we need to do everything He has called us to do. It will work at every level in our walk through this life.

“¹²In whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him. ¹³Therefore I ask that you may not lose heart at my troubles for you, which are your glory.” (Ephesians 3:12-13, WEB)

I have needed to ask Him for boldness on many occasions. Many times fear and anxiety have tried to grip me and I resisted it. Many times while I was in the Army I needed the boldness He gives to His covenant people. Even as a minister, I have needed to claim this and walk in it. Several times I have been responsible to pray, sing or preach at a funeral or some other important gathering and felt an overwhelming sense of fear and anxiety come upon me. I have learned to quote the promises of scripture in the face of this. Many

times it doesn't leave until I deliberately stand up and begin speaking in the service or at the event. I start in weakness and end in strength. The power of grace comes upon me and gives me the confidence I need to do the job. I don't wait until I feel confident before beginning. I have started many times feeling very nervous and weak. But, I refuse to give in to this. And, every time I have pushed on through this God's power has come upon me and helped me to preach, teach, speak, pray, or sing with confidence. This is an example of walking in covenant confidence today. Ask Him to help you. Believe in the covenant and the God of the covenant. Don't wait to feel the confidence you need before you begin what He has called you to do. Run to the battle! It may be tough at times, but He will always be there to help you.

“¹⁸Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I commanded you. Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” (Matthew 28:18-20, WEB)

What can give us more confidence than knowing we are commissioned by Jesus Christ Himself to take the words of the new covenant to the entire world? He, having all authority, tells us to take His gospel into the whole earth. We are commissioned to walk boldly in His righteousness. We go into the whole world trusting confidently in Him and believing the words of the new covenant.