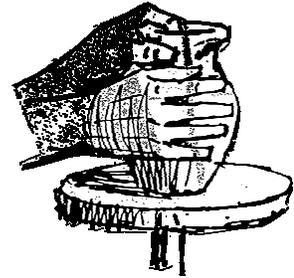


His Workmanship Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*



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Isaiah 64:8

Confidence in Christ: Discern Conviction's Voice from Condemnation's Voice, by Kelly Sanders

"By awesome deeds in righteousness You will answer us, O God of our salvation, You who are the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of the far-off seas," Psalm 65:5.

Shame and condemnation are confidence killers, yet we allow them to rob us of the joy and peace that belong to us in Christ. Like a thief in the night, this tag team steals away our confidence on a daily basis with insidious little seeds of wrong thinking that, if nurtured, can produce the fruits of weakened faith, half-hearted joy, and fleeting moments of peace rather than the FULL MEASURE of what Christ died for us to have.

As believers, it is very important—even critical—that we learn the difference between the voice of conviction and the voice of condemnation. When the Holy Spirit convicts a child of God of sin, it is from love, and it leads to a place of repentance and restoration. When Satan (called the accuser of the brethren) attempts to condemn a child of God on the basis of sin, it is from hate, and it leads to a place of hiding that is covered with shame.

When a believer listens to the voice of the Holy Spirit, the door to his heart is wide open, and he will go to God to

confess his sin, 1 Jn 1:9, and God can and will lovingly come in to wash that heart and conscience clean. But when the accuser is given place to speak, the heart is closed, its door shut tight with a sign hanging outside that says, "Do Not Enter—Unworthy," and the sinner will hide from God, cf. Gen 3:8.

OUR VALUE. Confidence is very much connected to value, and when we allow ourselves to think thoughts about being unworthy, unimportant, and insignificant, our confidence begins to deflate like a balloon losing air. Hasn't that ever happened to you? It happens to all of us quite often. That inner critic begins to speak to us about how what we're doing doesn't really matter, how we're not measuring up to some self-imposed standard, how we're not enough in some area or another (not enough faith, not enough smarts, not enough compassion, not enough of a man, not enough of a mother, not enough patience, not enough _____, just fill in the blank).

So how do we combat those nagging and unhealthy thoughts? What determines value? Value is determined by the price that someone is willing to pay for something...or someone. Jesus paid the highest price imaginable for

me and you! He doesn't merely believe we are worth it—His actions demonstrate that belief! We are worthy. We are significant. We are important. We are very, very valuable to God.

OUR IDENTITY. Confidence is very much connected to identity. Knowing who we are is as vital to the human spirit as air is to the lungs. Without a firm grip on our identity, we suffocate in a sea of question marks, an exposed stump occupying the space where our confidence was supposed to be flourishing. So how do we discover who we are? If we have placed our trust in Christ and are born of water and of His spirit, Jn 3:5, the word of God can help us answer that question. According to Rm 5, our identity has everything to do with our position/location. We are IN CHRIST. According to 1 Jn 4:17, "as He is, so are we in this world." In other words, we are not righteous, or holy, or accepted, or loved on the basis of our behavior—we are righteous, holy, accepted, wise, loved, blessed, strong, an heir to God's riches, and the very child of God because of Christ's behavior, because we trust Christ and we are IN Christ:

continued on p. 2

“[I am] confident of this very thing, that He Who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ,” —Philippians 1:6

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new, 2 Cor 5:17; see also Gal 3:26-28; Rm 3:24; 6:11, 23; 8:1-2; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 2:14; Eph 1:3-4, 6-7, 10-13; 2:13; 3:6, 11; 4:32; Phil 1:1; 2-5; 3:3, 9; Col 1:2, 28; 1 Thes 4:16; 5:18; 1 Tim 1:4; 2 Tim 1:1, 9, 13; 2:1, 10; 3:15; 1 Pet 5:14. Doesn't that give us confidence? Isn't our confidence growing with every affirmation of who we are in Christ? The best part is that even when we make mistakes, it does not affect who we are! Our identity is not found in our own righteousness, or in some label placed on us, or in our perfect performance. Who we are is defined not by what we might have done, but by what Christ has already done!

OUR PURPOSE. Confidence is very much connected to a sense of purpose. Where we find a person who doesn't have any sense of purpose for living his life, we will also find a person with very little confidence. The good news for every person is that God always creates with purpose in mind: “For we are God's [own] handiwork (His workmanship), created in Christ Jesus [born anew], that we may do those good works which God planned for us, that we should walk in them,” Eph 2:10. God created us in His own image, Gen 1:26-27; 9:6. Then He created us anew: we are new creations in Christ—remember 2 Cor 5:17! He created us as His masterpiece, His work of art. He planned for us to do good works and to walk in them. He prepared our paths. He made ready a good life full of good works—just for us! He created us “to be conformed to the image of His Son,” Rm 8:29. We are no mistake. We are not a result of chance. We were not created without purpose! The next time that voice in

our head says that we don't matter, that we are not important, that nobody would notice whether we live or die, go to God's Word! God made us new creatures, created to give God glory,

Verses on confidence:

Ps 27:1, 3: “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ...Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident.”

Pr 3:26: “For the LORD will be your confidence, and will keep your foot from being caught.”

Pr 14:26: “In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge.”

Isa 30:15: “For thus says the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel: ‘In returning and rest you shall be saved; In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.’”

Heb 3:6, 14: “...hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end....For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end.”

Heb 10:35: “Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.”

1 Jn 2:28: “And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”

cf. Ps 102:18, Is 43:7. We are “the new man who was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness,” Eph 4:24, “the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him Who created him,” Col 3:10. Say what God says: “there is a plan for you, sweet child!” Say it to yourself, say it to your brothers in Christ, say it over and over. The more we look into Who Jesus is, the more we will begin to see

who we are, and why we are here.

We Were not Made for Shame and Condemnation.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...” Rm 8:1. God wants us to be confident believers. Paul said that he was confident in the believers: “I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another,” Rm 15:14; “Therefore I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything,” 2 Cor 7:16; cf. 2 Cor 8:22, 10:2; Gal 5:10. This was because he trusted in God to keep them; he was confident in God for everything, even his life: “He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, Who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident, ...We are confident, yes,” 2 Cor 5:5-6-8; cf. Phil 1:19-26. “In Christ we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him,” Eph 3:12. He had no confidence in his own righteousness, his flesh, Phil 3:3-10, but supreme confidence in the Lord. “And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you,” 2 Thes 3:4; “Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say,” Philem 21. His confidence and trust in God gave him boldness to share the gospel, Phil 1:14.

We must learn to listen to the *right* voice and to respond the *right* way. Repent when the Holy Spirit convicts us, and let the love of God lift us up, dust us off, and cheer us on. Resist when the accuser condemns, and remain confident in what we're worth (Christ's sacrifice), who we are (God's sons), and why we are here (our purpose to glorify God). Our faith, our joy, and our peace are growing already in this knowledge! May we be confident children, trusting our Father!



Psalm 133:1

Let your faith be seen in 2014
“I rejoice to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.” —Colossians 2:5

When gratitude is gut-wrenching,
by Erin Davis

Our lives rarely look as perfect as we want them to. Sometimes families fight. We hurt each other. Sometimes the people who are supposed to stick by us don't. Sometimes we face disappointment, fear, and heartache. Sometimes our plates are empty and so are our hearts. When life is hard, it feels impossible to look to God and say, "Thank You." Giving thanks comes easy when everything's coming up roses, but life is bound to serve up some thorns.

Next time you have thorns, try something radical: the harder life gets, the more we will give thanks. Yes, that seems counter-intuitive, but the ways God calls us to live rarely line up with what feels most comfortable to us.

Just ask Jonah. He was in the belly of a fish when He prayed these words:

"But I will sacrifice to you with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation belongs to the LORD!" Jonah 2:9. Difficult? Jonah's circumstances were dire. God had given him a mission he did not want to accept. When he rebelled, God first sent a nasty storm and then sent a nasty fish to swallow Jonah whole. *"You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, and the floods surrounded me; all Your billows and Your waves passed over me,"* v. 3. If God had called you to something hard, asked you to leave your home and your family, sent you into the eye of a terrifying storm, and then into the belly of a fish, would "thank you" be the words that would come out of your mouth? When you prayed, would you do so with a "voice

of thanksgiving"? Me neither. But Jonah did. And check out the result.

"And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land," Jonah 2:10. Jonah gave thanks. He even gave thanks before God saved him from the fish's belly. He gave thanks because God had changed his heart. Then God intervened. Did Jonah's "voice of thanksgiving" work like some kind of emergency brake, forcing God to change His circumstances? Nope. But giving thanks isn't exactly about changing circumstances. It's about changing hearts. Jonah willed himself to focus on what he could thank God for. In doing so, he was likely reminded of some bedrock truths, such as:

- God is faithful.
- God is good.
- God is generous.
- God is gracious and full of mercy.
- God has done great things for me.
- God has forgiven me.
- God is sovereign.
- God is in charge. I am not.

Thanking God reminds us of God's character and attributes, which only leads us to more thanksgiving.

So when life is hard, and storms are raging, or you find yourself in a pit you don't want to be in—give thanks. *"Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and You heard my voice... The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; the deep closed around me;...the earth with its bars closed behind me forever; yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God,"* 2:2, 5-6.

How about thanking God right now? Be specific. What hardship are you facing in your life right now? What can you be thankful for in the midst of that hardship?

 "To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven."
—Johannes A. Gaertner

Discipleship Here At Home

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Jordana Sangellino—strep throat
Giles Free—seizure last week; confined at home
Sarah Hadders—persisting fever, cold, cough
Ed Fink—prostate cancer; current treatment for brain tumors; blood count improved last week
Amy van der Cooi's mother, Sherry Graves—fell and broke hip in TN last week
Forrest Corray, Jordan's brother—addiction
Bill Dennis—recovering from fall in elevator
Kory Tope's uncle Kurt Schulz—successful angioplasty last Monday, 2 stents
David Hull, a friend of **Randy Reames**—stroke; leukemia relapse; pray open to gospel
Randy's mother, Una, in her 80s—cancerous colon tumor removed recently
Sandra Perry's sister, Sharon Rupinen—upper GI tests; surgery expected; **Sandra's daughter's boyfriend**—complications from foot amputation
Judy Sartin's aunt Vallie Ek—passed away last Sunday

Josh McDonald, a friend of **Kory Tope**, and daughter **Casey**—unwanted divorce
Mark Campbell—will be moving to own apt and needs furniture, kitchen items

Sarah McMurray—needs help pulling out dry-wall Saturday, May 3, 9 am; call her for info

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr; Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes—asthma
Bill Dennis—heart issues
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease
Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome
Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs help
Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak; **Virginia**, macular degeneration; high BP
Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes
Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain
Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; arthritis
Judy Sartin's grandson Tristen—autism
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness

Job concerns **Linda Szymanski**

Newborns **Christina Adams** is the proud grandmother of **Ezekiel. Rod Green** is the proud grandfather of baby **Donovan**.



Exposing current thoughts & trends

Americans Favor Natural Marriage, Polls Show, *by Jim Daly*

If you're looking for evidence of the country's supposed shift on marriage, don't bother with the South and other areas of the country. Like so many recent polls, the results are hardly a ringing endorsement of same-sex "marriage." If anything, they prove just how wrong the Left's assessment has been on the issue. While the media is busy declaring an end to the debate, the reality is that most voters are just as opposed to redefining marriage as they were 10 years ago. In places below the Mason-Dixon line, support for same-sex "marriage" barely cracks the 40% threshold.



**AMERICANS
VALUE
TRADITIONAL
MARRIAGE!**

Based on a New York Times poll, only 35% of Arkansas, 36% of Louisiana, 38% of Kentucky, and 44% of North Carolina voters favor the idea of homosexual "marriage." The Times did not specifically ask about support for gay marriage in the four Southern states that are housing competitive Senate elections this year, but it did ask whether it should be legal for gay couples to marry.

Southerners aren't the only ones with reservations. In battleground

Ohio, voters still overwhelmingly back the state's marriage amendment, which is under attack from both activist judges and local activists. A poll commissioned the Citizens for Community Values Action shows trends that are strikingly similar to 2004, when voters defined marriage on the ballot. Some 56% think "marriage should only be between a man and a woman" and 52% are certain they would vote that way again. Another 55% don't think it's necessary to have another vote on marriage this year. Those statistics should be especially meaningful to political pundits who see Ohio as a bellwether for the rest of the country. Combined with the Rasmussen results two weeks ago (showing a tie across the country), the marriage debate is heating up—not cooling down.

For politicians, the message couldn't be clearer. Americans, and particularly conservatives, care deeply about marriage and are looking for leaders who do, too. In an era when so many races are narrowly decided, supporting marriage could be the difference between winning and losing. When candidates don't endorse natural marriage, these polls show they're doing so at their own peril. What does the Bible say about marriage? See Mk 10:1-12; Gen 2:23-25; 1:26-28; Mt 19:3-12; Eph 5:22-33.



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DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

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Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning:

- **Adult Bible class, *Inside Out, Growing a Spirit of Service*, Lesson 3, "A Confident Spirit,"** Jeff Wilkes

- **Sermon, "What Does It Mean to be Sifted by Satan?"** Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon theme for this term:
HISTORY OF THE LORD'S KINGDOM

- **Prayer, songs, Lord's Supper, class studies:** "Great apostasy was foretold by the apostles. Can we still fall away? What does apostasy look like today? What leads to it, who leads it, and why? How can we unite souls in God's kingdom? Is there really only one true church? If so, how can it be identified?"
Larry Campbell