

Title: Kingdom Family Confidence

Scripture: Ephesians 3:12

Ephesians 3:2-12 NLT

"As I briefly wrote earlier, God himself revealed his mysterious plan to me. As you read what I have written, you will understand my insight into this plan regarding Christ. God did not reveal it to previous generations, but now by his Spirit he has revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets. And this is God's plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God's children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Christ Jesus. By God's grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News. Though I am the least deserving of all God's people, he graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ. I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning. God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord. **Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence.**"

- Confidence: To be absolutely convinced of something. To be sure.
- **Self Confidence:** "a feeling of self-assurance arising from one's appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities."
- I have a certain level of self confidence based on my (perceived or actual) ability to do certain things, and my level of confidence is proportionate to my ability (or, my belief in my ability) to do that thing.
- Partly DNA, partly life experiences have made me fairly confident.
- The longer I live the more confidence I gain in certain things.
- **But not everything in my life is like that...**
- *Story about singing...*
- **I actually, often, LACK confidence when it comes to my vocal ability.**
- The reason why is because for the first 16 years of my life, I was 100% tone def. I could not hear pitch. And when you can't hear pitch, you can't sing on pitch.
- I was born and programmed with a lot of confidence. But me being tone def and everyone cringing at my voice my whole life was the perfect recipe strip me of all **confidence**, because my confidence as a singer was based on the assurance of my ability to sing well, and for most of my life, I didn't.

- **Path #1: Confidence**
- **Path #2: Insecurity and Fear**
 - I am either persuaded that I will succeed, or I am persuaded that I will fail.
 - I am either confident, or I am timid and uncertain.
- **Because my confidence is contingent on my ability to perform in the way that I need to.**
- Contrast that with my 6 year old, Kingston.
- Kingston has self-confidence about certain things. But the MAJORITY of Kingston's confidence is not "self confidence" at all. The majority of Kingston's confidence is based NOT on HIS own ability, but on MY ability to perform in the way that He thinks I should, because Kingston doesn't get manage his own life. He's 6. I'm in charge.
- *Story: Kingston Snacks*
- His confidence is directly tied to and contingent on how sure he is about me responding in the way that he hopes I will, and how sure he is about the results of his situation turning out the way he wants it to.
- At this point in his life, Kingston has very little confidence that He will get a popsicle instead of chicken because out of the 700 times he has asked I have ever said yes.
- But he is CONVINCED that I will grill him a drumstick anytime that he wants because my track record proves it!
- **His confidence is based on my ability to perform well on His behalf.**
- **This is what God has done in Christ.**
- **Our confidence that we will be given access to God is based on someone else's ability to perform well on our behalf.**
- **Ephesians 3:12 "Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence."**
- The assurance that we have confidence when coming into God's presence, hinges on Jesus.
- I lack confidence, at times, in my singing ability because my assurance is based on my ability, but access to my Father is not contingent on my ability. It is contingent on Jesus, and Jesus has perfect access to the Father, and when we put our faith in Him and are born again we take on all that is of Him, and we actually get the SAME KIND of access that Jesus has.
- **"Now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family." (Ephesians 2:19)**
- **You are not a stranger in the house of God, so don't act like it. God says, "You belong here".**
- You don't come by faith in you. You come by faith in Jesus, and because of Jesus.

- **Ephesians 3:12a** “Because of **Christ** and our faith in **him**.”
- *story of first time I had an “all access” pass at a huge show*
- **In the Kingdom of God, JESUS is our all access pass to the Father’s backstage, on stage, green room, catering, and everything in between.**
- I have asked God for a lot of things in my life. I’ve asked for trials to stop, for sickness to go away, and for difficult people and difficult situations to change
- God in all of His wisdom and goodness has often said “no” to me.
- **So just like my EXPERIENCE with my voice has caused me to lack some confidence about my singing ability, so my experience with God not removing hard things from my life has caused me to lack some confidence that He will answer some of my prayers.**
- **But do you know what prayer request that God has never said “no” to.**
- And of course He’s never said no. Me being in his presence was always His plan from the beginning. This is what Adam and Eve had that was destroyed when they sinned.
- And this is why God sent Jesus. God didn’t send His son to redeem us back to religion or to a certain way of living.
- God may not always remove the trials from our lives, or remove of us from the trials, but you know what???
- From the beginning, **it was never a promise of deliverance. It was always a promise of presence.**
- God never promised that He would always give us the easy stuff, and always keep us from the hard stuff. **What He promised was that He would never leave us nor forsake us.**
- He didn’t say that He would remove the trials from our us, He said that He would be with us in the MIDST of them.
- When Joshua was faced with the biggest trial and of his life God didn’t deliver Him from it. What did He say to Joshua?
- **Joshua 1:9 NLT** “This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the **LORD your God is with you wherever you go.**”
- **It was a promise of presence. Not a promise of deliverance.**
- And so when it comes to me asking God to bring relief from the trial, I am not super **confident** He’ll do it.
- I have knocked on God’s door plenty of times asking for *you name it*, and I have left, many times, empty handed, but every time I’ve knocked He has ALWAYS invited me inside.
- If you’re a Christian — if you’re a Kingdom Kid — then you have access to the House of God, and what KIND of access do you have? Confident access.
- **Ephesians 3:12b** “...we can now come boldly and **confidently** into God’s presence.”

The other way that Paul describes this access that we now have is “boldness”.

Ephesians 3:12 “Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come **boldly** and confidently into God’s presence.”

- **Boldness.**

Boldness (greek: “parrésia”) = freedom and openness of speech.

- Same word that is used in **Acts 4** when it says that “**they spoke the word of God with boldness (parrésia)**”.
- The other way this Greek word is translated in the NT is “plainly”.
- Like in **John 11** when it says that **Jesus spoke to them “plainly” (with parrésia), “Lazarus is dead”**. In other words, He’s was saying it like it was. He wasn’t mincing words.
- **In both cases the word refers to the attitude or mindset with which you speak.**

If “confidence” refers to the attitude with which you enter the King’s presence, then “boldness” refers to the attitude with which you speak to Him once in His presence.

- And here’s why this matters: the majority of our relationship with God actually revolves language.
- **Words are important to God and a fundamental part of our relationship with Him.**
- So when the Bible tells us that we can now come confidently into God’s presence **speaking openly and freely (with boldness, parrésia)**, this should make our ears perk up, because relationship with God has always hinged on language... **but never like this.**
- **Relationship with God has always needed words and has always involved words, and God’s people have always interacted with Him with words. But never with boldness in their words.**
- Interaction with God was kind of terrifying before Jesus because God is holy and in our sin, we are not. And God is an all consuming fire, so WHO KNEW if God would just consume us if we walked into His presence full of sin.
- And yet, God always desired to be with us and be intimate with us, and so He made a way to remove the barrier of sin when and bring us back to himself.
- And Paul says in our passage today that now **“Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly...” (Ephesians 3:12)**
- **In the OT, interaction with God was like this (head down). But then Jesus comes and does this (lifts head).**
- We even see in this the way that worship is described in the OT and NT.
- **OT = “Shachah” = to bow down and prostrate one’s self before a king or deity.**
- **NT = “Proskeneo” = to turn toward and kiss.**
- Both meanings of both words contain a posture and an action.
- Shachah’s posture: To Bow down prostrate

- Proskeneo's posture: To Turn toward
- Shachah's actions: To Give homage
- Proskeneo's action: To Kiss.
- The difference between worshiping God in the OT and NT is that when we were still in our sins, we worshipped God from the ground with our faces to the earth, unworthy to be in His presence — full of shame, full of sin (shachah - to bow down in reverent worship)
- But when Jesus came, He stooped down to us, and became just like us, and took on our sin and shame, and He nailed it to the cross, and He was buried in a tomb.
- But when He rose up the dead, He rose UP from the ground, and said to us, "Hey, you come with me. You don't belong down there any more."
- **John 8, the religious leaders bring a woman caught in adultery to Jesus.**
- **John 8:6-11** "They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust. When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" "No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."
- A woman full of shame. Full of sin. Full of embarrassment, publicly humiliated. Fearing for her very life.
- And they throw her in front of Jesus and Jesus gets on her level and drives her accusers away, and when He does this He takes her head from this (head down) to this (head high).
- **Psalms 3:3 ESV** "But you, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head."
- In **John 15:15** Jesus said, "I no longer call you servants, but friends."
- That's what boldness means here I believe. It means that we can talk to God as intimately as we talk to a trusted friend.
- You don't have to prove that you're worthy to be in His presence. If Jesus is your king, then you already belong God's presence.
- And How did Jesus interact with the Father? With boldness, speaking openly and freely.
- Garden of Gethsemane (**Matt. 26**)
- Sometimes when think about coming to God with boldness we think of us being full of faith or full of joy.
- The truth is we are not always full of joy or faith.
- Sometimes we're like the woman caught in adultery, full of shame and fear.

- But it is THERE in THAT STATE, that the Father says, “Come, sit with me at my table, and speak openly and freely with me. **God doesn’t need “polished”. What He wants is “honest”.**
- *She didn’t want to be a Christian.*
- Our Christian church culture has taught us that when we are suffering, the godly thing to do is to put on a veneer that says, “I’m fine. I’m trusting in God”, but if we were to be honest and speak openly, everything is probably not ok.
- I don’t believe that it honors God to not acknowledge what’s really happening in our hearts.
- I don’t believe that’s being a good steward of what God has given us. I don’t tell my broken foot to shut up, and I don’t believe I should tell my broken heart to shut up.
- God gave us those emotions for a reason. They’re part of the healing process.
- We think it’s dishonoring to God to feel things like doubt and anger and to wonder if He really is good when we’re suffering, but it was honestly with God that allowed my family and I to not just GET through the worst pain of our lives, but to get through and BE BETTER on the side of the worst pain of our lives.
- What I think is dishonoring to God is for us to avoid our hearts when they’re crying out to be cared for.
- The truth is that God already knows what happening in there, but you’ll never get healed if you don’t start acknowledging it.
- I believe the most honoring thing that we can do is to be honest with ourselves and with God. That’s boldness.
- **To avoid open and free dialogue with God is to miss out an an entire dimension of our relationship with Him.**
- *My daughter called...*
- **It really boils down to our view of God.**
- Is He is an out-of-touch sovereign deity disconnected from our emotions and thoughts?
- Or is He a present Father, intimately acquainted and concerned with every emotion and thought?
- **God can handle your emotions.**

We have access, but to what?

- **Through faith in Jesus, we are not given access to the King’s palace. We are given access to the King’s PRESENCE.**
- **We are given access into very presence of God.**
- **“Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God’s presence.” (Ephesians 3:12)**
 - And this is the best news I can give you.