TITLE: CONFIDENCE

TEXT: Jere. 17:7; Heb. 4:15-16; Ro. 8:16-17; Mt. 7:7-11

INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about confidence. Particularly our confidence as a Christian.

Is confidence a word that you would use to describe your relationship with the Lord and your position with God?

**Jeremiah 17:7 (NIV)**

**7“But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD,  whose confidence is in him.**

The Hebrew word for confidence is

***mib-tawkh'***

**properly a *refuge*, that is, (objectively) *security*, or (subjectively) *assurance:—*confidence, hope, trust. To be sure.**

James Dobson tells of a friend of his during their days in medical school. One day this man was walking across campus laden with books and briefcase. He passed by a fast food stand, and ordered something to eat and a milkshake to wash it down. He balanced it all on top of his briefcase and began looking for an empty table at which to sit. While looking, the milkshake got the better of him, and he bent down without looking in order to take a sip from the straw. The straw missed his mouth and ended up in his nose. Embarrassed, but not at a loss, he thought that if he straightened up the straw would stay in the shake. But when he lifted his head, the straw came out of the shake and remained in his nose, dripping the milkshake down the front of  his suit. In a moment, all his confidence evaporated. (Source unknown, Lou Nicholes - Missionary/Author).

John McKay, of the NFL, tells a story illustrating the supreme confidence of University of Alabama football coach Bear Bryant: “We were out shooting ducks, and finally, after about three hours, here comes one lonely duck. The Bear fires. And that duck is still flying today. But Bear watched the duck flap away, looked at me and said, ‘John, you are witnessing a genuine miracle. There flies a dead duck!’”

No that’s confidence!

Most all of us would probably say that we have this kind of confidence in the Lord. Confidence, security, assurance in His greatness and in His abilities. Confident in His power and strength, are Confident in Him.

But that is not really what I am talking about this morning.

I am talking about confidence of relationship. Our confidence in God within that relationship.

There are a lot of Christians who have confidence in God, confidence that Jesus is who claimed to be, God become flesh. Confident that He is all powerful and He can do all things. Confident that He has the ability to forgive sins and save and save completely.

But that is different from having a personal confidence in relationship.

Example: Think of courtship in a human relationship.

Through your observance of the person that you are courting, you may be confident that the person is a good person, that they have good qualities.

That they have a good and loving heart and are kind and compassionate, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that you will have the confidence to approach them to ask them to marry you.

To have the confidence to ask someone to marry you will not solely be based upon who they are, what qualities they possess, but it will be based upon the relationship that you have developed with that person who possess those qualities.. It will necessitate recognizing who you are in relationship with that other person.

So it is with the confidence that we will have in God. Our confidence will be dependent upon and in direct proportion to the relationship that we have with Him.

This morning I want to talk about the confidence that God wants us to have in Him. Not the confidence of courtship but the confidence of relationship. The confidence of fellowship.

**Hebrews 4:15 -16 (NIV) 14Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.****15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.**

**16Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.**

**16Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence!**

The Greek word for confidence used here is:

***par-rhay-see'-ah***

***par-rhay-see'-ah*** is a combination of two Greek words:

***pas*, meaing ; *all*, *any*, *every*, the *whole***

*And*

***hreh'-o* meaning a *pouring* forth; to *utter*, that is, *speak* or *say***

***par-rhay-see'-ah means***

***all* out *spokenness*, that is, *frankness*, *bluntness*,  by implication *assurance:*— confidence, freely, openly,**

The confidence that this verse of Scripture is talking about is the confidence of intimate relationship! The confidence that a husband and a wife has in approaching and confiding in one another.

There are things that I can say and share with confidence to my wife that I cannot say or share with anyone else with that same degree of confidence. And it is all because of the relationship that we have with one another that makes that degree of confidence possible.

This is the kind of confidence that the Apostle is talking about here. The confidence of intimate relationship.

**16Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence!**

Some translations say **16Let us then approach the throne of grace boldly!**

**EXAMPLE:**

A solider in the Union Army during the Civil War was a youngest son who had already lost his older brother and his father in the terrible fighting.

As the only male left in his family, he desired to go to Washington, DC, to see President Lincoln and ask for an exemption from military service.

His mother and sister needed him to help with work on the family farm.

After receiving leave from the military in order to plead his case, he made his way to the White House. The young man approached the doors and asked to see the President.

He was told by the guard on duty, you can’t see the President! Don’t you know there’s a war on?

The president’s a very busy man. Now go away, Son! Get back out there and fight the Rebels!

So the young man left, discouraged and downhearted. He stopped to sit on a park bench and a little boy came up to him. The young lad said: soldier, you look so unhappy. What’s wrong?

The soldier looked at this young boy and began to spill his heart about his situation and how his father and older brother had died in the war. He explained that he is the only male left in the family and that he was desperately needed back at the farm for spring planting.

The child listened to his entire story.

Then the little boy stood up and took the soldier by the hand and led him around to the back door of the White house. They went through the kitchen door, past the guards on duty, past all the generals and high-ranking government officials who were in the White House.

All of these officials stood at attention as this little boy took the private by the hand through the rooms of the White House. The young soldier didn’t understand what was happening.

Finally, they arrived at the presidential office itself, and the little boy didn’t even bother to knock; he just opened the door and walked in.

There was President Lincoln talking with his secretary of state, looking over a map of battle plans on his desk.

The president looked up and said: What can I do for you Todd?

And Todd said: Daddy, this soldier needs to talk with you.

The soldier then pleaded his case and received his exemption.

This soldier gained access to the father through the relationship that the father had with the son.

We too have access to the father through the son!

If we have by faith come to Christ and confessed Him as our Lord and Savior, entered into intimate relationship and fellowship with Him, then we have the Son to Intervene on our behalf with, Daddy; here is someone who needs to talk with you…

We can boldly and with confidence come before the throne of grace, not just because God is a good and gracious God or just because we know that He is all wise and all powerful, but what enables us to boldly come before his throne is the relationship that we have with Him through His Son!

**Romans 8:16 - 17 (NIV) 15For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, *“Abba,* Father.”**

**16The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.****17Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.**

This is another reason why we can approach the throne of grace with confidence.

When we receive Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior we receive His Spirit in our hearts.

Here the Holy Spirit is referred to as the Spirit of son-ship.

**But you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him**, (the Holy Spirit) **we cry, *“Abba,* Father.”**

Abba is an Aramaic word that best translates into English as Daddy!

**But you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, *Daddy God!***

You can determine a lot about the relationship a child has with their father by how they address him.

If a child, when speaking to their fathers, addresses him as father you get a sense of stiffness or coolness in the relationship that they have with one another.

But if they address their father as Dad or Daddy or Papa it gives us an entirely different perception doesn’t it?

If a child addresses their father as daddy, it doesn’t give us the perception of stiffness or coolness but the perception of warmth and closeness. It gives us the impression of an intimate relationship.

God doesn’t want us to look upon Him just as our father He wants us to look upon Him as our Dad!

Some may say well then when Jesus gave the example of how we should pray why did He use the word father instead of the word Abba, Daddy?

First, I think it may have had something to do with proper grammar but secondly and maybe more importantly something has changed since Jesus taught that prayer.

He has ascended to heaven and has sent back the Holy Spirit to indwell our hearts.

Now we have received the Spirit of sonship whereby we can cry out Abba Father! Daddy God!

Try implementing this standing we now have with God through the Holy Spirit when you pray the Lord’s prayer and see if it impacts your prayer life?

Daddy, who resides in heaven! Holy is your name!

Dad, may your kingdom come! May your will be done on earth just as it is in Heaven.

Daddy, give me today my daily bread—Dad, forgive me my sins as I forgive those who have sinned against me!

Daddy, lead me not into temptation but deliver me from evil.

Dad, yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever….

Takes on a whole other feel, doesn’t it?

Bolsters your confidence a little, doesn’t it?

Gives us confidence in and of relationship!

Father is a title of respect where daddy is evidence of relationship.

As an earthly father how would you rather your child addresses you? As father or as Daddy?

How would you prefer they look upon you? Simply as their father or as their Dad?

The earthly relationship that a son has with his dad is, I believe, the model of relationship that God wants to have with us. Intimate relationship!

How many of you when you were teenagers when you wanted to go out with the family car on Saturday night would go to your father and say: Oh great and mighty father, the one who gave-eth me life and brought-eth me into this world, who provide-eth me my food and clothing and give-eth me a place to sleep at night, who work-eth hard every day to provide for my needs, I beseech-eth thee for thy favor in giving me the keys to the car!

Is that how you would approach your father for the keys to the car? I don’t think so!

More than likely you will go to your father and say: Dad, can I have the car keys….You may even add the word please!

The other stuff may all be true enough, but it doesn’t need to be said because of the relationship that you have with your dad!

It is because of the relationship that you have with your father as a son that you can just go to your father and say Dad, May I have the car keys please!

Whether you get the keys to the car or not is not the point!

The point is the confidence that you had in approaching your Dad for them!

He knows what is best and maybe it is best that you don’t get the keys to the car tonight because it is snowing and you are inexperienced in driving in the snow, but because of your relationship you could boldly, confidently approach him to ask..

**16Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence!**

The confidence of relationship! The confidence of sonship!

Sonship is the pillar in our relationship with God.

Recognizing the position that we have with the Father in and through Christ Jesus the Son!

**15For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, *“Abba,* Father.”**

Famed English architect Sir Christopher Wren designed a large dome for a Church that was so unique he became the object of much criticism among his colleagues. During the construction of this dome, they created so much fuss that the authorities demanded Wren add two huge supporting pillars to keep the dome from collapsing. Wren bitterly objected, insisting in the strength of his structure and the wisdom of his new architectural innovation. Besides, it would ruin the beauty of the Church. But the opposition was well organized and powerful. The two pillars were added to the design over Wren’s objections.

Fifty years have passed since the construction of the controversial dome. It was now time to repaint the interior of the Church, as well as the dome.

When the painters had erected their scaffolding to begin the painting, they made the startling discovery that the two added pillars didn’t even touch the dome! They were short by two feet!

Sir Christopher Wren had such confidence in his work that he made sure the offending pillars were freestanding. The authorities, during his lifetime, came to make their inspection from the floor, saw the pillars, and assumed they reached the roof. They now felt secure, even though the pillars were freestanding and didn’t support anything!

Man has built many pillars to support his little world and to keep things from falling in on him. Often, they seem strong and are able to stand the stress of time. But often they are just as useless as architect Wren’s false columns.

Some have constructed pillars of religion, beautiful in structure and they seem strong enough. But religion is totally meaningless without the person of Jesus Christ. Pillars of religion are freestanding pillars without Christ and have no hold on eternity. They are all but useless! They offer no real confidence with God!

Jesus does! With Jesus as the pillar of our faith we become sons of God! We become Co-heirs of Jesus Christ!

Co-heir means that what Jesus has we have!

Jesus has intimate, personal relationship and fellowship with the Father!

Through Him we can also!

Through Him we have access to the name Abba--

Daddy when addressing God!

John Newton had received from the Lord some almost unbelievable answers to his petitions, and so he often engaged in "large asking." In support of this practice, he would frequently tell the story of a man who asked Alexander the Great to give him a huge sum of money in exchange for his daughter's hand in marriage. The ruler consented and told him to request of his treasurer whatever he wanted. So he went and asked for an enormous amount. The keeper to the funds was startled and said he couldn't give him that much without a direct order. Going to Alexander, the treasurer argued that even a small fraction of the money requested would more than serve the purpose. "No," replied Alexander, "let him have it all. I like that fellow. He does me honor. He treats me like a king and proves by what he asks that he believes me to be both rich and generous."

Newton concluded the story by saying, "In the same way, we should go to the throne of God's grace boldly and present petitions that express honorable views of the love, riches, and bounty of our King."

How we view God and the relationship that we have with Him will determine what we ask of Him.

When we ask great things of God, we honor Him! Because it shows that we believe that He has those things to give.

**Matthew 7:7-11 (NIV)**

**7“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.****8For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.**

**9“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?****10Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?**

**11If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!**

This isn’t a spiritual blank check for us, for God will never give us things that would be detrimental to our welfare unless it is to teach us an important truth.

If a son asks his father for bread a father will not give him a rock instead… But just because a son may ask for the keys to the car in a snowstorm doesn’t mean that a wise and loving father who is concerned for the ultimate wellbeing of his child is going to give them to him.

But the point is the father has them to give and the son realizes that fact and is confident enough in their relationship to ask whether they get them or not.

What we ask of God and how we ask it and with what confidence we will expect to receive it, is all dependent upon the relationship that we have with Him..

He wants us to boldly and with confidence come before His throne of grace as a son or a daughter would come before their Daddy….

Is this the relationship that you have with God this morning?

If not, is this the kind of relationship that you want to have with Him?

This is the kind of relationship that He wants to have with you. To come to Him crying Abba Father! Daddy God!

Grasp this and it will open a whole new dimension in your life and relationship with God.

Are you confident in your relationship with your heavenly Father this morning?

Confident enough to approach Him as a son or daughter would approach their earthly dad?

Do you have the confidence of relationship whereby you can cry out to Him in your time of need Abba Father, Daddy God?