

## Confidence – 1 John 2:28

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. *Wise Counsel*

1. A father noticed his young teenage daughter was attracted to guys who were rather wild and dangerous.
2. So he took her out for lunch one Saturday and asked her why she was drawn to such guys.
3. She said they seemed more interesting than the studious, nerdy types at school.
4. The father thought back to *his* days in high school
  - a. he'd been one of the more popular men on campus
  - b. and had been one of the dangerous types himself
  - c. he'd always despised the honor role students and thought they were missing out on life
  - d. but now, in his mid 40's, he realized that he'd had it all backwards!
  - e. he was working *for* one of the biggest nerds of his high school graduating class.
  - f. Bill Gates, founder and head of Microsoft!
5. So he said to his daughter – “I know the bad boys *seem* more fun. But trust me – marry a nerd.”

#### B. *Backwards*

1. Probably most of us know what it means to spend a lot of time and effort on something only to realize that it was pointless.
2. It seems inevitable that it will rain the day after you wash, wax, and detail your car.
3. Or the Santana winds will blow the day after you clean the pool.
4. And why is it that it seems the carpet is dirtier one week *after* shampooing it than it was *before* you cleaned it?
5. I wonder if these things don't happen as a way to *warn* us about the *possibility* that we can be investing our *lives* in something that ultimately doesn't matter –
6. That we need to be looking ahead and investing ourselves in something eternal.

### II. TEXT

#### A. *V. 28*

**And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.**

1. Bear with me as we do a little recap this morning of what John has to say in this letter.
2. His main theme is our *relationship with God & one another*.
  - a. our faith in Jesus Christ has brought us into a *new relationship* with God as our Heavenly Father.
  - b. in 1 John 3:1 he writes -

**Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!**

- c. our relationship to God is based on *His work*, not ours; on *His faithfulness*, not our own.
    - d. so our *relationship* with God does not change; we are His children and He is our Father.
    - e. but John is concerned in this letter with making sure our relationship with God is *close*, and not *distant* one – so he repeatedly calls us to remain in *intimate fellowship* with the Lord.
  3. It's crucial we grasp the difference between *relationship & fellowship*.
    - a. *relationship* speaks of *how* people *relate* to one another in terms of their *roles*.
    - b. *fellowship* refers to how close or *intimate* people are.
    - c. for example: all of us here have or had parents.
      - 1) the relationship is parent and child.

- 2) that relationship doesn't change.
- 3) what changes is the level of *fellowship* that takes place *between* parent and child.
- 4) if there's no conflict and they reach out to each other, then there's fellowship.
- 5) but if some problem has arisen or distance and circumstance divide them, then fellowship is hindered.
- 4. John wants his readers to enjoy the *benefits* of being the children of God, but he knows that these benefits only come through *intimate and consistent fellowship with God*.
- 5. That's what the word "abide" here in v. 28 means; it's the Greek word 'meno' and means 'to remain in fellowship'
- 6. 'Abide' was one of John's favorite words.
  - a. he used it 66 times in his writings -
  - b. 23 of them in 1 John and 10 times just in vs. 6-27 of chapter 2!
- 7. The idea of *abiding* was one of John's favorite themes probably because it figures so centrally into what Jesus shared with the disciples during the *Last Supper*.
- 8. He said- (John 15:4-7)

**<sup>4</sup>Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. <sup>5</sup>"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.**

- 9. John knew that what made a fruitful and abundant life *possible* was abiding in Christ.
- 10. So he says here in v. 28

**And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.**

### **B. When He Appears**

- 1. The Apostles clearly understood the Jesus said He was coming back and that when He came again, He would come *visibly*.
  - a. He wouldn't come *mystically* or *spiritually*
  - b. He would *appear*!
  - c. in fact, the word 'appear' means "manifested"; something that's made *visible to the physical eye*.
- 2. The word 'coming' is the Greek word *parousia*; which is a technical word in the NT for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in glory.
  - a. in secular Greek, the word *parousia* referred to the festivities that attended the arrival of a king who had come on an official state visit.
  - b. when He arrived, the red carpet was rolled out and a holiday was called so that every one could come and show reverence and honor to the King.
  - c. one of the first things the king would do was assemble those officials and royal servants who had lived in that area and bestow on them special rewards and favors for their faithful service.
- 3. This is precisely the picture John is painting here.
  - a. when Jesus comes again, He comes as King to establish the Kingdom of God on Earth as it is in Heaven.
  - b. and when He comes, as the scriptures say, one of the first things He will do is give out rewards for faithful service.
  - c. tell me, in the parables on faithfulness that Jesus told, what are the first words the returning master says to his faithful servants?
  - d. "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your master. You have been

- faithful with a little, I will make your ruler over much!”  
e. in Revelation 22:12 Jesus says –

**“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”**

- e. in 2 Cor. 5:10 we read about the *judgment seat of Christ*  
1) this is a judgment, not for *punishment*, but for *rewards*  
2) 1 Cor. 3 tells us how this judgment or analysis will take place

**<sup>12</sup>Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup>each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. <sup>14</sup>If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup>If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.**

- 1) when Christ comes, all we who are saved will be gathered before Him
  - 2) as stewards who have been given life and resources we will come before Him to give account for how we have lived and what we have done with our time, talent, and treasure.
  - 3) Christ’s eyes, like a flame of fire, will test our work, looking all the way through the externals to our hearts and the motivation *behind* what we’ve done.
  - 4) if our aim has been the glory of God, then it will come through the fire like gold, silver and precious jewels.
  - 5) if our motivation was personal glory or if we squandered our time, talent, and treasure on selfish things, then like wood, hay and stubble, it will be burnt up and we’ll stand empty handed.
  - 6) those who are empty handed will be saved – but they will realize with shame that they squandered the grace and blessing of God.
4. This is what John means when he writes –

**And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and NOT be ashamed before Him at His coming.**

5. The key to living a *fruitful life*, one that produces spiritual gold, silver, and precious gems, is to abide in Christ.
6. As Jesus said - (John 15:4-5)

**<sup>4</sup>Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. <sup>5</sup>“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.**

- a. we have an orange tree in our backyard.
  - b. every year it gets loaded with big, juicy oranges
  - c. every so often, the winds will blow real hard and one of the branches will break,
  - d. I’ve noticed an interesting thing; fruit never grows on a broken branch.
  - e. in fact, the leaves shrivel and the whole thing dies.
7. The key to spiritual fruitfulness is staying IN Christ;
- a. abiding in Him -
  - b. remaining in intimate fellowship *with* Him.

### **C. Confidence**

1. John says that when we abide in Christ, we have *confidence*, knowing that when He appears, we’ll be found in the right place, doing the right thing!

2. How tragic it would be for the Lord to come and find us not abiding in Him.
3. How embarrassing!
4. The time I experienced the greatest sense of shame was many years ago when I was badly backslidden.
  - a. it was about 1974 and I was living on my own in my first apartment.
  - b. it was a bad time of life and I was pretty heavily into pot.
  - c. one afternoon, a couple friends came over and we are just plain gone.
  - d. there were thick clouds of smoke filling the apartment when the doorbell rang
  - e. thinking it was another friend, I opened the door with a quick sweep
  - f. there to my utter horror stood – my mother!
  - g. the smoke billowed out the door, my eyes were red and my friends scrambled to remove the evidence as if there was any chance of fooling her!
  - h. she just turned around and walked away!
5. The look of hurt in her eyes, the disappointment, filled me with such a sense of shame I can't even describe it – but I think you all understand.
  - a. my mother was and is a godly woman – one of the most godly people I know.
  - b. I was an answer to her prayers for a son, and like Hannah, she had told God if He gave her a son, she would offer him back to the Lord for His service.
  - c. she had prayed for me throughout my teenage years while she watched me walk away
  - d. but she had never given up hope that God would change me.
  - e. I had been good at keeping my sin hidden from her – but that afternoon, it was all exposed!
  - f. later that afternoon, I realized something – the shame I felt was so keen, so strong, that the pleasure of getting high could never remove it again.
  - g. it wasn't too long after that that I recommitted my life to Christ.
6. That moment of discovery and shame brought me to my senses.
7. But what John writes about here is a moment of discovery that will come too late for those who are caught by it because they were not looking for it!
8. Think of it – when Christ comes again, there will be Christians, many of them, who will realize that though they have *relationship* with God, they are not in fellowship with Him.
  - a. they are His children - but only distant
  - b. and the things they have been investing in and living for are in the end, shameful!
9. John doesn't want us to be ashamed when the Lord comes; he wants us to be confident!
10. Friends, we can live confidently!
  - a. you and I can live today in such a way that if Jesus were to come tomorrow, we'd have every confidence that He'd say, "Well done My good & faithful servant!"
  - b. there was a song some years ago that said, "If you believe he's coming back tomorrow, then live like He is coming back today."
11. Confidence comes from *abiding in Christ* – from remaining in intimate fellowship with Him.
12. The Greek word translated as 'confidence' means 'bold-freedom'
  - a. here are some other passages which use it
  - b. Hebrews 4:16

**Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

c. Hebrews 10:19

**Therefore, brethren, [we have] boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,**

d. 1 John 3:21

**Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.**

e. 1 John 5:14

**Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.**

f. in 1 John 4:17, John amplifies what we find here in v. 28

**Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.**

13. Remember in school when finals came?
  - a. there was that class you struggled with and as you faced the final you were *anything* but confident!
  - b. in fact, the night before you laid in bed and couldn't go to sleep thinking about it!
  - c. but then there was the other classes that were a piece of cake for you and the final was no big deal.
  - d. you had complete confidence that you were going to ace it!
14. God wants us to live our lives with the awareness that we will face a final exam; the judgment seat of Christ.
  - a. but He doesn't want us to lay awake at night worrying about it
  - b. He wants us to live in confidence, free from anxiety and worry because we're abiding in Christ.
15. The more I learn about God, the more I'm amazed by how into *freedom* He is!
  - a. the Cross was all about setting us free from sin and death.
  - b. His love comes to set us free from fear.
  - c. His grace ensures that we can be free or worry.
  - d. confidence IS freedom and it comes by abiding in Christ.

### III. CONCLUSION

#### A. *Attractive*

1. I've noticed something about people who are genuinely confident; they're *attractive*.
  - a. not necessarily *physically*, but in their *character*.
  - b. a man or woman who's confident is a joy to be around because they're *free*, and freedom is incredibly attractive to the human soul.
  - c. that's why so many millions of people in other countries want to come to the US.
    - 1) they may find many things about American culture offensive,
    - 2) yet they want to come here because of the *freedom* we enjoy.
  - d. freedom is attractive, and confidence is just that – *bold freedom*.
2. There's a lot of uncertainty in the world today.
  - a. there's an old proverb that says the only thing that's certain is death and taxes.
  - b. while clever, it's not true – there's a lot more that's certain than that
  - c. what's even more certain than death and taxes is the love of God and the truth of the gospel.
  - d. death has been defeat – and one day taxes will end, but the Kingdom of God will abide forever.
3. You and I can live with confidence today – because God is good and changes not.
4. If we abide in Him, if we remain in intimate fellowship with Him, then we can be free of uncertainty, free of fear, free of shame, free from worry.
5. Life, real life is IN CHRIST – Abide in him!