

# The Perils of Self Confidence

by Brent Yim

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*The peril of self-confidence is that it can lead us away from God and towards a focus on our own abilities and strengths.*

**Duration:** 56:59

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5

**Topics:** "Faith And Trust", "Godly Humility"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the dangers of self-confidence, highlighting the need to trust in God's guidance and not lean on our own understanding. It explores how self-confidence can lead to prayerlessness, following personal reasoning over God's counsel, presumption, practical consequences, and personal discouragement. The message encourages surrendering to God's strength and wisdom, acknowledging that true victory comes from trusting in Him.

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## Transcript

Jesus, here I am before you, and I'm broken. I feel like there is not an answer to my problems. I know that you are so much stronger when I'm broken.

I know that Jesus, you're the answer to my problems. Jesus, you are the answer, you are the way. You will never let me fall, only you can help me stay.

You are the answer, you are the way. You will never let me fall, only you can help me stay. And I'm free.

It's good to be here with you this morning. I think, are you going to come up and share the update? I don't want to share the update. Do you want to come up and share an update? She's better at it than I am.

Can you hear me? No, you can hear me. My voice is loud enough. I'll just talk.

You sure? Yeah. She won't kiss me in front of people. I've gotten better.

No, I can talk really loud. No, no, no. Just kidding.

Okay, I'll be quick. We thought we'd update you guys. I'm sure many of you guys got the email for Brent.

Pastor Brent's husband. We got the MRI. Brent got an MRI on Friday morning.

Here, go with Grandma Tina. Go with Grandma. He got an MRI, and the doctor called us back, and they, in the doctor's perspective, believe that the tumor, the cancer, whatever's in there is growing.

It looks worse. There's enhancement. And we see the doctor tomorrow to just get, you know, see what else.

They're going to stop the chemotherapy that he's on now again. And we, I mean, there's really nothing else to share other than we're just continuously believing that God does the impossible because, you know, I mean, just being realistic, you know, it seems as though this is the impossible. But with God, all things are possible.

And, you know, I believe that faith isn't believing that God can. It's believing that God will. And that's what faith is.

And right now our faith is being tested. And, you know, I was just sharing with someone, and just someone came up to me, not someone from here, but they asked, you know, like, are you going to, like, stay a Christian, you know, like through this? And I'm like, no, really, God is drawing us near to him, you know. And I'm human.

We're human. We're sad. We're at times disappointed.

We question. You know, there's times when we're angry. But in all in all, you know, God is God.

God is still good. God knows what we need. God knows everything.

And in and of ourselves, we can't do it. And in and of ourselves, in this world, it seems hopeless. But with God, we are hoping.

And we continue to pray. And, you know, like I said, you know, it's hard talking about it, because everyone's like, how are you doing? And you're like, you know, it's hard. I mean, what do you say? This is a difficult situation.

We're sad, like I said. And we're at times disappointed. And we feel like gypped, you know.

That's a good word, gypped. You know, at times we do. We just feel totally like, Lord, really? You know, but God has brought us closer to him.

God has brought us closer to each other. God has given us a perspective that, you know, I'm thankful for. I really am.

I'm thankful for the perspective that God has given to our whole family, our mothers, our dads, our brothers, our sisters. You know, I know so many of you. And our relationship with the Lord is only drawing closer.

Like I said, it's not easy. But we only get closer to the Lord. And we're not angry at him.

We're just hoping and waiting for him to do a miraculous healing on Brent. And in the meantime, we continue to ask that you would pray for us. And just pray for direction for the, you know, the treatment.

Because there's so many different options. And we, you know, I'm doing research. I'm here.

I know this. I know that. But where does God want us? What does God want us to do? Where does God want us to be treated? What doctors does God want us to come in contact with? You know, what staff does he want us to come in contact with? And my son thinks, okay, he's like a typical pastor's kid.

He's like, I could walk on stage. But, you know, we just need prayer. We just need directions.

Our Dr. Green, you know, he's, we believe that we found favor in his eyes. And he really is, you know, in the medical world going to do all that he can, that he knows. And we're trusting and praying, you know, that the Lord would lead him and direct him to give us the right treatment.

So continue to pray for our Dr. Green and our neurosurgeon, our Dr. Green and our neurosurgeon, Dr. Steiner, which we meet with both of them tomorrow. And just continue to pray for our family. Pray that the enemy would, that the Lord would protect our minds.

Because I think a lot of the battle is in the mind. So, yeah, we love you guys and we're thankful for you guys. And that's it.

Cool. Yeah. This is a cool shirt, huh? I think you should, as Christians, get it.

This is my dad rocks. Show them your shirt. My dad rocks.

My dad rocks. Oh, how fun. Well, Joshua chapter 7. If you have your Bibles, you can turn there with me.

If you're taking notes this morning, the title of my sermon is The Peril of Self-Confidence. It's funny, last night we went to a children's concert type thing. I don't know if any of you are familiar with the Fresh Beat Band.

If you have young kids, you're probably familiar with them. It's like a Nick Jr. thing where they have a group of guys and girls who come together and they sing these real fun songs for kids. And they dance, and it's really colorful.

And Jaden, he loves it. And they do little songs. Are we okay? Sound wise? Okay, cool.

And, you know, I was thinking about my message while we were there. And one of the first songs that they played or they sang was a song about self-confidence. You can do anything you put your mind to.

I was listening to those words and thinking how our culture really promotes this idea of self-confidence. We need more confidence in self. And so we buy things and we do certain things to promote self-confidence.

And we even nurture this in our children. But if you look at that from a biblical perspective, what you find is we don't need more self-confidence. That's what gets us in trouble.

What we need is God-confidence. And so this morning we're going to look at the peril of self-confidence as we look at Joshua 7. And I believe there's a pertinent word for each one of us here in this text this morning. So let's pray and ask the Lord to bless our time together.

Father, thank you again for this morning, a day that we can gather together under your name, the name that's above every name. And we know that one day every knee is going to bow and every tongue is going to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. And we're just privileged that we have

an opportunity at this time to bow our knee to you and to yield ourselves to you and to ask you that you would take all of our lives.

Everything, Lord, that we have is first given by you. And Lord, we just want to express our love for you and acknowledge that you are the one who satisfies that longing in our soul. You're the one who meets every need.

You're the one who provides every good gift that we enjoy on a daily basis, Lord, the breath that we breathe and the life that we live. Lord, above and beyond even our needs to our wants. We're such a privileged people.

And to know that this is simply a temporary stop before we reach our final destination. When your word says that you've gone to prepare a place for us, that where you are, there we might be also. Jesus says, you declared to your disciples, for in my Father's house there are many mansions, and if it were not so, I would tell you.

You're a God who cannot lie. You're unchanging. You're the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Even when our emotions are fluctuating and our circumstances are changing, Lord, you remain the same. You're constant. We're so grateful that we can come to the word of God and we can soak in the promises of God.

And we know that every single promise that's found in the word of God is yes and amen to the glory of God the Father through us. Lord, you want to receive glory from our lives. We exist for that purpose and to that end.

And so I pray this morning as we look into Joshua chapter 7 once again that you would encourage our hearts, that you would speak into our lives. Lord, as I pray often that you would just challenge us, that you would change us. Thank you that your word is transformative.

Lord, it has the ability to take us from one place to another place and to reflect the very glory of God. The world might look at us as we saw last week as ambassadors to be sent into this world and declare the glory of God who called us out of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of his love. And so this morning we want to respond to the words that are spoken.

So give us ears to hear what the Spirit would have to speak. Lord, reveal to us the peril of self-confidence. We pray that you would nurture in us and foster in us a greater confidence in God.

And so we do offer this time into your hands and pray that you would do exceedingly abundantly above all we can expect or ask as your power is working in and through us. We bless you and pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, last week I began by sharing with you that I plan on spending a few weeks considering some of the vulnerabilities that the children of God face on the wake of a great triumph. Let me repeat a quote I shared with you at the beginning of our study last Sunday that I really believe captures this idea in a few words. It's been said that the mountaintops of triumph often pave the way for the valleys of defeat.

And this morning as we continue our study in Joshua chapter 7, we're going to discover why this statement has been proven to be true time and time again. And for the sake of context and to quickly

review what we covered last week, I'm going to begin reading in verse 1 of chapter 7 before we pick up in verse 2. But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things. For Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things.

So the anger of the Lord burned against the children of Israel. Now, one of the observations I wanted you to mentally catalog last week was the perception of Israel in comparison to the perception of God. No doubt at this time Israel was celebrating this colossal victory over the inhabitants of Jericho.

Just as the Lord had promised, the Lord said, I've given this city into your hands. And they followed the instructions of the Lord. And the Lord delivered that city into the hands of the nation of Israel.

They experienced a great triumph, a great victory. Just as the Lord had promised, God was faithful to deliver on His promise. And we spent a lot of time talking about how when God promises something, He promises them that He might fulfill that promise.

And so the nation of Israel, maybe things didn't transpire the way they anticipated they would unfold. Maybe the directions that God had given to them or the instructions that He had given to them weren't conventional in their approach. But when the Lord gave them these instructions and they followed His instructions, the Lord followed through on His promise.

And it's so comforting when we as children of God can look into the Word of God and remember that all the promises of God are yes and amen to the glory of God the Father through us. We can trust the Lord because He's trustworthy. But because of this, as they experienced this colossal victory, they were probably thinking, God is so pleased with us.

Nothing can stop us. Put yourself in their situation, having just experienced this great victory. And so now you're on your way to conquering more of the land.

Joshua is leading. The fame and the favor of God is upon Joshua as their leader at this time. And there's a lot of land to conquer.

But at this point, you can imagine their confidence is really stimulated. They're thinking, man, God's for us. Look at what He's done for us.

He's delivered this city into our hands. Nothing can stop us now. And so we spent some time talking about that last week.

However, as we saw in the text, from an eternal vantage point, the Scriptures reveal that the anger of the Lord was burning against the children of Israel. Remember, God had given Israel very specific instructions regarding the accursed spoil of Jericho. He said, don't touch these things.

Don't take any souvenirs from this place or there would be consequences. Yet one man, he chose to blatantly disobey God's instructions. Therefore, even though the children of Israel probably believed that God was pleased with them, in reality, His anger was aroused toward them.

Now, you might be asking yourself, what's so insightful about this idea or this concept? Well, what this reveals is we can't properly determine someone's stance before God based upon temporal circumstances. And I want to explain what I mean here. From a human perspective, we often conclude if our circumstances are favorable, then God's pleased with us.

How many of you have ever been in that position before? Things are going really well and you're thinking, man, God really loves me. You know, there's money in the bank account. Relationships are going well.

Things are copacetic. Everything seems like everything is on track. It's going the right way.

We think, oh, God, you're so pleased with me. And this confidence begins to build in our lives. But then on the flip side, we often conclude that if our circumstances are unfavorable, then God must be angry with us.

I don't know if you've ever been in that position before, but, you know, I know I have. Or there's times where things aren't really going my way. I'm not hearing the news that I expect to hear.

And all of a sudden, I'm thinking, oh, God, are you displeased with me? Are you angry with me? And so many people live their lives with this vacillating conviction. And those who live their lives according to the standard, they're really living on a spiritual roller coaster. When things are good, they're up.

When things are bad, they're down. And even their relationship with the Lord, it changes and varies based upon their circumstances. But as we see here in the text, that we can't conclude whether God's for us, approved of us, or not approved of us based upon external circumstances.

But the question that we really have to ask ourselves in context to this thought is, is this a biblically sound conviction? Or in other words, what does the Bible have to say about this subject? Well, we're already given an example here in Joshua chapter 7 that reveals that this common type of reasoning is faulty. The children of Israel, they thought they got it approved of them at this time. But in reality, his anger was aroused toward them.

They really had no idea. But with this in mind, let's shift directions and take a moment to consider the life of Job. Okay, Job, and many of you are familiar with the story.

He lost everything, right? His possessions, his family, his health. Anything that could have gone wrong with this man, went wrong with this man. And so I fully understand how from an objective perspective, you can look or observe Job's life and think God must be extremely displeased with this man.

But I want you to listen to what the Lord really thought of Job in the darkest season of his life. There is none like him on the earth. He's a blameless man.

He's an upright man. He's one who fears God. And he shuns evil.

And so Job is getting all of this news. Your family, your possessions, your servants, your life. It's crumbling in around you.

And it would have been easy for Job at this time to look at God and think, well, God, you're so displeased with me. But really from an eternal vantage point, the Lord's looking down upon this man's life. And he says, the reason you're experiencing this suffering is because I love you.

And it's hard for us to understand that. How could a loving or a just God allow his people to experience such hardship if he says he loves them? And so often we evaluate our lives and the lives of others based upon this idea. If things are good, then God loves them or God loves me.

Or if things are bad, then God doesn't love me. And the reason that I'm emphasizing this is because too many people live their lives according to this standard. But I want to warn you that embracing this pattern

of beliefs is extremely dangerous.

Jesus himself said, in this world you will have tribulations, but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world. Again, Jesus himself said, don't judge by outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment. The Lord wants his people to maintain a biblical and eternal perspective when it comes to examining our lives.

I want you to keep your finger here and turn with me to Psalm 73. Whenever I come to Psalm 73, I find comfort in this psalm because it really captures the common emotions of a man that arises when evaluating life from a temporary perspective. This is what Asaph has to say.

He says, truly God is good to Israel. To such as are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet they almost stumble.

My steps had nearly slipped for I was envious of the boastful. When I saw the prosperity of the wicked, for there was no pains in their death, but their strength is firm. They're not in trouble as other men, nor are they plagued like other men.

Therefore pride serves as their necklace. Violence covers them like a garment. Their eyes bulge with abundance.

They have more than their heart could wish. They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression. They speak loftily.

They set their mouth against the heavens and their tongue walks through the earth. Therefore his people return there and waters are full of cup and are drained by them. And they say, how does God know? And is their knowledge in the most high? Behold, these are the ungodly who are always at ease and they increase in riches.

Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I've been plagued and chastened every morning. I had said I will speak thus.

Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of your children when I thought how to understand this. It was too painful for me. Until I went into the sanctuary of God.

Then I understood their end. And so here the psalmist, this man of God, he's struggling with these emotions. He's looking at his life and he's thinking, why am I getting chastened all day long? Why am I experiencing hardships? And I look around me and there's people who are wicked.

And God, they're proud and they're boasting in these things. They don't even believe there's a God and yet their prosperity increases. They're healthy.

They seem like everything is fine in their lives. And he struggled with this. How can a just God or a good God allow these types of things happen to good people? And allow these good things to happen to bad people? But then Asaph transitions from having these struggles to saying, Until I went into the house of the Lord.

And what he's saying is, I did not understand these things until I maintained an eternal perspective. And so Asaph, this psalmist, and we've all experienced these emotions before. I know I've looked at people even through this trial.

Lord, why would you allow me to go through this and not them? And people have even mentioned that before. Well, you're the last person that should be getting cancer. You're a pastor and you're loving Jesus and you're loving your wife and you're loving your family.

And so many people, they look at your life and they think, Well, you don't deserve this. But the reality is, is we don't deserve anything. The Bible says that there is none good, no not one.

And the Lord wants his people, his children, to maintain an eternal perspective. God wants us to look at things and our lives and the lives of others through the lens of eternity. You know, Paul the Apostle was able to do this.

And the trials that he experienced, the hardships that he faced. Man, what was prophesied over his life before he began serving the Lord is, You are going to suffer a lot of things for my namesake, Paul. You know, think about it.

You're going into the ministry. What types of words do you want prophesied over your life? You're going to have a huge mega church. You're going to have CDs that you record.

There's going to be books that you're going to write. You're going to have a worldwide impact. That's a cool prophecy over my life before I enter into the ministry.

Not Paul. You're going to suffer, Paul. You're going to experience hardships, Paul.

You're going to know what it means to suffer on behalf of the gospel. And Paul was able to rejoice in this. And I haven't come to that point yet.

But I know from reading the scriptures, Paul was able to maintain this perspective because he understood that this life was only temporary. And then he was able to write to the church in Corinth, Though outwardly I waste away, inwardly I'm being renewed day by day. For my light and momentary afflictions, which are for a moment, they don't even compare to the exceeding weight of glory that I'll experience when I see God face to face.

It doesn't matter, Paul would say. And so we find in the scriptures that really the scriptures don't support this idea. If things are going well, then God loves me.

But if things are going bad, then God doesn't love me. And maybe some of you have walked in here today with that thought. Maybe everything in your life isn't flowing the way that you wish it would flow.

And you're thinking, well, am I not praying hard enough, God? Am I not reading my Bible hard enough? But the reality is, if you're a child of God, God loves you. And nothing's going to remove that love from your life. Paul, again in Romans chapter 8, was able to say, Neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor the present, nor things to come, will separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus my Lord.

He was so confident in God's love. And then he was able to write, All things are working together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose. Paul had an eternal perspective.

And this is the perspective that God wants us to maintain. He doesn't want us to be those spiritual roller coasters. That when things are good, oh God loves us, things are great.

But when things are bad, oh God doesn't love me. That isn't a biblical conviction. It shouldn't be a conviction in your hearts.

Nothing changes God's love for us. And though there might be times where the Lord does chastise us, as we looked at last week, the reason He chastises us is because He loves us. But really the key, as we have read over Psalm 73, and really the summation of what I'm trying to say here, is that communion with God results in clarity from God.

As we remain in communion with the Lord, as we remain in the Word of God, our convictions, our beliefs, the things that we embrace in terms of our pattern of lifestyle, they must be formed from the Word of God. The world thinks that, oh God is angry with me, that's why things are bad in my life. And when we live our lives like that as Christians, what are we communicating to the world? I mean, think about that.

If you're living that life where when things are good, you're praising the Lord, you're rejoicing, but when things are bad, you're not walking with God, you're cursing God, and maybe not with your words, but with your attitude and with your actions, what does that communicate to the world? It doesn't communicate biblical truth. And so when the world looks at our lives and they see that we're going through hardships and we're going through difficulty, and we don't waver in our worship or in our thanksgiving, man, that's powerful, that's a miracle. And that's what the Lord wants us to reflect as we live here in this life.

But remember that communion with God is always going to result in clarity from God. That's what happened here with Asaph, it wasn't until he entered into that place of communion with God that he received clarity from the Lord. Well, as we proceed this morning, we're going to discover some mistakes that Joshua made as a leader that contributed to Israel's defeat in their next military engagement.

And I like this. Because when I look at Joshua's life, I really admire Joshua. Joshua was a great leader.

The character traits that are reflected in his life are just beautiful. He reflects such humility and dependence upon the Lord, and God used him to such a great degree. His love for the people of Israel, his commitment to speak the instructions of God into their life.

There's so many things about Joshua that I really admire. But what we're going to find here today is that as a leader, Joshua made some mistakes. And you might be thinking, well, why are you glaring at his mistakes? Well, because as a leader, I understand this idea.

People look at you and they want to exalt you and put you on a pedestal. Because you preach the Bible or because you're in a certain position, people think that you're perfect at times. And I know they wouldn't say that, but just the mentality, and we've all done this before.

We've taken people that we admire and we place them on a pedestal. But here we're going to find in our text today that Joshua, he did make some mistakes. And even in positions of leadership, the Lord many times has to bring us to a place of humility that we can remain usable.

But he contributed to Israel's defeat in their next military engagement at Ai. So let's pick up reading in verse 2 together. It says, Now Joshua sent men from Jericho, as he did even before, to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them, saying, Go up and spy out the country.

So the men went up and spied out Ai. And they returned to Joshua and said to him, Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not weary all of the people

there, for the people of Ai are few.

So about three thousand men went up from there, from the people, but they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai struck down thirty-six men, for they chased them from before the gate, as was at Cherubim, and struck them down on the descent. And therefore the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

Now, prior to the defeat at Ai, you can almost audibly hear the self-confidence exuding from the text. Joshua and the children of Israel had just experienced another divine victory. And as they pressed forward to possess more of the land, God was going to remind Joshua and the leadership the peril of self-confidence.

Again, as they had experienced great victories, the Lord had delivered the inhabitants of Jericho into their land. Everything transpired just the way that God had spoken to them and promised them. They had passed from the east side of the Jordan River to the west side of the Jordan River.

And again, they probably thought, there's nothing that can stop us at this point. And you can read the text, and it's almost like this self-confidence, you can almost see it visually, this self-confidence that's arising in their hearts. Maybe their chests are puffed out a little bit more.

Their heads are held high. Nothing's going to stop us now. We're going to conquer this land.

But the Lord is going to remind Joshua, the leadership, and the nation of Israel the peril of self-confidence. I was reading over these notes and over my notes, and I was reminded of a quote. And I love this quote.

It's by an old preacher named Leonard Ravenhill. And this is what he says. We're in great danger when we allow our past accomplishments to become the grounds of our present confidence.

It's a powerful statement. We're in great danger when we allow our past accomplishments to become the grounds of our present confidence. Oh, you know those people.

Oh, I remember. Remember when God was doing this or God was doing that? And they never talk in the present tense. They always talk in the past tense.

I remember when God used to do this in my life. Or I remember when God was moving in this way. But as believers, the Lord wants us to experience Him on a daily basis.

But so often we experience great victories or great triumphs in our life, and then we kind of just stay there. We become self-confident, boastful. Spiritually, we kind of stick our chests out and our heads held high.

Oh God, use me in such a powerful way. And so we rely upon those past accomplishments as the grounds of our present confidence. And it's dangerous.

It's dangerous when we as believers look in the past and say, Well, this is how God used to work in my life, but we can't really testify to how God is working presently in our life. And when we maintain that conviction, what happens is we become apathetic and complacent. We live in the past.

But the Lord wants us to move forward, not trusting in ourself, but continually trusting in the Lord. How often do we embrace this mindset to our own demise And self-confidence leads to all types of problems. Therefore, for the remainder of the morning, we're going to spend some time considering the results of

self-confidence.

And if you're taking notes this morning, the first problem with self-confidence is this. Self-confidence leads to prayerlessness. Self-confidence leads to prayerlessness.

The very first thing that Joshua should have done was set his heart to seek the Lord. But we don't find that in the text. Joshua, the very first thing that he should have done was, Lord, what is the next step? God, what do you want to do? Lord, you've just given us this great victory.

We've experienced this great triumph. Everyone's excited. Everyone's rejoicing.

But Lord, what's next? What do you want to do now? And this is what the Lord wants of His people. Again, no matter how the Lord has used you in the past, or even how He's using you presently, the Lord wants us to maintain this attitude of prayerfulness before the Lord. Because really, prayerfulness, or this attitude of being in prayer, displays or expresses humility before God and dependence upon the Lord.

Right? When we're not praying, we think we have it all figured out. And so Joshua, here he goes, Oh, man, we just had this great victory. And just like he had done before, he had sent spies to check things out, we're going to send spies out again.

But again, the very first thing that Joshua should have done was to set his heart to seek the Lord. Again, many times when we experience these great triumphs, they pave the way for the defeat. Because we're walking in this victory, we're walking in this triumph, that self-confidence in our heart, and what we find is we stop depending upon the Lord.

Okay, God, we'll take it from here. We got it. We'll just do what we did last time, and just go in and defeat all of them.

And the Lord doesn't want that of His people. The Lord wants us to remain in that humble state of prayerfulness before Him. Let me ask you a question.

How often have you made a significant decision that impacted you and others before spending time in prayer before the Lord? I do it all the time. I do it all the time. And that's something the Lord has to teach those who are in leadership, but teach every single one of us.

We're making decisions that are impacting not only our own lives, but the lives of those who are around us. Our kids, our spouses, our family members, friends. And we don't think about them.

All we're thinking about, what can I do in this situation? And we don't realize that when we make certain decisions, especially when you're in a position of leadership, that your decisions are going to affect those who are around you. The other day I was talking to my dad, and I was praying with him because he was going to have to make some pretty important decisions at his job, some really big decisions. The first thing that I thought about was when Jesus, before Jesus chose His 12 disciples, He spent a whole entire night in prayer and fasting.

And my dad was going to have to choose some people to do some certain things, and I was like, yeah. And that thought came into my mind, and I said, Dad, you really need to be in prayer over these decisions. And we spent some time in prayer after I'd shared that with him, but that's just an example of many of us, we make these decisions, and we don't realize that our decisions are affecting the people who are around

us.

They're going to impact those who are around us. And if we truly love those people who are around us, and we want to be a witness to them and an encouragement to them, then as leaders, those in our home, those who are in our workplace, and in every facet of life, the Lord wants us to be those who are coming before Him and to say, God, I have these decisions to make. What do you want me to do? God, I realize the significance of these decisions.

Lord, and even if it might seem small in your heart or in your mind, there isn't any decision that is too small. And the Lord wants us to maintain this attitude of humility before Him and dependence upon Him. Lord, what do you want me to do in this situation? And that's why we're given verses like in the book of James.

It says, if any of you lacks wisdom, let him come to God, and he'll give to those who ask in faith. But we can't come to him lacking or, you know, wavering in our faith and our belief. And so, again, this is a dangerous place for a child of God to be, individually and corporately, if because of self-confidence, we're not maintaining this attitude of prayer and waiting upon the Lord.

The Lord wants individually and also corporately as the body of Christ. Well, the second thing we see here in the text is that self-confidence leads to following our personal reasoning. Instead of receiving instruction from the Lord, they decided to follow their own counsel.

Even though it may have seemed like a logical course of action, it wouldn't prevent it wasn't God's plan. You know, so these people that came, these men that came back to Joshua said, Hey, Joshua, you know, Ai is a smaller city. It's not as fortified.

It doesn't have as many people, and so let's not send everyone up, but let's just send a few guys up. You know, look what happened at Jericho. We destroyed these guys.

The walls fell down. We went in. We just took them all out.

You know, so let's not send everybody up to Ai or to Ai. And what happened was, again, because of self-confidence, because of what had happened prior to this, Joshua, he listened to their instructions, their reasoning, and it was the wrong counsel. The Bible does say that there's wisdom in a multitude of counselors, and that's true.

But that counsel that you're receiving from that multitude of counselors that are around you needs to be God-centered, needs to be Christ-centered. You can have a lot of people around you that are giving you wisdom. Well, don't do that or do this.

And it's easy to think about things practically. Well, we should do this because it just seems right. It just seems like something we should do.

It seems like it's going to meet the need. And so often, before we hear the voice of the Lord, we make these decisions, and say, That's not my counsel. That's not my plan.

The Lord wants us to receive His counsel. The Lord wants us to receive His instruction. But we often jump into these decision-making modes where we think, Well, something's got to be done, so let's do it.

And we enter into these plans rashly. And the Lord the whole time is saying, That's not my counsel. That might be your counsel, but it's not my counsel.

And we see here that self-confidence, the confidence of man, man trusting in his own reasoning and his own strength, said, We shouldn't send everyone else up. We should just do this, Joshua. And Joshua listened to him because he didn't hear from the Lord.

And I understand that because I've been in this position before as well. And probably many of you have been in this position as well. But what would have been wise in this instance was for Joshua as the leader to say, You know what? I'm going to wait upon the Lord until I receive instructions from God, and I'm not going to step out until I do.

That would have been wise. But that's not what happened. He listened to those who were around him.

I was reading the book of Proverbs the other day. And in the book of Proverbs, counsel, we shall wage our warfare. And I was thinking of that verse and the importance of having wise counsel.

And when you have that wise counsel, you want people around you that are going to give you counsel based upon the Word of God. That's why the leadership here, we seek to raise up men who are walking with the Lord, who are in relationship with God, who aren't trusting in self but trusting in the Lord, those who have proven in their lives and reflected that they're about Jesus. And that's what we want, those types of people around you, not just the people that are going to agree with you all the time, but those who are going to come along.

Well, this is biblical counsel. That's the type of people you need in your life. But if the Lord isn't speaking, then we need to be sure that we're waiting upon him and hearing his instruction, even if that answer is not coming as quickly as you like it to come.

How many times have you found yourself in a predicament where you need to make a decision, and before you hear the voice of the Lord, you step out and make a decision. And then you look back and think, probably wasn't the greatest decision. There's some hands going up, people nodding.

Yeah, we've all been in that place before. And what is that reflecting? What's that expressing in our lives when that happens? Well, what that's reflecting is we're self-confident. We're confident in our thoughts and our wisdom and our reasoning.

But the Lord doesn't always move in that way, and many times he doesn't. He wants to lead us in a different direction. So it seemed like a logical course of action, but this plan would not prevail because it wasn't God's plan.

As wise as a plan may sound, we want to ensure that that counsel originated from the throne of God. Solomon had something to say about this when he said, Trust in the Lord with all of your heart. Don't lean on your own understanding.

In all of your ways, acknowledge him, and he will direct your path. And at this point, they weren't trusting in God, but rather they were trusting in self. This is a big weakness in our humanity, especially for men, right, guys? Because we're problem solvers, right? So a problem arises, we get the tool.

I don't. Actually, I call my dad. Or someone else from the church, Jim Radford.

But for the most part, guys are problem solvers. I solve problems by making phone calls, but we all have different ways of approaching our issues. But we find ourselves, men, in these instances where, you know, we're problem solvers.

So we want to figure everything out. Hands and knees and figure out how to fix the car, what's going on, and to examine and to evaluate. So often, we find ourselves in these, you know, not the greatest position because we're not trusting in the Lord, but we're trusting in ourselves.

God wants us to trust in him. Well, the third thing is self-confidence leads to presumption. Notice in the text that before they received the green light from the Lord, they stepped out to engage.

So again, this just kind of follows along that same thought that before the Lord says, okay, I want you to step out and do this. They didn't wait for the Lord to give them the green light, and it would lead to their own demise. Fourth, we see self-confidence leads to practical consequences.

In this instance, the consequence was the death of 36 men. And so it's important to remember, especially for leaders, that when we make decisions, our decisions affect other people around us. And the fifth point this morning is that self-confidence leads to personal discouragement.

Notice in the text it says that their hearts melted like water. And you have to understand that in this example, it wasn't an issue of God forsaking them. It was an issue of them forsaking God.

And the reason that this lesson was so important is because their success was contingent upon them abiding in the Lord. Their success as a people was contingent upon them abiding in the Lord. And so the Lord was going to teach the nation of Israel, Joshua, and the other leaders that self-confidence just leads to their own demise, this personal discouragement.

And as we look at this story and we look at this example, I want to encourage you even before we conclude here and we enter into a time of communion that there's going to be a season that the Lord allows us to be discouraged. And it's to the purpose or to the end that we would no longer trust in ourselves but that there would be a greater trust and dependence upon the Lord. You may be in a season right now of discouragement where your heart is melting.

You're thinking, God's not for me. When in reality, the Lord is allowing you to endure this season at this point because He's wanting you to learn not to trust in yourself but to trust in Him. This morning I was given, I was sent a message.

And in this message, He had written or shared a verse out of 2 Corinthians. And I know the verse well but I'd forgotten it and it's a great reminder. As Paul here is communicating some of the hardships that he experienced as an apostle, as a minister of the gospel.

And in verse 8 of chapter 1, it says, For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of the trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength. Hearts were melting in this instance. But he said, yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, self-confidence, but in God who raises the dead.

So Paul here with this eternal perspective goes, our hearts were melting. We were discouraged. But the reason the Lord allows us to experience this discouragement was so that we wouldn't trust in ourself but in God who raises the dead.

And that is the Christian life. That is the Christian walk. The Lord is taking us from strength to strength, from grace to grace, from glory to greater glory.

And so he does allow us to experience seasons of defeat, seasons of discouragement because he's wanting to train our eyes to be fixed upon him for our confidence to be in him and him alone because he's the God of resurrection. Amen? Amen. Father, this morning as we come before you and acknowledge the truthfulness, the veracity, validity of your word, we're overwhelmed, God, because it is profitable for doctrine, for proof, for correction, instruction in righteousness.

We might be thoroughly equipped, prepared for every good work. And thank you for examples like this that are found in the word, that we can study and examine these examples and that we can glean spiritually from them. Lord, it just seems like in many of our lives, whether it's financial difficulties or relational issues, physical problems, that you're shaking things up in our lives, which is eternal, might remain.

Lord, we thank you for your word that brings us clarity. We thank you for the communion that we receive as we approach the throne. And from your throne, we receive clarity and refreshment.

Lord, I'm asking this morning if there's anyone in here that has been trusting in self, has been self-confident, and Lord, that you've exposed that in their heart, in their lives. Lord, that this morning they'd surrender, that they'd cast their cares and their burdens upon you, knowing that you care for them. And Lord, as they would surrender and yield to you, Lord, that you would draw near to them and strengthen them.

As was read this morning, the reality, Lord, that you neither sleep nor slumber, and that those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They'll mount up with wings like eagles. They'll run and not grow weary.

They'll walk and not faint. And so we thank you, Lord, that you are the strength for those who are in need. Lord, you're the peace for those who are in turmoil.

Lord, you're the confidence for those who are broken. And God, I'm asking that you just move forward, even at this point by your spirit, and that you would just comfort the hearts of your people. And Lord, no matter what's happening in their lives, even though they might believe that you're not approving of them because of their circumstances, that you'd remind them that there's nothing that will separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

You may be chastising them, but it's because you love them that you're chastising them. So Father, draw us deeper. Give us a biblical perspective regarding the things in this life that we would properly represent you to the world.

Even as we will see in the text that the outcome was the same. You delivered the city into their hands. But it was according to your plan, and it was according to your timing.

And Father, through it, you would be glorified. Lord, men would have been glorified if the counsel of the spies would have been taken and it was something that they did or contrived in their own reasoning. And Lord, it was your plan.

It was your timing. It was your way. And therefore, you received the glory.

And it's true for each one of us as well. And all these issues that we face, I mean, really, that stuff doesn't matter. What matters to you more than anything is that we would draw near to you and that we would trust you.

And our confidence would be placed in you, Lord. Yes, Lord. So we look to you now, Father.

And even as we prepare our hearts to take communion, we just ask that we would examine our lives and that your Spirit would examine us, Father. If there is a self-confidence in us, a confidence in our talents, our giftings, our abilities, our own reasoning, Lord, that we would cast those things at the cross and that we'd remember that Jesus Christ is our only confidence. Even as you declared in the scriptures, that without me, you can do nothing.

And so we offer this morning into your hands. And once again, we thank you. Thank you for your word.

Thank you for what Christ has done on our behalf that we might be here this morning to rejoice in the glory of our salvation. We love you and pray these things in Jesus' name. Jesus, here I am before you, and I'm broken.

I feel like there is not an answer to my problems. I know that you are so much stronger when I'm broken. I know that, Jesus, you're the answer to my problems.

Jesus, you are the answer. You are the way. You will never let me fall.

Only you can help me stay. You are the answer. You are the way.

You will never let me fall. Only you can help me stay. That I'm free.

That I'm free. Jesus, you are the answer. You are the way.

You will never let me fall. Only you can help me stay. You are the answer.

You are the way. You will never let me fall. Only you can help me stay.

That I'm free.

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