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The Importance of Certitude

Text: 2 Timothy 1:8-12

If you read the Bible long enough, particularly passages that describe your status as a believer in Jesus the Christ, you *could* become arrogant.

1 Peter 2:9

*You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people..*

As we go about, witnessing to our faith and sharing with others the good news about Jesus, we *could* be perceived as arrogant. We proclaim a Jesus who is, according to the scriptures, the only way to God. That doesn’t always go over well in a multicultural, multi tradition, highly tolerant culture.

I submit that we are not arrogant but confident.

Confidence and arrogance are often confused.

**Confidence** is a sense of self-assurance based on what I know, what I’ve accomplished and what abilities and gifts and skill sets I possess.

**Arrogance** is a sense of superiority over others, an overestimation of my abilities and an underestimation of the abilities and the worth of others.

People who are confident are usually respectful of others while arrogant people are often pompous and dismissive of others.

Someone has said

“Arrogant leaders **cringe** at the success of others, even though leadership success **hinges** on the success of others.” ([mobile.twitter.com](http://mobile.twitter.com))

In our text, the Apostle Paul is writing to his spiritual son, Timothy. Paul admonishes Timothy not to be ashamed of Paul’s suffering, nor of the testimony of the Lord. Then Paul gives a clear testimony as to what God did in Christ. That action of God forms the basis of Paul’s confident posture. Paul is not arrogant. He is confident.

Listen to Paul’s confidence in the gospel which we preach:

*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it* (the gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith...

As we grow in our faith, we move from uncertainty to certainty. From lack of confidence to confidence. From not sure to blessed assurance. It is the will of God for us all, that we walk not in arrogance but in confidence. It is not the will of God that you spend years doubting where you stand with God. The apostle John addressed this is his first epistle.

1 John 5:13

*These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God,* ***that you may know*** *that you have eternal life...*

1 John 5:20

*And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding* ***that we may know Him who is true****, in His Son Jesus Christ.*

That we may know. That we may know. That we may know.

Paul’s statement would be less powerful if he wrote, *I know* ***what*** *I have believed....*

Paul is confident that his relationship with God through Christ has made all the difference in his life. David had a similar testimony. Do you recall the first three verse of Psalm 27?

*The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me,* ***in this I will be confident.***

**Closing**

There are many things I **don’t** know.

* I don't know why we drive on parkways and park in driveways. I’ll never figure that out.
* I don't know how a black cow eats green grass and then produces white milk.
* I don't know why there is no ham in hamburger.
* I don’t know why there is no egg in eggplant.
* I don’t why the plural of goose is geese but the plural of moose is not meese.
* I don't why teachers have taught but preachers haven’t praught.
* I don’ t how slim chance and fat chance can mean the same thing.
* I don’ t know why a wise man and a wise guy are opposites.

There are many things I **don’t** know.

**But...**

I know whom I have believed! About my relationship with the God who sent Jesus for me and for my sin, I have complete certitude.

We sang a song in my youth:

*You can’t make me doubt Him*

*You can’t make me doubt Him*

*You can’t make me doubt Him in my heart*

*You can’t make me doubt Him*

*I know too much about Him*

*You can’t make me doubt Him*

*In my heart.*

Certitude. I am sure of where I stand and the One whom I know.

And you?

Amen