



The Caller

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Confidence Comer John F. Board

In this week's *Confidence Comer* let us examine some evidence that should help us to be confident Christians who can be sure of salvation. Many of these thoughts reflect an article and lesson I heard

from Jason Jackson. I hope as I adapt them they will be beneficial to you.

John claims as a part of his purpose in writing, "These things I write unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life..." (1 John 5:3). In order to have the fellowship with God needed to produce the confidence of which John writes, we cannot habitually commit sin (walk in darkness 1:6), we cannot act as if sin does not affect us—rather we must confess it (1:8), and we cannot claim that we have not sinned (1:10; see also Rom. 3:10).

I once heard Jason Jackson say, "Sin is a fact of our past and a fight in the present." I think this is an extremely important and true statement that we all need to consider. We must have a proper view of how sin affects even the lives of us as Christians.

Once we understand a proper view of sin as it relates to us as Christians we can then begin to greater appreciate the truths of which John writes through inspiration. We can trust God's faithfulness to do what He has promised (forgive and cleanse us 1:9). We can realize as we strive to "walk in the light" that Christ's blood can keep on cleansing us from all sin (1:7).

Both of these promises of God that He is faithful to keep are conditional. Notice the word "if" in the passages noted above. Though such a small word, an understanding of what it means is extremely important. God's promises to forgive and cleanse are conditioned upon us "walking in the light" and "confessing our sins."

Living in sin and committing sin are not the same. We as Christians may commit sin, but we have an advocate, Christ Jesus (2:1). If we will take sin seriously and strive to forsake a life of sin, we can have the greatest confidence that we will have eternal life. Thanks be to God!

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The enemy's greatest tool has always been deception. He confuses us with the slightest twist of the truth, while dangling our desires in front of our faces. He cleverly tempts us at times of weakness, making it

humanly impossible to say no. One false promise of greatness is all it took to get Adam and Eve to take one small bite. And one small bite is all it took to break up the unity in God's perfect design. Satan's deception led to their disobedience. Their disobedience led to the first earthly division between man and God, which ultimately caused division between all mankind. It's a vicious cycle that has been plaguing human history ever since.

Our world is full of stories of hurt from broken relationships and divided people, and we all have our own versions to tell. Whether we disagree on things like "what's for dinner" or important things like "theology," it's admittedly hard to agree to disagree. It's in our nature to want to be right. God calls us to live in unity with each other, but just like in the Garden, He wants us to start by being united with Him first. Then, we can destroy division and demonstrate unity with the help of the One we serve. **"Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited."** (Romans 12:16 NIV) Instead of giving Satan the thrill of victory by living as a divided people, let's bring God glory by living as a united people. We will need to be proactive and prepared, because unity won't happen by accident. So how about taking a first step together? Let's keep in mind the unity needed to be true children of God. As we have already discussed in this article, let's come together under the unity of Christ and defeat Satan.

*Mitchell's
 Weekly
 Manna*
 Mitchell Lockhart

Sunday's Sermons:

**A.M. — The Head of the Church
 Colossians 1:16-18**

**P.M. — Oceanography and the Bible
 Psalm 33:6-8**

Isaiah and Peter on the Christ

Both Isaiah and Peter had their lives impacted by Christ. Isaiah saw a vision of the LORD high and lifted up and his life was never the same. Peter walked the earth with the Lord and even was privileged to be with Jesus on occasions only a few witnessed. Both were inspired by God in the written records left for our study. It is fascinating to me what a study of these writings reveal about Christ by both one who looked forward to His first coming—the incarnation (Isaiah) and one who looked forward to His second coming. Isaiah would tell us amazing things regarding the coming Messiah, and Peter, as one who walked with the Lord would confirm these same truths regarding Jesus.

In Isaiah 53 reveals some information regarding the coming Messiah. Peter perhaps alluding to what Isaiah wrote and also what he saw first hand, reveals the same thing regarding Jesus. How amazing it is that one could write 700 years before the Christ would come and describe so clearly details regarding His life. How amazing that after such was written hundreds of years earlier, One could come who would be able to fulfill such a high standard. As amazing as prophecy is, the life the Messiah led is even more amazing to this writer. Consider the following thoughts recorded first by Isaiah and then referenced by Peter.

In 1 Peter 2:22-25 there appears to be five references made by Peter regarding Jesus that Isaiah predicted of the coming Messiah in Isaiah 53. 1 Peter 2:22 rehearses what Isaiah predicted in 53:9; "...because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit found in His mouth." 1 Peter 2:23 parallels Isaiah 53:7: "...he was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth." 1 Peter 2:24 has similar language used as Isaiah 53: 5, 12; "with His stripes we are healed" and "He bore the sin of many." 1 Peter 2:25 repeats Isaiah 53:6; "all we like sheep have gone astray." What does all of this mean?

First, Peter confirms for the Christian that the prophecies of the OT indeed pointed to Christ. The only way this was possible is that God was guiding all to bring about salvation through Christ. These prophecies served to confirm the conviction that the prophecies were divinely provided and intended by God to help men recognize the Christ and to better understand and appreciate His life and work.

Second, the fulfillment of this prophecy is not simply recorded by simply another human being; rather it is recorded by one who had been on the closest terms of intimacy with Christ. One so close attests to the complete sinlessness of Christ. Peter reveals that Jesus failed neither in word nor deed. Peter can then reveal that Jesus above all others did not deserve to suffer. Such is in contrast to the Christians of Peter's day who were suffering greatly. Peter's words could help provide encouragement.

What was it that helped Christ to fulfill such amazing expectations? For one it was His great faith in God. This great faith was in part based upon His confidence in the righteousness and vindication of God.

What an amazing savior Jesus is! Truly his name shall be called "Wonderful"—beyond comprehension!

*John F. Board
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