**Confidence**

Introductory text: 1John 3:18-24.

I used to be jealous- envious even, of the seemingly supreme *confidence* some had their “relationship” with the Lord, and their eternal salvation. I, on the other hand, was full of doubts and fears regarding both of these. They had been told that all you had to do to possess such security was to “accept Jesus as your personal Savior,” and that once you did so, you could never be lost. I, again on the other hand, was taught that a right relationship and eternal security was dependent upon becoming “acceptable” to Him. Perhaps they were *too confident,* as were those in Matt.7:21-23; and maybe I *lacked some confidence* that God intended me to have, 1John 5:13.

While I still sometimes *lack confidence in myself* (and we’re going to talk about that more in a minute), I/we should *never lack confidence in God-* in His *love for us,* Rom.8:35-38; or in His ability to *justify us* through Jesus Christ, Rom.8:31-34. We must remember that we are *saved by grace through faith,* Eph.2:8, rather by our own *meritorious works,* Eph.2:9. Our *faith-* even though *small,* cf. Matt.17:20,should lead us to confidence in His *grace* and *provision,* rather than depending upon our own merits.

However (and these things notwithstanding), in 1John 3:21-22 there is a *link* between proper *confidence* and *keeping His commandments* and *doing the things that are pleasing in His sight.* This link is obviously missing in Matt.7:21-23.

Given these things, and based mostly on some areas in which I sometimes *lack confidence* **in myself** rather **than God,** let me ask a few questions for your further consideration: **Are you *confident* or *ashamed* of your effort to:**

* **Know God’s will/word, 2Tim.2:15?**
* **Submit *my* will to *God’s* in day-to-day decisions/choices, Matt.6:10b; 16:24; 26:39,42,44-46?**
* **Love as *God loves,* Mark 6:34; Matt.5:43-48?**
* **Encourage others, Acts 11:22-24?**
* **Endure or persevere- even in times of hardship and temptation, Luke 21:19; Jas.1:4?**
* **Share the word, or evangelize, 2Tim.2:2?**

Did these considerations *help* or *hurt* your confidence? Didn’t help? Me either!

But what we must remember is that **if/when we *ask***and then ***act in faith****,* we can have ***confidence* that God provides**, 1John 3:22; cf. Matt.7:7-11; Jas.1:2-8!

Therefore, our *confidence* is in Him rather than ourselves!