

Confidence in Life and Death

Philippians 1:19-21

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Shepherd's Community Church

Confidence in the Promises of God

(1 Corinthians 15:31; Job 13:16; Romans 8:28; Psalm 34:17; 121:7; 7:10; 2 Peter 1:4)

Confidence in the Prayers of Believers

(Romans 15:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:25; Ephesians 6:19-20)

Confidence in the Provision of the Spirit

(John 16:33; 14:16-17; 15:26; Ephesians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 2:12; Romans 8:26, 14; 15:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:19)

Confidence in the Purpose of Christ

(Exodus 40:34-35; 33:18; 34:6-7; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Isaiah 6:1-5; Matthew 23:12)

The Advantage of Strong Faith

Puritan Pastor William Gurnall

If you only knew the many advantages of strong faith over weak faith you would not rest a minute until it was yours. Strong faith conquers those temptations which take weak a prisoner. When David's faith prevailed, he looked death in the face fearlessly. "And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God" (1 Samuel 30:6). Yet when his faith was weak, he was ready to run and hide in the nearest hole to save himself (1 Samuel 21:13).

Strong faith frees the Christian from those thoughts which oppressed weak faith. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isaiah 26:3). The more faith, the more inward peace and quietness; if little faith, then little peace and serenity through the storms that unbelieving fears will surely gather.

Weak faith will as surely take the Christian to heaven as strong faith; for it is impossible that the least ounce of true grace should perish, since it is all incorruptible seed. But the doubting Christian will not have as pleasant a voyage as will the believer with strong faith. Although everyone aboard the ship will arrive safely at the shore, yet the seasick traveler will not have so comfortable a trip as the man who is healthy. The sick person misses pleasant surprises during the delightful parts of the journey. But the strong man views it all with abundance of expectation; and while he wishes with all his heart he were already home, yet the joy he has shortens and sweetens his way to him.

Thus, Christian, there are many delights which saints traveling to heaven meet on their way there, besides what God has for them at the journey's end. It is the Christian whose faith is strong enough to act upon the promise who finds and possesses these pleasures.

William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour, Daily Readings in Spiritual Warfare*, ed. by James S. Bell (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), October 19

The Christian in Complete Armour was written by Puritan Pastor William Gurnall (1616-79) and originally published in three volumes in 1655, 1658, and 1662. It is one of the classic Puritan books on practical daily living. John Newton said that if he might read only one book beside the Bible he would choose *The Christian in Complete Armour*.