

2 Corinthians 3:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

Analysis

And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Paul transitions from the Corinthians as evidence to his apostolic confidence (pepoithēsis, πεποίθησις, "trust" or "confidence"). This confidence is crucially qualified: **through Christ to God-ward** (Greek *dia tou Christou pros ton Theon*, διὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν). Paul's boldness is not self-generated but Christ-mediated and God-directed.

The structure is significant: confidence flows through Christ (instrumental) toward God (directional). This prevents both self-reliance and false humility. Paul is confident, but only because Christ is the mediator of his ministry and God is the source of its effectiveness. The apostle models proper Christian confidence—neither arrogant self-sufficiency nor paralyzing doubt, but bold trust rooted in Christ's finished work and the Spirit's present power.

Historical Context

In a culture that prized rhetorical skill, philosophical sophistication, and social status, Paul's emphasis on Christ-mediated confidence was countercultural. Greek and Roman society celebrated self-made success and personal achievement. The Sophists, traveling teachers who charged fees for rhetorical training, embodied this ethos. Paul deliberately contrasts his ministry with such self-promotion, grounding his authority not in human credentials but in divine calling and Christ's mediatorial work.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Where do you find your confidence for ministry and service—in your abilities, credentials, and experience, or in Christ?
2. How does the qualifier "through Christ to God-ward" protect you from both arrogance and false humility?
3. What would it look like for you to exercise bold confidence in God's calling while maintaining complete dependence on Christ?

Interlinear Text

Πεποίθησιν	δὲ	τοιαύτην	ἔχομεν	διὰ	τοῦ	Χριστοῦ
trust	And	such	have we	through	G3588	Christ
G4006	G1161	G5108	G2192	G1223		G5547
πρὸς	τὸν	θεόν				
to	G3588	God-ward				
G4314		G2316				

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 3:12 (Faith): In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Philippians 1:6 (References Christ): Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Exodus 18:19 (References God): Harken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:

2 Corinthians 2:14 (References Christ): Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

1 Thessalonians 1:8 (Faith): For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

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