



CONFIDENCE

LESSON 3

LEARNING TO LIVE IN CONFIDENCE

HeartLine
CROSSLINE COMMUNITY CHURCH





Get Healthy: Confidence

Lesson Three: Learning to Live in Confidence

Look Back: (10 Minutes)

1. **Last week we were to re-read the verses listed in lesson two, question one, about who we are in Christ. Did you pick one truth to focus on throughout the week? If so, what truth did you focus on? How did it impact your confidence?**
2. **Did you make a mental note every time you felt insecure, or sensed a lack of confidence? Could you trace these feelings back to fear? Discuss.**
3. **Recite 2 Timothy 1:7 together: “God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, love and self-discipline.” Discuss how the personal nature of this promise can give you confidence to face something specific in your life right now.**
4. **What has been your biggest take-away from this Bible study, so far?**

Look Forward: (50 Minutes)

When JP and I were newlyweds a well-to-do couple from our church invited us to their house for dinner. Driving up to the home was an experience in itself. It was a huge estate, and to be honest, it was a little (ok, a lot) intimidating.

We walked in, were greeted warmly, then ushered into the kitchen where I watched the wife effortlessly make dinner as her three teenagers randomly came and went, occasionally sneaking a taste of this, or that. Eventually, one of the kids hoisted herself onto the kitchen counter and joined our conversation.

I remember thinking, How does she do it? How does this woman effortlessly make dinner, while making every person who roams in and out of her kitchen feel comfortable--feel special, even?

At the time, I could barely boil water, and we lived in a small rental we affectionately dubbed, “The Hell Hole”. Our host’s easy confidence boggled my mind.

But it wasn’t just her confidence that intrigued me; it was how her confidence rubbed off on everyone around her. 20 years my senior, and miles above me on the

socio-economic scale, this woman made me feel comfortable in my own skin, mainly because she was comfortable in hers.

I knew then and there, someday, I wanted to be like her.

- 1. Have you ever had an experience where someone else's confidence rubbed off on you, making you feel more confident and at ease? If so, when?**

Flash forward several years (and a move out of the "Hell Hole"). JP and I were again invited to a home for dinner; only this time it was a one bedroom, low-income apartment complex.

We were greeted with warm hugs and ushered into the kitchen. A teeny one. But the same easy confidence I observed in the woman who lived at the estate graced the face of the woman who stood in this tiny room. She, too, was comfortable in her own skin. She too, was filled with confidence. Again, I found myself wanting the easy confidence she possessed.

These two women modeled an invaluable lesson: **Confidence is not a function of what you have**--materially, relationally, physically, mentally, or socially--**confidence is a function of who you are.** Or maybe, more accurately, *how you see who you are.*

- 2. Read the above paragraph again, slowly. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?**

The million-dollar question every woman asks is this: ***How do I gain, and maintain, confidence?*** The kind that's not tied to where I live, a number on a scale, my career success, my children's behavior, my relationship status, my age, my education, my ethnicity, or _____ (you fill in the blank).

So let's take a peek into the life of a person who learned to grow in confidence, and find out the secret. (Note: we'll be camping in Judges 6 and 7, so you'll want to follow along in your Bible)

- 3. Read Judges Chapter 6:1-4; 11-17, and answer the following questions. (Oh my goodness...this is so good. I get excited just thinking about it!)**
 - a. Describe the situation according to verses 1-4.**

- b. According to verse 11, where was Gideon, and what was he doing when the angel of the Lord appeared to him?**

I'm not much of a wine connoisseur, but even I know you press grapes in a wine press, you don't thresh wheat. So why was he hiding in the wine press? What was Gideon's deal? He was stinkin' scared to death of the Midianites, that's what.

Doesn't sound like much of a mighty warrior to me. Sounds like a guy with major insecurity issues.

Exactly the point.

So now we have our starting point with Gideon: His circumstances stink, he's riddled with fear, and the concept of living as a confident overcomer is the last thing on his mind. But--and here's the good part--what comes next shows us how we, like Gideon, can overcome insecurity and live in confidence.

- c. What does the angel tell Gideon in verse 12? Fill in the blanks:**

The _____ is _____.

- d. How does Gideon respond? (vs. 13)**
- e. Essentially, Gideon tells God, "It sure doesn't look like you're with me". What does this tell you about how Gideon's circumstances affected his confidence? Can you see ways your circumstances have affected your confidence? If so, how?**
- f. Look again at verse 12. What does God call Gideon?**
- g. Gideon doesn't acknowledge being called a mighty warrior. Do you reject or deflect positive things others, or God (remember last week's lesson?) say about you? Yes or no?**
- h. How does your response affect your level of confidence? Be specific.**

Gideon may not have been ready to believe what the angel told him about himself, but it was important for him to hear it, nevertheless. **The first step to believe something is true is to *hear* something is true.**

4. **Because the first step to *believing* the truth is *hearing* the truth, turn to the gal next to you and tell her, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior!” (Yep. Out loud. Right now.) Now that you’ve heard this truth spoken over your life, hold on it--even if you don’t quite believe it yet--because this truth is the starting point for your confidence.**

5. **Read verses 14 and 15 again. What did the angel tell Gideon to do? What was Gideon’s response?**
 - a. **Have you ever felt like “the strength that you have” (see verse 14) is not enough for a task God has assigned you (think family, work, ministry, dealing with hardship, etc.)? Have you felt that way recently? Discuss.**

 - b. **Compare starting in the strength you *do* have, to being sidelined by worry and fear about the strength you *don’t* have. How can starting something “in the strength you have” help grow your confidence?**

 - c. **Gideon’s strength didn’t lie solely in what he possessed on his own; God gave Gideon a secret weapon. Fill in the blanks from v. 16 to find out what it was:**

The Lord answered, “I _____ be _____.”

Wait a minute. Didn’t God make the same promise to us? To *you*? Why, yes, He did.

“...God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5b)

So Gideon takes God at his word, is filled with bold confidence, and immediately sets out to accomplish God’s purpose for his life. Right? Uh. No.

6. **Read Judges 6:25-27. The Lord gives Gideon an assignment. What is it? Does Gideon do it? When?**

Baby steps. Gideon takes baby steps. He breaks down the altar of Baal (yeah!), and builds an altar to God (yeah!). But he did it at night. Because he was scared. Honestly, though, who could blame him? The people wanted to kill whoever did it.

So, really, it was a victory for Gideon's faith. And his confidence. Don't miss this: ***Confidence grows one step at a time.*** Just like faith. Because confidence is always tied to faith.

7. How does knowing that confidence a) can grow, and b) grows bit-by-bit, give you hope in developing your own confidence?

- a. Is there some small area of obedience God is asking you to make, to grow your confidence and your faith? If so, what? (Believe me, there *is* some small step God wants you to take!)**

Just so we don't forget this significance of what's happening in Gideon's journey from insecurity to confidence, let's revisit the progression of how confidence grows.

- 1. The first step to believing the truth is hearing the truth.**
- 2. Confidence doesn't grow overnight. Confidence grows one step at a time.**
- 3. Confidence grows when we step out and succeed (even a little).**

Note that Gideon's success wasn't without its problems. There was the teensy little problem of angering the whole town. Still, Gideon's one step in the right direction, led to another step in the right direction.

8. Read Judges 6:36-37. Propelled by the confidence he gained by breaking down the altar to Baal, Gideon now considers doing something even bolder. What is it?

Whoa! Gideon actually considers allowing God to use him to save all Israel. This is a far cry from the scared little man-child hiding in the wine press. His confidence is growing right before our eyes.

But Gideon is human, and still has some learning to do to get this whole confidence thing down pat.

9. **What does he ask God to confirm in verses 36-40? Did God confirm it? How?**
- a. **What does this tell you about the heart of God as he responds to our imperfect journey to overcome insecurity and live with confidence?**

Now I know what some of you are thinking, because it's what I'm thinking: *If God would just give me a sign as clear as he gave Gideon, I'd live in complete confidence.* But here's the thing--God already gave us a sign that he's with us, and for us.

It's called the cross.

10. **Read Judges 7:1-8 and briefly describe what happened. How do you think this affected Gideon's confidence? Why did God ask him to diminish the number of men?**

Gideon's army went from 32,000 to 300. Why? I believe it's because God was not simply teaching Gideon confidence, God was teaching Gideon something more important: **GODfidence.**

- a. **According to verse 9-15, what did God do to bolster Gideon's confidence, now that his army was greatly diminished?**
- b. **What does this tell you about the heart of God, and how He wants to encourage your GODfidence?**

11. **Read verses Judges 7:17-18 carefully. What difference do you notice in Gideon compared to the man we first met in the wine press?**

- a. **What three things does Gideon tell the men to do in verse 17? (Fill in the blanks**

1. _____ me.
2. _____ my _____.
3. _____ exactly as _____ do.

- b. **How does Gideon's declaration epitomize confidence?**

So there we have it. One man, transformed from feeling (and acting) like an insignificant, fearful, intimidated nobody, to a confident leader and, dare I say it? A mighty warrior.

Gideon goes on to lead his people in victory, and save Israel. God was right about Gideon's true identity, even when Gideon didn't believe it.

God is right about your true identity, too.

And so I return once again to the lesson I learned from two women whose circumstances looked different, but whose souls grasped the same truth: **Confidence is not a function of what you have**--materially, relationally, physically, mentally, or socially--**confidence is a function of who you are.** Or maybe, more accurately, *how you see who you are.*

How do you see who you are?

It's time to see yourself like God sees you. It's time for *you* to claim *your* identity and live in confidence. The Lord is with *you*, mighty warrior!

Life Application:

1. Make one small step of intentional obedience this week, even if you are scared. Be ready to share with your group next week.
2. Confidence grows when we hear the truth of who we are. This week, be intentional about speaking words of encouragement to your friends and family members. Be open to receive any encouragement others give to you.
3. Anytime you lack confidence, feel insecure, fearful, or overwhelmed this week, speak this truth out loud: "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior." (Judges 6:12b). Then, go live like it!

Optional: Further Reading, Reflection, and Bible Study

1. Re-read Judges 6 and 7. Ask God to show you new insights to help grow your confidence and GODfidence. Write down what you learn.

