

SOUTHWEST LIFE GROUP BIBLE STUDY

“We Have a Confidence Problem” – 4-1-07”

OPEN:

- Tell a funny story about a time when you believed something was true, only to find out later that it was only your perception.
- Why is confidence before God so important when we try to share Christ’s message with others?

DIG: *Measure your “perception” of truth against these Scriptures.*

2 Corinthians 3:4-6 – This verse confronts the idea of finding confidence based on our “competence” or based on “following/teaching the letter” of the Law. Why is it so tempting to use those two things to find confidence?

Ephesians 3:7-12 – What is there in vs. 7-11 that makes Paul so sure of verse 12?

Hebrews 3:14 – Is this verse saying that “unless you feel confidence before God you are not saved?” What else might it be trying to say?

Hebrews 10:35-36 – What causes Christ-followers to “throw away their confidence”?

Hebrews 13:5-6 – Imagine if God said the words in vs. 5 straight to you. Are these words “the objective truth” that you live and believe in? Can you say with confidence what is said in vs. 6?

Read and discuss these two simple exhortations from Jesus. What is Jesus trying to instill in us concerning our confidence and why would he do so?

Luke 12:32 - *“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”*

Mark 5:36 - *“Don’t be afraid; just believe.”*

DISCUSS: Below is an email from a long-time Christ-follower from last week.

“I just wanted to shoot you an e-mail to let you know about something really cool going on in my life now. My guilt is gone! The funny thing is, since I laid down my guilt, when temptation flares up it is so much easier to overcome. Before my “New life” Satan was constantly dragging me down. When faced with temptation then a deep struggle would go on inside me. There was this voice saying things like “What does it matter, you’ll never be good enough anyway” or “Why try, you’ve already blown it” or “What’s one more sin, you’ve got a whole pile of ‘em over there.” and especially “You know how bad you really are, how could God accept you?” My guilt was toxic to me and causing me to sin! Praise be to God, for Christ has entered my heart and healed my broken spirit, freeing me from the guilt of my past, present, and future, and restoring to me the assurance of my salvation! I am only in my first week of living my new guilt-free life and I know that I will still have trials along my Christian journey. But the highs will be higher and the lows not nearly as low, for Satan will no longer saddle me with guilt. Praise be to God!!”

- What sticks out to you from this guy?
- Has anyone else had this experience? Did it last? Why or why not?
- What came first for this guy, the “healing of the guilty conscience” or the “victory over specific sin”? Why is this? Can it happen the other way around?
- What faith is required of a man to have this experience of God in the heart?
- How will this man’s light shine more brightly as he takes Christ’s message to the world?

PRAY: Pray that when the Southwest church members offer “salvation” to the world, that we include the offer of “healing for your heart in this life” in addition to the “knowledge you need to be saved”.