



SESSION ONE

FROM CONFLICTED TO CONFIDENT

**FAITH IS ABOUT THE SPIRIT
ENABLING US TO TRUST
CHRIST MORE AND MORE
DEEPLY AND ALLOWING
HIM TO INFLUENCE EVERY
ASPECT OF OUR LIVES.**

IDENTITY

READ EPHESIANS 1:1-14.

Where does your confidence come from? Many people seek confidence in their accomplishments or in their social status. We think that if we can achieve a certain level of success or can be accepted by the right group, then we can be confident. But while these things may give us a temporary jolt of confidence, eventually the high will wear off and there will be a crash, leaving us worse off than before. Attempts at building confidence through worldly achievement and self improvement are shallow at best.

The good news is that if you are in Christ, you can be one of the most confident people on the planet—not because of what you do, but because of who you are in Him. If you are a follower of Christ, everything in Ephesians 1 is true about you. You are a “saint,” and you have “every spiritual blessing in the heavens” (vv. 1-3). God chose you and adopted you into His family according to His glorious grace and love (see vv. 4-6). You have redemption through His blood and forgiveness from all your sins (see vv. 7-10). You have received an eternal inheritance (see v. 11) and have been sealed with the Holy Spirit as a down payment on that inheritance (see vv. 13-14). All these things were given to you through God’s incredible grace and for His glory. This is more than you will ever need to walk in unshakable confidence and lasting joy for the rest of your life!

Why, then, do so many followers of Jesus lack the confidence that understanding our identity in Him should produce? There are many reasons, but one is that we simply forget in the chaos of life. The enemy whispers lies, tempting us to chase after the validation of others or to give in to a sin that promises a quick fix. We get caught up in the daily grind, measuring ourselves by what we do rather than resting in who God says we are. If we are not intentional about fighting this drift, our joy and confidence in Christ can quickly fade.

We can fight this tendency to drift through daily Bible reading and through slowing down enough to reflect and journal on key verses that highlight who God is or who we are in Christ. Making Scripture practical is essential, but if we only focus on obedience and never on our identity, then we can easily slip into legalism or discouragement. The

apostles never apologized for simply reminding believers of the gospel. In 2 Peter 1:12-13, the apostle said, “So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body.” So, memorize key verses that remind you who you are in Christ and quote them out loud when you face discouragement or temptation. Being involved in community is also essential so that you can be reminded and remind others of God’s grace and love. The more you reflect on your identity in Christ, the more confident you will become.

REFLECT / APPLY

What stands out to you from Ephesians 1:1-14 and today’s study? What encourages you the most?

On a scale of 1–10, how would you rate your level of confidence on an average day? Why do you give yourself that rating?

How can reflecting on and reminding yourself of your identity in Christ help you build confidence?

What habits will you adopt to remind yourself of who God is and of who you are in Christ?

Take a moment to pray, thanking God for all He has done for you in Christ. Use today’s passage as a guide by praying over each section, thanking God for what He has done.

PERSONAL STUDY DAY 2

THERE IS MORE

READ EPHESIANS 1:15-23.

This is one of the most powerful prayers in the whole Bible. It is aimed at those who are already faithful followers of Christ. No matter how strong your faith is, how passionate your prayer life is, or how much Scripture you know, there is always more. Since God is inexhaustible, there is always more of God to experience, more of His truth to grasp, and more of His power to walk in.

Paul prays that the eyes of their hearts would be enlightened. Much more than mere intellectual understanding, the goal is to see, savor, and experience all that God has for you. This enlightenment is something that only the Holy Spirit can give you. True knowledge of God only comes through divine revelation, not natural reason. Puritan Thomas Watson put it this way: "Every grace is a divine spark lighted in the soul by the Holy Spirit."³

Ephesians 1:19-20 always amazes me: "... and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength. He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens." It's easy for me to believe that God has immeasurable greatness in Himself, but this power is also available "toward us who believe." The same power that resurrected Jesus from the dead is available to you and me. That is a mind blowing amount of power! It's more than enough power to help you overcome any struggle with sin and any insecurity you might face. God not only wants you to survive the challenges of life; He also wants you to thrive.

Many followers of Christ live defeated and spiritually dull lives because they don't fully grasp the power that is available to them through the Holy Spirit. The Christian life is not about trying harder in our own strength. It is about tapping into the unlimited power of God through the Holy Spirit. One of the greatest adventures of life is learning how to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit in our daily life. We are commanded to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) to "walk by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16) and to "not quench the Spirit" (1 Thess. 5:19). Charles Spurgeon put it this way: "Value above all things the

Holy Spirit. Put your entire dependence on Him. Pray for fresh grace. Venture not into the world without a fresh store of His hallowed influence. Seek to be filled with that blessed Spirit."⁴ Experiencing the Holy Spirit starts with an attitude of surrender and is activated by courageous faith. So, don't waste another moment spiritually asleep! Pray Ephesians 1:19-20 for yourself, asking God to wake you up to all He has for you. There is more!

REFLECT / APPLY

What stands out to you most from Ephesians 1:15-22 and today's study?

List the things that Paul prayed for in verses 18-19. Which of these is most encouraging to you right now?

How does the fact that God's unstoppable power is always available to you encourage you to live with more confidence?

In what specific areas of your daily life do you find it challenging to "walk by the Spirit" rather than trying harder in your own strength? What steps could you take in those situations to cultivate more humility and surrender to the Holy Spirit?

Pray through Ephesians 1:15-23 one verse at a time, asking God to fill you with the Holy Spirit and to empower you to become and accomplish all that He has for you. Repent, surrender, and commit to do whatever He is putting on your heart.

PERSONAL STUDY DAY 3

ROOTED IN LOVE

READ EPHESIANS 3:14-21.

College life can feel like one long audition. You're constantly surrounded by professors, peers, leaders, and even family members who each have their own set of expectations for you. Not only is there pressure to engage in sin, there is also always another achievement to pursue, another club to join, or another social expectation to meet. I have talked to many students who confess to getting sucked into the "rat race" of campus culture because deep down, they just want to be accepted and loved. I believe that for many, this desire for approval is the primary driving force beneath the surface of college life.

This prayer by the apostle Paul, if realized in your life, would change everything. Paul is on his knees, pleading with the Father for the church to experience Christ's transforming presence and love. The Holy Spirit is the One who supernaturally fortifies our hearts as we grow deeper in our relationship with God. This is done so that Christ can "dwell in [our] hearts through faith" (v. 17), meaning that Jesus takes up permanent residence in our life and never leaves. This is not a momentary spiritual high we might experience at a special worship service or summer camp—it's a daily reality to experience at the core of our being. When Christ dwells in our hearts, He becomes the defining influence in our lives.

It's important to note that Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3 is for believers who have already had a true salvation experience. The phrase "through faith" (v. 17) implies that the experience of Christ's indwelling presence is sustained by a daily trust in Him. Faith is not a one time act but an ongoing reliance on Christ's person, work, and promises. This is about the Spirit enabling us to trust Him more and more deeply and allowing Him to influence every aspect of our lives. When Christ dwells in our hearts, He is not a guest who is merely tolerated, but a King who reigns.

In verse 17 Paul also prays for believers to be "rooted and firmly established" in love, like a tree with deep roots or a building with a solid foundation. This foundation is the launching pad for us to more experientially grasp the unfathomable depths of God's love for us in Christ. This love has absolutely no limits and we could never fully

understand it—yet Paul prays that we would know it more and more. When our lives are rooted in the love of Christ and surrendered to His lordship, we can be free from the expectations of others and can expect God to work in ways far beyond what we can ask, think, or imagine.

REFLECT / APPLY

What stands out to you most from Ephesians 3:14-20 and today's study?

In what ways are you currently most tempted to seek the approval of others in your life?

How does understanding the deeper meaning behind Paul's prayer "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" encourage you?

How does God's limitless love free you from the pressure of the expectations of others?

Spend time praying Ephesians 3:14-20 over yourself, phrase by phrase. Take your time and reflect on each line as you bring it to God in prayer. If time allows, pray this over a friend or family member as well and send this person a text saying you prayed this for him or her.