Victory in Christ (The Amazing Race)

Lesson 3: Finding True Confidence

**Lessons in this series:** [1](http://www.teensundayschool.com/156/lesson/christian-partnership.php) [2](http://www.teensundayschool.com/163/lesson/having-the-right-attitude.php) **3**[4](http://www.teensundayschool.com/169/lesson/pressing-on.php) [5](http://www.teensundayschool.com/173/lesson/the-ultimate-prize.php)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To understand what generally gives others confidence
2. To see why Paul considers earthly confidence rubbish
3. To learn how to find Godly confidence, or real confidence

Topics

Confidence, Dependability, Knowing Jesus, Self-Worth, Trust

Scripture Memorization

Philippians 3:8

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

To start today, we will do something pretty simple. I have a word, and I would like you to come up with a good definition for it. Stand up and talk to others around you, getting input from several people. When you believe you have enough input for a great deffinition, go back to your seat and write it down.

The word is **CONFIDENCE**

(Allow several minutes, and continue when everyone is back in his or her seats.)

Here are some dictionary definitions:
• Freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities
• A feeling of trust (in someone or something)
• A state of confident hopefulness that events will be favorable

So, how close did your definition come? However, the bigger question is, what or whom do you place your confidence? We will discuss that in more detail as we continue.

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

To set the stage today, I want to ask you three questions. There is a place to write down your answers in your workbook.

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| **Workbook Questions**1. What are you proud of in your life? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_2. What can you do well?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_3. What do you possess that makes you happy?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

Go ahead and take a couple of minutes to jot down your answers and we’ll share some of your thoughts in a minute.

Okay, now that you have those written down, who’s willing to share?*(Allow a few people to share.*)

Let’s broaden that idea just a little. Brainstorm with me.

• What in our culture (movies, music, society, etc.) are things that are worth bragging about?
*(Possible answers might include lots of money, a sweet car with rims, a hot boyfriend or girlfriend, a big house, a successful career, etc.)*

DIGGING IN (15 minutes)

Let’s return to the book of Philippians, and turn to chapter 3. We’re going to read eleven verses today, and these verses are loaded with Truth. I believe that today’s lesson can change your view entirely about what life is about, and lead you down a different path in the Amazing Race.

 **Read Philippians 3:1-6**

**Discussion Questions:**1. What are some things that stick out to you in this text? Does anything confuse you?
2. What do you think is Paul’s point in this passage? What is he trying to say?
3. Who are the “dogs” Paul mentions? *(They were Judeaizers, who taught heresy about what it took to be a Christian, such as circumcision.)*4. According to this legalistic approach to religion, does Paul qualify to have confidence in his salvation? Why or why not? *(Yes. He was circumcised; he is a member of the tribe of Israel, a Jew of Jews, a poster child of sorts; he persecuted the church; and he followed legalistic righteousness without fault.)*

The point here is that Paul, according to the legalistic way of thinking, did a lot that could have caused him to be confident. However, as we will learn in the next verses, Paul’s confidence was placed elsewhere instead.

 **Read Philippians 3:7-11**

**Discussion Questions:**
1. According to verse 7, what does Paul count as a loss? *(Whatever)*2. According to verse 8, what does Paul count as a loss? *(Everything, all things)*3. Okay, so Paul counts several things as no longer important. Where does his confidence lie? *(Gaining Christ/knowing Christ.)*

It is interesting that three (3) times in three (3) verses, Paul talks about “knowing or gaining Christ.” It seems like Paul’s goal is clear—he wants to be close to Jesus.

Optional Activity (10 minutes)

In this week's workbook, you will find a story titled, "Everything I Cared About Is In A Box." Take a minute or two to read the story carefully now. Then, I have a few questions.

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| **Everything I Cared About Is In A Box:**Everything I cared about is in a box. When I was 7, it was little league baseball. At the end of the season, we had a watermelon feast and awards party. Each player got a trophy. I’d never been more proud. I put it on my dresser and would stare at it for hours on end. *Now it’s in a box.*In 8th grade, it was the Panther of the Year award. It was given to the best student athlete in our grade. In my grade, there were a lot of good athletes, and a lot of good students. I was not the best of either, but I was good enough to be in the running. The awards banquet came and I won the Panther of the Year. It was the biggest trophy I’d ever won, and I loved it.*Now it’s in a box.*By college, I had given up baseball and attached myself to basketball. I was not great, but I worked hard at it and did okay. My team was not the best, but we had fun. One year we made it to the Regional Finals game, only to lose. Another year, my last year of playing, I was named to an All-Region team. I had never been named to an all-anything team in my whole life. I was proud, and I planned on getting my award framed. I never got it framed. It’s not even hanging on my wall anywhere.*Now it’s in a box.*Everything I ever cared about, any prize I’ve ever won, any medal I’ve ever achieved, and any award I’ve ever been granted—they’re all in a box. The box is in my basement with clothes I’ve outgrown, flat footballs, tools, and old textbooks.*Everything I cared about is in a box.* |

• What is the point of this story?
• Why didn't these things matter to me anymore? Why keep them in a box?
• How long do you think you will value the things you currently value?
• What things in your life come and go? What things last?

When Paul says he counts everything as rubbish or waste, what he’s saying is that that stuff pales in comparison to knowing Christ. The question for us, then, is how much to we value Christ. How much do we want to know Him? What do we need to “put in a box” so we can let God out?

MAKING IT REAL (15 minutes)

Look back to the three questions in your workbooks, where you listed things you were proud of, did well, or possessions that made you happy. You listed a lot of good things (repeat a few of the things the students shared earlier). However, as we have discovered in these passages, I hope you’ve been clued in on a really important Truth.

**Nothing is more important than knowing Christ.**

It’s true. Nothing is more important—not money, sports, fame, or *anything*. But here's why: It’s not just because God is a divine party-pooper who wants to squash our fun. It’s because He knows that if we think things are important, we’ll put confidence in them. We’ll rely on them. We’ll look to them when we’re in trouble. He also knows that those things will let us down eventually. Money runs out. Boyfriends or girlfriends break our hearts if we're not careful. Fashionable clothes go out of style. And our achievements seem less important with the passage of time.

Return to your workbooks. Prayerfully, consider whether or not you need to stop placing so much value in the things you wrote down, and instead, begin valuing Christ more. One by one, examine each, and if you are willing to “count it as garbage,” cross it out. Better yet, write over it in large capital letters “JESUS.”

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Let's make this prayer time a time of reflection. We all need to consider Paul’s words about not placing confidence in ourselves, but instead placing all of our confidence and trust in Christ. So in silence, consider your life. In a moment, I’ll close in prayer.