

CONFIDENCE

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

We've all got our frontlines – the various contexts where God has placed us, where we meet with people who don't know Jesus.

Over the weeks of Lent, we want to explore together how, with God, we can apply what God is teaching us about how to live with confidence on our own frontlines.

Each session uses similar questions to help you consider a different aspect of confidence covered each week. As you work through the questions, you'll discuss what's happening on your frontline over time, noticing how God's helping you grow in confidence.

The goal is to get the group thinking and talking about both the Bible and your frontlines. I hope and pray that the readings, reflections, and studies will give you greater confidence in our amazing God and his wonderful gospel everywhere you go.

- SESSION 1 Confidence through **being convinced**
- SESSION 2 Confidence through **community**
- SESSION 3 Confidence through **compassion**
- SESSION 4 Confidence through **consistent spiritual practices**
- SESSION 5 Confidence through **confidence**
- SESSION 6 Confidence through **courage**

26 Feb 23	SESSION 1	CONFIDENCE THROUGH BEING CONVINCED
Romans 8:31-39	When we are convinced God's big story is true – and Jesus is good news – we're more confident in our role as disciples.	

Discussion questions

1. When have you needed to be convinced about something to have confidence in it?
2. Spend a few moments discussing your own frontlines.
If you haven't talked about them before in this group, have each person share what their frontlines are.
 - a. Where do they spend the majority of their time, and who with?
 - b. Have each person share one challenge and one opportunity from one of those frontlines.
3. How has being convinced of God's love, or the power of the gospel, given you confidence?
4. Think about your own frontlines again – where you've been this week or will be next week.
What aspect of being convinced do you think will be the most helpful to remember?

Bible study

Read **Romans 8:31-39** aloud.

- Sit in the text.
- What did you notice?

Read **Romans 8:31-39** a second time.

- What does this passage reveal to you about God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
- What does it say about...
 - a. the world?
 - b. our contexts?
 - c. something in the news?
- How does this passage relate to us and our frontlines?
Is there something to give thanks for, to do, to ask for, or to say sorry to God for?

Closing prayer

Spend some time praying for each other's frontlines.

Heavenly Father, your truth is the rock on which we build our lives.

Thank you that we can be confident of your love through your Son Jesus.

Help us to be convinced that you are there with us on our frontlines.

5 Mar 23	SESSION 2	CONFIDENCE THROUGH COMMUNITY
Proverbs 27:17 1 Thessalonians 5:11	We gain confidence for our frontlines when we're part of an encouraging church community.	

Discussion questions

1. When has being part of a community or group given you confidence?
What difference has being part of a church family made to you on your frontline?
2. Discuss how your own frontlines have been this week.
Share one challenge and one opportunity you've encountered.
3. Thinking about your frontlines – what aspect of being in community will be the most helpful to remember?
4. Is there anything you can do in your group, or wider church, that would encourage one another on your frontlines, and give each other confidence there?
How could you introduce or develop some of these ideas?

Bible study

Read **Proverbs 27:17** and **1 Thessalonians 5:11** aloud.

- Sit in the text.
- What did you notice?

Read **Romans 8:31-39** a second time.

- What do these passages reveal to you about God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
- What does it say about...
 - a. the world?
 - b. our contexts?
 - c. something in the news?
- How does the reading relate to us and our frontlines?
Is there something to give thanks for, to do, to ask for, or to say sorry to God for?

Closing prayer

Give thanks for your church community.

Ask the Lord to show you how it could be a blessing to you, and you each can be a blessing to others in it.

Spend some time praying for each other's frontlines.

Father God, thank you for our church, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

May we encourage one another to grow in confidence as followers of Jesus wherever we are.

12 Mar 23	SESSION 3	CONFIDENCE THROUGH COMPASSION
Jeremiah 38:10-13 39:15-18	When we love people for Jesus' sake, our compassion overcomes a lack of confidence on our frontlines.	

SESSION 3 | CONFIDENCE THROUGH COMPASSION

Discussion questions

1. When has compassion trumped any nerves or hesitation in you on your frontline?
Explain why.
2. Talk about how your own frontlines have been this past week.
Share one challenge and one opportunity you've encountered.
3. Thinking about your own frontlines – what aspect of showing compassion do you think will be most helpful to remember?
Is there someone God is prompting you to be especially aware of?
4. How important do you think having compassion is for being confident to do the right thing on your frontlines?

Bible study

Re-read the passages from **Jeremiah 38-39** a couple of times. Pause to reflect on one thing that strikes you.

What passages of scripture come to your mind when you reflect on the word "compassion"?

1. What does this reading reveal about God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
2. What does it say about...
 - a. the world?
 - b. Our contexts?
 - c. Something in the news?
3. How does the reading relate to us and our frontlines?
Is there something to give thanks for, to do, to ask for, or to say sorry to God for?

Closing prayer

God of all compassion, your Son Jesus showed your compassion in all that he said and did and calls us to do the same as his followers.

Grow our confidence in you to reach out in love and care for those around us.

19 Mar 23	SESSION 4	CONFIDENCE THROUGH CONSISTENT PRACTICES
Matthew 7:24–27	We grow confidence in our faith and God’s leading when we regularly use helpful spiritual practices.	

Discussion questions

1. When has a well-rehearsed practice or routine in your work, home, or leisure life been especially helpful?
2. Discuss how your own frontlines have been this week. Share one challenge and one opportunity you’ve encountered.
3. How might having consistent spiritual practices give you confidence in a difficult situation?
4. Think about your own frontlines again – how can you introduce something simple that reminds you that you are a follower of Jesus there, or that God is present?
5. If regular, consistent spiritual practices are not something you are used to, how you could encourage one another in developing them?

Bible study

Read **Matthew 7:24-27** a couple of times, then pause to reflect on one thing that strikes you.

1. What does this reading tell us about God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
2. What does it say about... the world? Our contexts? Something in the news?
3. How does the reading relate to us and our frontlines? Is there something to give thanks for, to do, to ask for, or to say sorry to God for?

Closing prayer

Spend some time praying for each other’s frontlines.

Father, we know we don’t have what we need for our frontlines in our own strength. Help us to be intentional about staying connected with you and make us more aware of your Spirit prompting us wherever we are.

12 Mar 23	SESSION 3	CONFIDENCE THROUGH COMPASSION
Jeremiah 38:10-13 39:15-18	When we love people for Jesus' sake, our compassion overcomes a lack of confidence on our frontlines.	

SESSION 5 | CONFIDENCE THROUGH COMPETENCE

We can be more confident in sharing the good news when we are prepared for the opportunities God gives us.

Discussion questions

1. When has competence really made a difference to your confidence in something or someone? Where did that competence come from?
2. Which of the devotions did you think particularly applied to your life this week? Which did you find especially helpful?
3. Discuss how your own frontlines have been this week. Share one challenge and one opportunity you've encountered.
4. Was there an aspect of Emma's story (from the Day 31 devotion) that you found helpful? Have you had a similar experience? What's the difference between confident competence and arrogance?
5. Think about times when you've had an opportunity to share the good news of Jesus with someone. How did it go? How might you have prepared yourself?
6. Think about your own frontlines – how would growing in knowledge of God or understanding of the Bible help you there?

Bible study

Choose one of the Bible readings for this week. Read it through a couple of times, then pause to reflect on one thing that strikes you.

1. What does this reading tell us about God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
2. What does it say about... the world? Our contexts? Something in the news?
3. How does the reading relate to us and our frontlines? Is there something to give thanks for, to do, to ask for, or to say sorry to God for?

Closing prayer

Spend some time praying for each other's frontlines. You might find it helpful to use one or two of the prayers in the devotional.

Father, you've made us with gifts and abilities and so many opportunities to serve you on our frontlines. Give us fresh desire to keep on learning and growing in competence so that we're prepared to share your love wherever we are.

2 April 23	SESSION 6	CONFIDENCE THROUGH COURAGE
Jeremiah 38:10-13 39:15-18	We can be confident even when we're fearful because our courage is drawn from God's strength and faithfulness.	

Discussion questions

1. When has courage been needed in your life?
How did it give you confidence to do something challenging?
2. Discuss how your own frontlines have been this week.
Share one challenge and one opportunity you encountered.
3. Courage doesn't necessarily just involve doing something challenging.
Kindness can sometimes be an act of courage – especially if it involves risk or sacrifice.
What might courageous kindness look like on your frontline?
4. Thinking about your own frontlines – where you've been this week or will be next week.
What aspect of courage will be helpful to remember?

Bible study

Choose one of the Bible readings for this week. Read it through a couple of times, then pause to reflect on one thing that strikes you.

1. What does this reading reveal about God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
2. What does it say about... the world? Our contexts? Something in the news?
3. How does the reading relate to us and our frontlines? Is there something to give thanks for, to do, to ask for, or to say sorry to God for?

Closing prayer

Spend some time praying for each other's frontlines.

Father, we thank you that Jesus found his resolve to face the cross in you. As we think about our frontlines, give us the courage to be bold and to be kind, trusting in your grace to keep us.