**Confidence**

**Confidence:** Noun - The feeling or belief that one can rely on someone or something; firm trust

*Faith is deliberate confidence in the character of God whose ways you may not understand at this time.*

- Blaise Pascal

(An influential French mathematician and Christian philosopher)

*Fear stifles our thinking and actions. It creates indecisiveness that results in stagnation. I have known talented people who procrastinate indefinitely rather than risk failure. Lost opportunities cause erosion of confidence, and the downward spiral begins.*

- Charles Stanley

Creative people are prone to losing their confidence. From dreams that are slow to materialize to outright and repeated rejection, their confidence can erode making them poor stewards of their gifts. Low confidence can hamper their ability to live joyfully, worshipfully and powerfully for Christ. Loss of confidence can be experienced in ways that are mundane or extreme. It can result in a diminished desire to take risks and walk by faith.

What are some elements that usually precede your loss of confidence? (i.e., fear, anxiety, comparison, rejection, etc.)

Let’s look at Matthew 14:22-29. What conclusions or thoughts do you have about this passage?

**THINK:** Regardless of being a creative person or not it is easy to place your confidence in things that will ultimately fail you. Can you identify areas of your life where you are overconfident? Why do you tend to be overconfident there? Has that ever led to problems?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What happens when you place your confidence in something or someone other than God? (People, talent, status, etc.?)

2. How can you gain confidence while pursuing your calling and dealing with failure?

3. How do you gain confidence in Christ?

* **ENGAGING WITH OTHERS:**
* Seek opportunities to engage in this topic with others who are followers and not yet followers of Christ. Listen to their perspective and ask them good questions. Actively listen to them by asking thoughtful questions and resisting the urge to share your perspective or opinion. Ask clarifying questions when they pause or stop – but don’t interrupt while they are sharing. Sincerely thank them for sharing with you. If it is appropriate or they are interested offer to tell your story as it relates to your experiences with confidence.

**REFLECTION:** How is a loss of confidence in yourself a positive thing in light being a true follower of Jesus?

**PRAYER:** God, please remind us of the fact that we can place our confidence in the unwavering promise that you are unchanging and that you will never leave us. Thank you for your promises!

**OPTIONAL SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL**

Read Philippians 3