



Session 6

Being confident in God

Most of us have experienced being asked about our faith, what we believe in and why. Some of us feel comfortable having these conversations and others find them more difficult. I believe we can build foundations in our children that help them develop a firm 'God confidence', so that they will be clear and confident in how God wants them to respond to people and situations.

When I was a child and teenager, I would get into conversations about faith and feel like I had to argue God's corner, as if me having the right answers would convince someone and save them. It came from my desperation, and if I am honest, a lack of confidence that God was capable of doing it himself!

As my understanding of *who* God is and how He feels about me developed, I realised that our God loves to use us, but that it is His choice, not a necessity. When I am talking about my faith I don't need to have the right answers and a good defence, but a clear, bold understanding of who God is and what He has done for me.

In the Bible, King David experienced God in such a way that he lived 100% for God without a thought of what others might say. He was often undignified, but firm in knowing who God is and who God made him.

I want my children to grow up confident of who God is so that they can talk freely about Him with their friends. I don't want them to fear what people may

say or feel that they have to have the right answers. I believe they can hear from God and be well positioned to respond to the people and situations around them as He wants them to. So how do we raise our children with this confidence in God?

We can start by helping them understand the truth that God's Kingdom rules over the world. On top of that we can build an awareness of God's heart for us. We should demonstrate with our own responses that when difficulties happen in life they don't rule over or dictate to us. We acknowledge situations and deal with them, but God's word rules whatever the circumstances.

When we are praying with them for healing, we should pray from the position that God has limitless power and can heal anything. We also need to teach them that God's heart is for all of us to be healed. This will raise questions with them, especially if prayers seem to go unanswered, but God wants us to come to Him with this expectation. Our children can ask God their questions and we can trust that He will speak to them directly – we don't have to have all the answers for them! Having said that, it is still really important to have conversations with our children about what they are thinking and what God might be saying.

Children learn how to do things by seeing other people doing them. This is a real challenge to me to be aware and deliberate in showing my children what my own confidence is in. We model simple things like handwashing and tidying up to demonstrate that these are important things to do. In the same way, I know they will see what my confidence is in and follow my lead.

If my focus is on God, then the things of the world don't crowd out Him for me. I am quick to talk to God about things in my day, quick to ask him to intervene in situations and quick to share His heart with others.

If my focus is on the things around me, 'the world', then I am quick to be distracted and can be ruled by worry or fear. It results in me trying to control situations and focusing on my own needs and priorities. As we invite God to shake up our focus and build our foundations more confidently in Him, we can

model these simple every day moments to our children. They will see that Kingdom-focused living brings freedom and life.

We can involve our children as we bring our focus back to God in everyday moments. Frequent, deliberate conversations help lay the foundations of faith. For example, an older child may talk about things they have heard in the news that could bring fear – this is an opportunity to talk about how nothing happens that is beyond God’s control. When we feel God call us to meet a need, we can involve our children in some of that process. When we open our home up to others we can talk to them about God’s heart for people.

As we build faith in our children, we also need to help them develop confidence in God. This involves taking a position as a family to trust God rather than our own understanding, even in difficult situations that we don’t understand.

Principles:

1.) Our God is a great big God!

Job 26:14 – ‘behold, these are but the outskirts of His ways and how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?’ (ESV)

2.) God’s Kingdom rules over the world; He is in charge of everything and nothing is too difficult for Him.

Isaiah 40:28 – ‘Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary: His understanding is unsearchable.’ (ESV)

3.) Our confidence needs to be in God - focused on His ability and not our inability – that is what we model to our children.

2 Cor 12:9 – ‘But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest upon me.’

Questions:

- Do you feel that you have to have all the answers about God for your child? Are you comfortable to be unable to answer their questions? How do you handle that?
- Is your focus in daily life on God's kingdom ruling over the natural world or the other way around? How can we adjust our thinking in line with what God says? How can we then model that to our children?
- How do we encourage our children in 'God confidence'?

Practicals:

- Talk your child through a thought process or situation you've had that day where you have seen God's power in action – it can be simple!
- Talk to your child about situations in their life and how God's power can rule – it may be bed-wetting, nightmares or something bigger.
- Be honest where you find your own confidence in God is low and talk that through with someone. We want to lead our children into something we are living in the fullness of.