

## Small Group Discussion Guide Counterfeits of Confidence - 2 Corinthians 3

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### ### Opening Prayer

Begin by asking God to help your group engage honestly with His Word and with one another. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where we've been seeking confidence in the wrong places.

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### ### Icebreaker

**\*\*Question:\*\*** When you were younger, what did you think would make you feel confident or "successful" in life? How has that changed (or not changed)?

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### ### Read Together

Have someone read **\*\*2 Corinthians 3:1-6, 12-18\*\*** aloud.

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### ### Discussion Questions

#### ##### 1. **\*\*Counterfeit #1: Commendation (Seeking Others' Approval)\*\***

- Paul asks, "Do we need letters of recommendation to you or from you?" What does he mean by this?
- Pastor Mark said, **\*\*"If you require their commendation, you invite their control."\*\*** Where in your life have you given someone else the power to manage your emotions or sense of worth?
- What's the difference between healthy accountability and unhealthy approval-seeking?

#### ##### 2. **\*\*Counterfeit #2: Competency (Proving Yourself)\*\***

- Paul writes, "Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God" (v. 5). How does our culture push us toward self-sufficiency?
- Pastor Mark said, **\*\*"God is not anti-effort. He's anti-earning."\*\*** What does that distinction mean practically? How can we work hard without falling into the trap of trying to earn God's love?
- Share an area where you've been exhausting yourself trying to prove you're worthy.

#### ##### 3. **\*\*Counterfeit #3: Condemnation (Living Under the Law)\*\***

- What does it mean that "the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (v. 6)?
- The Old Covenant law brought condemnation because no one could keep it perfectly. How do Christians sometimes fall back into law-based living?

- What does true freedom in Christ look like in daily life?

#### #### 4. **True Confidence: Christ and His Covenant**

- Verse 17-18 says, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom... And we all... are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory." What does transformation "from glory to glory" look like?

- How do we cultivate worship "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24)?

- Pastor Mark said we have **"nobody to impress and nothing to prove."** How would your life change if you really believed that?

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#### ### Application

**Choose one or two:**

1. **Audit your confidence sources:** This week, pay attention to when you feel insecure or anxious. Ask yourself: Am I seeking someone's approval? Am I trying to prove myself? Am I living under condemnation? Write down what you notice.

2. **Memorize Scripture:** Choose one verse from 2 Corinthians 3 to memorize this week (suggestions: v. 5, v. 17, or v. 18). Let it reorient your confidence toward Christ.

3. **Take back authority:** Is there someone whose opinion has been "managing your emotions"? Pray about it, then take a practical step to reclaim that authority—whether through a conversation, setting a boundary, or simply choosing not to give their words power over you.

4. **Practice unveiled worship:** Spend time this week contemplating God's glory through Scripture, worship music, or creation. Ask the Spirit to transform you as you behold Him.

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#### ### Closing Prayer

Go around the circle and let each person pray a short prayer of surrender—giving God areas where they've been seeking counterfeit confidence. Close by thanking Jesus that our confidence rests fully in His finished work, not in ourselves or others' opinions.

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#### ### For Further Reflection

- Read **Galatians 5:1** and **Romans 8:1-4**—how do these passages reinforce what we learned in 2 Corinthians 3?

- Journal: What would it look like for me to live with "unveiled face" confidence this week?