

#2 Discover Your Choices



Our choices are related to our hope and confidence!

The Path of Spiritual Life

- Starts with new life in Christ
- 3 stages
- Level 2 - Gain confidence in God's powerful Word.



Facts from Fiction - 2nd Foundation

"I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one" (1 John 2:14).

- **Point:** "You are strong!"
- **Purpose:** Build confidence.
- **Problem:** We do not believe we are _____.
- **Product:** We feel weak and defeated.

**BELIEVE
WHAT YOU
CHOOSE**

Choice

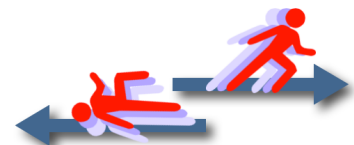
**Never be a
victim**

The Battlefield

- Our natural hearts are _____, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts..." (Mark 7:21).
- Our new heart is all good, "For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit" (Ro 8:5).
- The mind is the battlefield. The issue is over which we trust, and that depends on what we believe. "Be transformed by the renewing your minds" (Rom 12:1-2; Eph 4:23).
- Who controls the mind wins – Eve
- "Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11).

Personal Reflection

- Are you strong? What makes you feel weak?
- Do you sometimes excuse yourself from this victory claim and are willing to live as if you have lost? e.g., "That's the way I am, I guess."
- How does what John says compare to what you believe deep down? Can you see how your hope sometimes leaks from your spirit?



Fortifying Ourselves

- Two areas especially need strengthening:
 - #1 Discernment of our thoughts (_____)
 - #2 Belief that God's way is always best (_____)

#1 Discerning our Thoughts & Choices

- When defeated or cocky, note short phrases in one's mind (temptations).
- Note how our choices (i.e., minds) greatly influence our feelings.
- Link what we believe to our choices. _____ ways:
 - (1) **Defeated thoughts:** "I never can do it right." "I guess I am no good." "No one wants to be my friend."
 - (2) **Trusting God:** "The Lord is so good!" "Thank You for forgiving me!"
 - (3) **Self-confident:** "I am so clever!" "I can handle it."
- We discard and adopt proper thoughts only when we discern our thoughts.

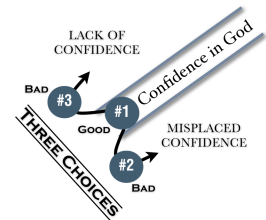


#2 God's Way is Always the Best - Faith!

- Spiritual growth is best measured by our growing faith in God's ways (Job 17:9; Ps 1:6).
- Obedience works wonders - even when you do not feel like it or it looks impossible.
- "Take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Eph 6:17).

The Confidence (Trust) Filter - 3 choices

- Significant choices are those that matter to God.
- All significant decisions can be placed in one of 3 categories.
 - **#1 Confidence in God** (always best): Abraham saved Lot (Gen 12:1-4; 14:1-24).
 - **#2 Misplaced confidence** (evil): Have confidence in things other than God. (e.g., riches; Abram lied Gen 12:10-20; Joshua's defeat at Ai Jos 7).
 - **#3 Lack of confidence** (evil): Lack of trust in God ("Too strong" Nu 13:31; Saul 1 Sam 15:24). Note: Low and high self-esteem concepts are evil because they do not relate to God.



Life Application: Path of Restoration

- Mind: Note the specific words or phrases that come to your mind.
- God-confidence: Trust in God's way and design as always _____.
- Misplaced confidence (idols) and lack of confidence induce poor choices, causing emotional, physical, relational, and spiritual problems due to _____ in God.
- Solutions are found by spotting how we have not rightly trusted the Lord, repenting, and placing our complete trust in the Lord.
- Identifying sin leads to repentance, restoration, trust in the Lord, and proper choices.

➡**Key: Take back possession of your mind. You are strong. God's ways are good. Obey Him!**

Life Sharing

- What is a word/phrase that Satan uses to bait you? (i.e. temptation)
- When do you find yourself doubting God's way as always best?

Assignments

- Complete Exercise #1: *Making Good Matches*.
- Complete Exercise #21: *Faith Definitions*.

