



## CUT TO THE CORE

By Vincent M. Newfield

**Confidence**—a trusting, or reliance . . . an assurance of mind or firm belief in the integrity, stability or [truthfulness] of another, or in the truth and reality of a fact. <sup>1</sup>

Cultivating confidence is very important, but in order to do so we must understand what it is. Take a look at what the dictionary says. The word confidence comes from the root word *confide*. Confide is from the Latin word *confido*—con, meaning *with*, and fido meaning *to trust*. So, to confide literally means *with trust* or *to place trust in*. In other words, confidence is all about trust. We place our confidence in the things we believe in.

**Confidence is an invisible commodity.** We all have some, and we all invest it in different amounts in a variety of things. Think about it. When you make a decision to sit in your favorite chair, you're placing confidence in the chair's ability to hold you. When you get sick, you go to the doctor and he gives you a prescription. You get the medicine and begin taking it, placing confidence in the doctor's integrity and in the medicine's ability to make you better.

We also place a great deal of trust or confidence in people and sources of information. Newspapers, radio and TV broadcasts, websites, as well as all kinds of books and magazines, are all places we invest a certain amount of confidence. We rely upon them to provide information that is accurate and true. We also place confidence in the food we eat. We either trust that something is good for us and eat it, or we believe what we eat really doesn't matter, and therefore we eat anything we want.

In each situation, we are consciously or unconsciously placing confidence in something. The *amount* of confidence we invest and *what we invest in* are a direct reflection of our core beliefs.

**Our core beliefs dictate where we place our confidence.** They are the values and viewpoints everything else in our life centers around—the ways of thinking we hold tightly to. Picture a big red apple in front of you. Now picture taking an apple slicer and pressing down on the top of the apple. What happens? It cuts the apple into several pieces, leaving a column-like core in the center. Now take a closer look at the core . . . what do you see? Seeds. The core contains seeds that reproduce what the apple is. In the same way, our *core* beliefs contain seeds that reproduce what we are.

The Bible says that as a man thinks in his heart—the *core* of who he is—that's what he becomes. So what is your mind filled with? What values and viewpoints do you hold tightly to—and defend when someone attacks them? They make up your core beliefs and dictate to a great degree where you place your confidence. How can you tell what you have your confidence in? Look at where you invest your time, money, energy and attention. These are the things you trust and believe are good for you . . . these are the things you place your confidence in.

**Where are you placing your confidence?** Is it in your education, job position, relationships, bank account, religion, government . . . what is it? The truth is we shouldn't place much confidence in anything other than God. Why? Because He *never* changes. Everything else changes—our vocation, location, and financial situation all change. This is also true of our relationships, health, the value of our education, and everything else in life. But God NEVER changes! <sup>2</sup>

I encourage you to take a close look at your core beliefs. Begin placing your confidence in God and God alone. Allow your values and viewpoints to center around your relationship with Him and what He says in His Word. This will not happen overnight—it is a lifelong process. But as you begin each day renewing your mind with truth and putting no confidence in your own abilities,<sup>3</sup> you will cultivate an unshakable confidence that can withstand even the greatest doubts and fears.

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(1) *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster 1828 (Foundation for American Christian Education, San Francisco, CA: 2000). (2) See Hebrews 13:8. (3) See Philippians 3:3.