



Jesus Is My Confidence!

Bible Study – Leader's Guide

1. What does the world offer to bolster confidence?

Exercise, whiter teeth, self help books, education, snazzy autos ... These are not wrong in themselves when seen as blessings from God for our earthly life. But they do not offer lasting peace and confidence that goes to the very core of our being.

2. What is the ultimate destroyer of confidence?

Sin. In order to feel good about ourselves we need to do everything perfectly. But we can't. Our entire being is pervaded with sin and so is our world.

3. What is the answer?

Jesus! He is the perfect Son who took all of our sin to the cross and in exchange gives us His perfection so our hearts can be joyful and confident no matter what life's circumstances present.

4. In verse 19, from where does our confidence come? What is the source of the Christian's confidence?

Our confidence comes from the blood of Christ in His atoning sacrifice on Calvary's cross.

5. See 1 John 1:7b. What does the blood of Christ do for us?

The blood of Christ cleans and purifies us from all of our sins: the sin that we have inherited through the fall of Adam, and the sins that we have done against others, against ourselves, and against God."

6. What are the "holy places" that now we can enter?

We now have confidence that we can enter the real presence of God in the Divine Service – worship, prayer, thanksgiving, and the Lord's Supper.

7. What is the "curtain" in verse 20? See Matthew 27:50-51.

Through the blood of Christ shed on Calvary's cross, sins are forgiven and we are united with God. The tearing of the temple curtain is the stunning reality that God and mankind are united in the death of Christ. We have the confidence that payment for sin has been made and we are now dear children of the Heavenly Father. Emmanuel – God with us!

8. According to verse 21, who is the great high priest? See Hebrews 4:14-16.

Christ is our great high priest. It is through our Savior that we can confidently come to the throne of God to receive mercy and grace in every need, challenge, and difficulty in our lives.

9. What is meant by "house of God"?

That's us – His church!

10. In verse 22, what is meant by a "true heart"? See Psalm 51:1.

A true heart is a repentant heart which believes not in its own good works but on the work of Christ's death as the perfect payment bestowing the forgiveness of sins. This is what gives confidence!

11. In one word, what is meant by "hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water"?

Baptism!

12. According to verse 23, what is the “*confession of our hope*”?

As we think of “hope” we begin by understanding that we are not talking about “hope” as the world talks about “hope” - wishful thinking, sincere desires. We as Christians “hope” with confidence because the promises of God are sure and certain. Hope is not just wishing, but it is certainty that something expected will come to pass. Then, the hope is the sure and certain knowledge, through faith, that we are forgiven, washed clean, reunited with God, and will receive the gift of eternal life in heaven because of the saving work of Jesus Christ.

When we speak of confessing this hope - this is our witness, our speaking about that which we know. It is grounded in faith, and that faith cannot help but live, move, speak, and act.

Holy Scripture teaches us and assures us that Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, is our Lord. He has forgiven all our sins on Calvary's cross. We confess this truth in the three Ecumenical Creeds, our hymns and liturgy, and the Lutheran Confessions contained in *The Book of Concord*.

13. “... *for He who promised is faithful.*” How does this give us confidence? See

Malachi 3:6a and 1 John 4:8b-9.

God does not change and cannot change. He remains ever loving and faithful to His children. Faith is not subjective. It is not a matter of our feelings. Our feelings waver, fall, and rise. Faith is the objective certainty of God's promises in His Word. Faith clings to Christ who is faithful to us.

14. What is verse 24 encouraging?

This passage encourages love and good works to our fellow man. Luther teaches that we are Christ to our neighbor in all of our vocations – butcher, baker, farmer, teacher, nurse, wife, mother, grandmother ...

15. What does it mean “*to meet together*” in verse 25? See Acts 2:42.

This is the assembling of the baptized in the Divine Service.

16. Why is it important to connect verse 24, “*love and good works,*” with verse 25, “*not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some*”?

In verse 25, the writer to the Hebrews observes that some Christians were actively involved in love and good works (verse 24) and neglected attending the worship service. This connection suggests that some Christians viewed the love and good works as the most important activity of faith, forgetting the need to feed and strengthen their faith in meeting together in worship. As Christians, we need both. We need to be fed and strengthened through Word and Sacrament, and we need to exercise our faith through love and good works. So, verse 25 is our reminder and encouragement to feed on Word and Sacrament regularly, so that we can continue to do the “love and good works” spoken of in verse 24.

17. According to verse 25, what is “*the Day drawing near*”?

Judgment Day, the day on which Christ will return to judge the living and the dead.

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