

Joyce Meyer: Practical Steps to Boost Your Confidence

God has a great plan for each person's life, and He wants us to enjoy every day of our lives. But we can't do it if we live in fear and lack confidence. Confidence is the belief that you're able to do what you need to do or what you want to do. God gives us confidence, but we need to know how to access it by faith.

God-given confidence is actually the grace of God. We usually hear grace defined as God's undeserved favor or God doing something for you that you don't deserve. But it's really more than that.

It was life-changing for me to learn that grace is also God's power, freely given to me, to enable me to do with ease what I could never do on my own with any amount of struggle or effort.

Think about this for a minute. Everyone who accepts Christ as their Savior is taught that we're saved by grace through faith. Ephesians 2:8 (NIV) says, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God."

But the same way we are saved is the way we are supposed to live. In other words, once we are born again, God wants us to do everything in life by grace through faith.

This has been one of the greatest revelations of my life. I remember how exciting it was to realize that God is not just there to help us when we have an emergency. God wants to be involved in every single thing we do on a daily basis.

There's nothing you're involved in that God doesn't care about, and He wants you to pray and ask Him to help you with

every detail of your life. He doesn't want you to live striving in your own effort to do anything. God wants to be your close, personal, intimate friend.

I was a Christian for years before I learned how to access God's grace—His power—to live my everyday life. First, I had to get an understanding that once I was saved, God didn't expect me to live right by my own strength.

Just as I couldn't "earn" salvation through my own works or effort, I also couldn't really change my heart or behavior in my own strength. Jesus says in John 15:4 (NIV), "No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

Every day we need to come to God and tell Him, "God, I can do nothing without You. Nothing in my life is going to work without You. Apart from You, there is nothing good in me. My confidence is in You. I need You all the time. I believe You and trust You, Lord."

When we humble ourselves before God and ask Him for help, we can access His grace through faith.

To help you do that, I want to share three things that commonly short-circuit our faith, cutting off our access to God's power: complaining, self-pity and pride.

Complaining is a negative attitude that keeps us from being thankful for all God has done, what He's doing, and what He will do. It is a sin we need to repent of, and then be determined to thank God in all things, at all times. His grace and blessings always outweigh the things we think are wrong in our life.

Self-pity is simply a "poor me" attitude. It is a form of idolatry because it causes you to focus on yourself and think, "What about me?" We can't be pitiful and powerful at the same time, so let's decide to give up all self-pity.

Pride takes credit for what God has done and steals His glory. It makes us independent of God, and we can't bear good fruit apart from Christ.

Before I learned how to live my life by God's grace, I was a mess. I was a nagging wife, manipulative and controlling. And I wasn't satisfied living like that. Then God helped me by opening my eyes to see that I couldn't really change until I started taking His Word seriously, trusting Him to change me.

When I made a firm decision to pray and study the Word in areas where I was weak, then God's grace gave me the power I needed to overcome the things that were wrong. And I keep going forward in my journey with God the same way today.

God has all the power you need to do anything you need to do. He loves you and wants to give you His power to live your everyday life with joy. Trust His wisdom and goodness, and you'll live with God-given confidence!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's teaching resource Knowing Who You Are in Christ. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting . {eo}

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