

Never Throw Away Your Confidence

Stumbling through the hotel room door, my mind was swimming with the memory of the last few moments before I took off running for privacy. Sobs were still tearing from my throat, and tears continued to blind me. Worship had just ended. We were given the communion elements and instructed to wait on the Lord. I dutifully sat, waiting. For what, I didn't know. Suddenly His voice broke in, calling me to full-time vocational ministry. Me. The one with a shameful past. When I protested, He said, "Tell the blonde woman what I just told you." When I did, she looked through me and told a demon to leave. I let out a wail, shook violently as it lost its grip on my mind, and ran to my room.

"Get your Bible and open to the book of Hebrews, chapter ten, verses 35-39," He said. Do not throw away your confidence. Never shrink back. Keep moving forward. Live by faith. Endure to the end. His promises will be your reward. This was the message. It was the message I would need to overcome and walk by faith through the testing and trials.

Hebrews was written to Christians who, because they decided to follow Christ, were experiencing mounting pressure to conform to their old way of life (Judaism) with an ever-intensifying threat of persecution if they did not. Their faith was being tested. They were afraid. They were tempted to shrink back. Hebrews warns, exhorts, and encourages them to "run the race with endurance" because they "have everything to lose if they fall back, but everything to gain if they press on."

Confidence is the key to endurance. What is confidence? Are we to grit our teeth, square our shoulders, and resolutely believe in ourselves? Is self-confidence with its companions, self-assurance, and self-reliance enough to run our race with

endurance? *No!*

Confidence, in Hebrews, means much, much more. It implies a deep, abiding, unrelenting, unapologetic, passionate belief in Jesus; a bold-believing trust in Him that raises its voice to what is true, takes risks to move forward, and endures with hope until His promises are fulfilled. It is faith that sees and receives Jesus— the author and accomplisher of our faith, the begotten son of God who is superior to angels, Abraham, and Moses. Through Him, everything was created, and by His word, everything is sustained. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the one who has given his life once and for all, saving us to the uttermost by tasting and destroying death on our behalf. Jesus is our high priest who has suffered as we do and sympathizes with our weaknesses.

This is our confidence. We have favor and power from Jesus to help us endure and even thrive, in times of struggle, persecution, false accusation, turmoil, cultural shifts and shakings, reproach, affliction, and suffering without shrinking back. We don't need what the world offers—power, pleasure, position, possessions—because we have something better that cannot be taken from us – Christ and eternity.

Challenging times threaten to harden our hearts with discouragement, paving the way to unbelief and ending in apostasy. This was the cause of the rebellion in the wilderness, preventing the people of God from entering the promised land. What is the cure? Right now, no matter what you are facing, never throw away your confidence! Keep moving forward!

Dr. Kim Maas is a sought-after international speaker, author, and Christian minister. After a radical encounter with the Holy Spirit on March 22, 1994, Dr. Kim left her 22-year nursing career to serve God full-time. Her passion is to inspire, encourage and equip God's people to move forward in the call of God on their lives. She is the president and CEO

of Kim Maas Ministries, the founder and director of Women of Our Time (WOOT), host of the Move Forward with Dr. Kim Maas podcast, host of the Move Forward with Dr. Kim Maas KiTV show and author. Kim and her husband Mike live in Athol, Idaho. They have three children and a growing number of grandchildren. Go to her website to find all her resources.