

Having Confidence In God

Steve Thompson—February 17, 2018

Hello to those out in CBCG-land. Fred had asked me to speak so I figured I'd give it a go. I am originally from Leeds, (in the County of) Yorkshire, England. I moved here in 1979, and I now live in Santa Cruz, California.

As a bit of background: I first heard of Worldwide Church of God in 1974. There's a Plain Truth Magazine in the UK. They used to give the magazines away free, so I would pick one up. I didn't get serious about Church, really, until after I moved to the U.S., got married and had kids. I got baptized in 1986 and I left the Worldwide in 1994. I have two grown kids and six grand-kids. That's a little about me. The only job I've ever had has been furniture and upholstery repair, 40-plus years already. I started as a 15-year-old making new furniture in a factory. Since 1984 I've had my own business.

As I was running this business, I would read books on how to run it more efficiently. I read a lot of the best sellers back in the 80s and 90s:

- *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Steven R. Covey.
- *In Search of Excellence* by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr.

I came across one book, a small paperback, called:

- *The C-Zone* by Robert Kriegel, Ph.D.

It tells me how to achieve peak performance under pressure. The premise of it was that you have a type 'A' behavior, which is the hyperactive, always running, putting out fires, constantly in distress, got to get it done, multitasker, driven to perform. It's unhealthy and statistically you would die younger. The type 'B,' which was an ambitious, ho-hum, drift along, don't take risks kind of guy.

The book wants you to combine the two attitudes to enter *C-zone* to achieve peak performance under pressure. I do my best work when I'm under a little bit of pressure, having a goal to get something done, which could relate to your making it into the Kingdom. You have to be under pressure to have that goal. The way to do this according to this book is to have *confidence, commitment and control*.

Let's look at this from a Christian perspective. You may see why I liked this book. The book has various exercises and such, which I won't bother you with. Let's focus on the 'C' words:

1. **Confidence:**

- Do you have confidence in your life?

- Do you have confidence in the Christian walk that you promised at baptism that you would follow?
- Do you have confidence that we're doing the right thing? no second guessing?
- Do you have confidence in God Himself?
- Do you have confidence in God's promises, no matter the circumstances?

When I was growing up, I had confidence in my parents, especially my mom. I didn't grow up doubting they would get divorced, not have a house, or food; such things were not on my radar. I just never had to worry about it; it just wasn't in my head that I had to worry about that. That was such a blessing.

Years later, back in 1976 I visited the U.S. I either hitchhiked or rode the Greyhound Bus a few months. This was the bicentennial year and it was a great time to be British. I went up to Vancouver Island in British Columbia and coming back to the U.S., they wouldn't let me back into the country for lack of funds. I only had a couple of weeks left before I had to fly to England, so the money was running low. So, they wouldn't let me back in the country, basically; I had to because my flight was from New York.

I don't remember the details now, but I called mom somehow, 'Mommy.' The money was there two days later. I knew I could always count on mom. She had the money there two days later and this was back in the 70s tech., no instant transfers, no whatever. Somehow, I don't remember how she did it, but she did. I had confidence in her. I knew I could count on her.

How does this relate to anything? *It is a model for how we should have confidence in God, never doubting, never questioning, Will He? Won't He?* God may say no to something or put a test on us, but we should have total confidence in God. He created us. So, what's your problem?

This is kind of a fill-in-the-blank sermonette because there are so many Scriptures we could use. The first one that came to mind was:

Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this very thing... [we're told to be confident in what we're told] ...that He Who began a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ."

We can have this confidence that God is backing us up. We should be confident. God chose to work with us. He could have picked anybody, but He picked us. He has to see something or have some

confidence in us that we can make it into the Kingdom.

Psalm 118:5: “I called upon the LORD in distress; the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.” *We can call on God confidently and know that He is going to set us up, in a sense like that!*

Proverbs 3:26: “For the LORD shall be your confidence and shall keep your foot from being taken.”

We can just read these Scriptures and know we’re going to confidently call on God to help us no matter what the circumstances.

Hebrews 3:6: “But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful* as the Son over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.” *We can have confidence in what we do knowing God is behind us!*

2. Commitment:

- Are we committed?

or

- Is it just a ‘feel good’ experience?

When we were back in Worldwide it felt good to go to Worldwide, **but were they committed?** We have thousands of people all singing at the Feast, and it felt good, **but was that all it was?** Where are they now, all the people we used to know? *We thought they were committed and we find out they really weren’t!*

Do we love God more than children, parents and life? We should, **but do we?** Only you know, and *God knows!* I hope I love God more, even into martyrdom, if need be. We will need that kind of commitment in the future. If you’ve ever read *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs* by John Foxe, that’s the kind of commitment we need.

Proverbs 16:3: “Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established.”

We’re told to **commit**. Just like *The C-Zone* book says, *we commit*. This way we’re committing toward God that He will guide and protect us.

If you’ve ever looked at the *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*, they went through some horrible things, but they kept their commitment, willing to die for Him. Let’s hope that we would be able to, also.

3. Control:

- Are you in control no matter what the circumstances?

- Do you ‘lose it’ over things real or imagined?
- Do your emotions rule you?
- Are you an emotional person known to be touchy, a ‘fly-off-the-handle’ sort of person?

I remember one year at the Feast I had somebody want to hit me with a pool cue because he was out of control. Fortunately, there was a room full of people and he couldn’t do that. He was not committed and not in control of his emotions at that time.

- Can we control the self?

or

- Does it control us?
- What dominates you?

Romans 6:14: “For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace.” *Sin is not supposed to rule over us!* We are supposed to have control of sin and try to not mess up! Just be in control of the self, not emotional. To be in control, to dominate the self, ‘let him that sins, sin no more.’

Have you ever watched somebody who’s good at what they do? *They can make the complex look easy!* They have *confidence and commitment*, and they have control in what they do.

I’ll not speak of my friend Jack, but I watch him build motorcycle engines and he is in control. He knows what he’s doing. You watch him and he’s good at it. Somebody who’s good at what they do makes it look easy. We should try to make Christianity look easy, in a sense, that people would want to do it. Having control is very important. You can’t really be Christian without having control. So, we have *confidence, commitment and control!*

4. Courage:

You might think that’s good, but the author of this book—*The C-Zone*—is very slick in what he does. It says that there’s one other ‘C’ word that we have to have. We have confidence, commitment and control, and there’s one more thing that we need: courage.

- Do we have courage to follow what we need to do?
- Do we have confidence to be in control?
- Do we have the commitment to maintain this way of life?
- Do we have the control we need?
- Do we have the courage to practice what we believe and to set an example?

- Would you walk down the street with a Bible?
- Would you be dressed nice and stand out from the crowd?

or

- Do we try to blend in and not make waves?
- Do your neighbors know you're a Christian?

I remember one time somebody came to visit me from England and my ex-wife was like, 'Ugh! That Church, it caused all the problems.' This friends of mine—I was really embarrassed—said, 'What Church?' They didn't know that I went to Church. I don't know if it was that I kept it from them, or for whatever reason they just never knew I went to Church. I was really embarrassed that they didn't know that. ***We need to have the courage of our convictions!***

This is *The C-Zone*:

- confidence
- commitment
- control
- courage

and strive to walk in it!

Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ, Who empowers me." ***We can have the confidence, the commitment, the control and the courage to let Christ strengthen us!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Philippians 1:6
- 2) Psalms 118:5
- 3) Proverbs 3:26
- 4) Hebrews 3:6
- 5) Proverbs 16:3
- 6) Romans 6:14
- 7) Philippians 4:13

Also referenced: Books

- *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Steven R. Covey
- *In Search of Excellence* by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr.
- *The C-Zone* by Robert Kriegel, Ph.D.
- *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* by John Foxe

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Transcribed: 11/5/18
Proofed: bo—11/6/18