

Self-Confident

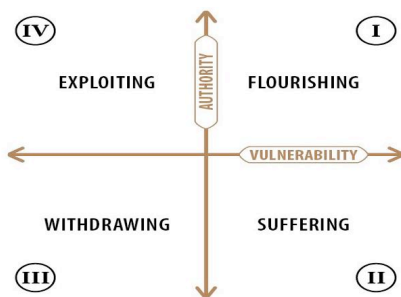
DISCUSSION GUIDE

ICE-BREAKER:

Recall a time when you had to do something you didn't think you could do. How did you respond?

QUESTIONS:

Reflect on the chart below (from the book Strong and Weak by Andy Crouch):



- Based on your life experience, what is the relationship between vulnerability and authority? How do authority and vulnerability work together to help a person live confidently?
- What does it look like for you to live with confidence in God? [If that is too broad of a question for you, apply this question to a specific area of your life.]

Read II Corinthians 12:9-10

- What is Paul's perspective on weakness? How might that shape your view of your own weaknesses?

1. SUFFERING: Read Genesis 25:24-28.

- Compare Jacob and Esau – how are they alike and how are they different?
- Rate Jacob's sense of authority and his sense of vulnerability (1-10, low to high). How does this impact his confidence level?

2. EXPLOITING: Read Genesis 27:1-19

- What is Jacob's reaction upon hearing his mother's plan and why?
- In this passage, Rebekah demonstrates a high sense of authority and low vulnerability. How would you characterize her resulting actions?

3. WITHDRAWING: Read Genesis 27:41-45

- What is the impact of Rebekah and Jacob's actions?
- Describe how Jacob might have felt in running away and share a time when you experienced those same/similar feelings?

4. FLOURISHING: Read Genesis 28:1-15

- The relationship being offered by God to Jacob is one of a high authority and high vulnerability. What is the source of Jacob's authority? Why would Jacob also have a high level of vulnerability?
- How have you experienced this 'confidence paradox' in your own life?

APPLICATION:

1. Who or what is your primary source of confidence?
2. What action do you need to take this coming week to respond to what God is teaching you through this study? Consider the following commitments as options: * I will not pretend to agree with people I don't agree with. * I will believe that people are interested in me connecting with them, and listening to, them. * I will wake up believing that God is going to help me throughout the day. * I won't compare myself to anybody else. * I will be confident that God will care for my needs and not worry about money. * I will be confident that God is with me in my work and not obsess over it.