

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Hope,” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for February 26, 2012. The lesson is found on page 81 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

Do women have less self-confidence than do men? Some recent studies ask that question and explain some reasons why it may be true.

A study in the October 2011 issue of the *American Sociological Review* showed that women are less likely than men to stay in engineering majors and to become engineers. The study cited a lack of “professional role confidence” among women interested in that field. The authors used this term to describe people’s faith in their abilities and their belief that they are suited to be professional engineers.

“Women engineering students go to the same classes, take the same tests, and get the same GPAs as men, sometimes even higher,” said the study. “But, what we found is that the women in our study developed less confidence in their engineering expertise than men did and they also developed less confidence that engineering is the career that fits them best, even though they went through the same preparation process as men.”

Another study indicated that women have less confidence than men when it comes to starting or running a business. The London-based *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor* found that “compared to men, fewer women believe there are lots of opportunities for entrepreneurship and that they have the capabilities for this endeavor. Fewer women than men intend to start businesses and more are dissuaded by fear of failure.”

Ann Daly, an author and career coach devoted to the advancement of women, believes that part of the problem is that women are taught at a young age to be perfectionists. “Perfection is the enemy of the good, and it’s the enemy of confidence,” she said. Daly explained that girls often come to believe that they need to get everything right to reach the top of the class. She calls this phenomenon “the gold star syndrome.” Daly believes that when women conclude that success requires perfectionism, they begin to doubt that they can succeed at all.

Others say that the problem is not that women lack self-confidence. Rather, they believe the problem is that men have *too much* confidence in themselves. Vickie Milazzo, author of *Wicked Success Is Inside Every Woman*, cites a recent study from Columbia Business School. That study concluded that men honestly believe their job performance is 30 percent better than it really is! “Women are raised to be more modest. If you toot your own horn, that’s not what nice women are raised to do,” said Milazzo.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

What do you think about the information in this article? In your experience, have you found women to have less confidence in themselves than do men? What has led you to believe that?

In what do you place your hope? How confident are you in your own abilities to succeed in life? Explain. List some people in whom you have confidence. What makes you trust them?

Sometimes it is difficult to face this life with confidence. People disappoint us. Events are unpredictable. Our own abilities are subject to injury and disease. Despite this, Paul told Timothy that there are three reasons Christians can live confidently. Let’s discover what they are.



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

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