

Meditation 1 for Hickory WWWC: When You Feel Like You Are Not Enough

I am not enough. I may cruise through a day projecting confidence and purpose, but this message continually lurks on the periphery of my mind. I am not smart enough, productive enough, unselfish enough, spiritual enough, disciplined enough, pretty enough. In fact, in the back of my mind there seems to be a radio that plays a whole list of "I am not enough" songs throughout every day. Some days, the music is so soft that I scarcely notice it, like the quiet background music in a doctor's office. Other days it blares loudly and obnoxiously. Those are the days I want to withdraw from life, because, well. . . . I am not enough.

I have lots of strategies for trying to quiet the unwanted music in my head. I can get busy to prove that I am productive. I can consult friends who can reassure me that I'm a good friend. I can buy new clothes or accessories to feel prettier. I can volunteer with people less fortunate than myself to prove that I'm actually unselfish. I can read my Bible more. Memorize more scripture. Exercise more. All of these are self-improvement tactics to convince myself and others that I have what it takes to make life work. I am enough.

Another strategy that I employ to combat feelings of inadequacy is *comparison*. I look at others to imitate behaviors of success. I might compare myself with others who I judge to be more selfish, less productive, less spiritual. I might measure myself against celebrities who are "so lost," politicians who are "so hateful," or a friend who is "so angry." Sometimes doing this can turn the knob on my internal radio, so that I can hear songs of worth instead of songs of condemnation.

The problem with comparison, however, is that it cuts both ways. I might temporarily be assured that I am not so bad. But in the next moment, I am seeing someone who is so much smarter, more put together, more sacrificing and more articulate than I am. *Comparison is a boomerang that returns more harm than help.* In fact, nothing turns up the volume on my "I am not enough" music quite like comparing myself to other women.

I don't think I'm so different from most of you. If we could see a print out of what others are listening to in their minds, I think we would see a lot of similarities. We are all listening to some version of "I am not enough."

Evidently, we are in good company. The "I am not enough" song has played for a long time. It transcends culture, gender, religion and time. It blares loudly even in Christian circles, for we can also feel inadequate in our faith. I think the apostle Paul was trying to interrupt this toxic soundtrack when he wrote to believers in Corinth:

*"Such is the confidence we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, **but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." (2 Corinthians 3:4-6).*

Paul isn't just spinning the dial to a more positive message. He is throwing out the radio. Feeling good about ourselves doesn't come from working harder, listening to inspiring podcasts, having the right friends or practicing positive messaging. These are horizontal sources which are bound to hurt us as much as help us.

God gives us what we can't conjure up ourselves: confidence. Confidence through Christ toward God. This is a vertical power source. We aren't enough. We aren't sufficient. But God has gifted us sufficiency. Through Christ, we are enough. Will we take God at His word?

We are enough simply because God says so.

Meditate on this truth as you listen to this song: ["I'll Give Thanks" by Housefires.](#)

Meditation 2 for WWWC Hickory: Living in Confidence

What is your favorite morning drink? For me, it is a mug of steaming black coffee. Sometimes I imagine what my day could be like if I could spike my coffee with an elixir that would supply me with confidence for the day. That would be the perfect antidote when I don't feel like I am enough.

I may not have a magic confidence elixir, but the truth is that while I drink my coffee, I can engage in a daily practice that will yield confidence in my life. That practice is confession.

For some, that very word is painful, stirring feelings of shame. Confession implies guilt. It is an admission of wrong. I spend most of my days trying to "get it right." Why would I want to devote focus to confessing my mistakes?

For this simple reason: ***confession is the portal to freedom and the pathway to confidence.***

It is embedded in our human nature is to put on our best face for the world. We all live with an image of the kind of friend/parent/partner we want to be, and we exert enormous effort to project that image. The problem is, that image is false, and the energy it takes to maintain that image is exhausting. Many of us live with the low-level anxiety that the people around us may discover that we really aren't smart enough, fun enough, hard-working enough, good enough.

Confession takes off that false image. It acknowledges the truth that I am a limited, flawed and imperfect individual. I may confess my moral failings: deceiving my boss, yelling at my kids, seeking comfort in the wrong places. But I also need to confess my insecurities and the fact that *I let my insecurities define me more than I let God define me.* Confession is like throwing open the doors to my messy closet, and inviting God in to see my dirty laundry. It feels embarrassing, risky, painful. Truth is, God already knows. Truth is, confession is more for my benefit than for God's. The apostle John wrote, *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).* We have nothing to lose by confession . . . except the exhaustion of trying to live a perfect life. . . and we have only freedom to gain.

When I confess my sin and insecurities, I am essentially emptying my closet with the expectancy that God will give me a better wardrobe. The rags of my false self are thrown out for the clothes of Jesus' righteousness. I am free to live authentically. I am free to be who God says I am.

These words become loud in my life:

"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10

"Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God. . . ." 2 Corinthians 2:4,5

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9

Our insufficiencies and failings throw light on God's surpassing ability. He shows up and supplies what we lack. He chose us, redeemed us, adopted us, and delights in us. There is nothing we can do to make God love us more. There is nothing we can do to make God love us less. We may feel insecure, but we are secure in God's love and can trust that He will supply what we lack.

So today confess your sins, but also confess your insecurities. Where do you not feel like you are enough? As you anticipate staffing in Hickory where do you feel insecure? When you are with a group of women, how do you sometimes hold back in an effort to protect your false self? Name your insecurities and perceived limitations specifically. Give them to Jesus one by one, like dropping dirty clothes in a laundry hamper. Ask Jesus to replace your insufficiency with His sufficiency. New clothes based on Jesus' perfect righteousness. Receive His sufficiency and walk in freedom and confidence.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. Isaiah 61:10

Listen to this song by Stars Go Dim: "You Know Me Better"

Meditation 3 for WWWC Hickory: More Than Enough

The Christian walk is full of paradox. One of the greatest is that as we confess our failings and fears, Christ endows us with confidence. When we face our gaping insufficiencies, Christ bestows His surpassing sufficiency on us. The issue is not whether we are sufficient, but rather what is the source of our sufficiency. Trying to pretend to be strong and together exhausts us. It is a leaking boat that will eventually leave us drowning. But receiving Christ's sufficiency is empowering and even exhilarating. I am not enough, but God is more than enough. Paul says it best in his letter to the Corinthians:

*"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God, and not to us."
(2 Corinthians 4:7)*

We are the jars of clay. Ordinary, plain and prone to breaking. The message of Christ is the treasure that we carry. Very intentionally, God is placing the beauty of the gospel within flawed people, to bring Himself the glory. Our inadequacies are not just defects that God overlooks. Our insufficiency is God's chosen vessel for spotlighting His greatness. Our inability to throw the light on God's surpassing ability. He gets the glory. We are the jars of clay. He is the treasure.

Confession is just half of living confidently. The other half is embracing Christ's sufficiency. Every day we need to proclaim, "I am not enough, but God is more than enough."

Truthfully, that is hard for me. Deep in my heart, I want to be more than enough. I want to get credit. I want to perfect myself through applied effort, so that I don't have to make mistakes any more. Deep down, I don't want to live surrendered to God and dependent on His sufficiency. It just feels so . . . needy.

That honest admission takes me back to confession. I confess to God that I am prideful, stubbornly determined, deceived. Sometimes I'd rather put on my old clothes of trying hard. With a little more effort I believe that I could avoid failure. How many times must I climb on the treadmill of self-effort before I am convinced that it takes me nowhere and leaves me exhausted?

Confession reminds me that I am not sufficient, but I am loved. Worship reminds me that God is sufficient and that His grace is infinitely better than my moral resolve. Jesus said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Paul is so convinced of the truth of Christ's words that he writes, *"Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."*

Every day I need to re-ground myself in the sufficiency of Christ. He is strong. He is trustworthy. He is more than enough. Could I be so convinced of this truth that I would boast of my weaknesses and shortcomings?

Take the time today to focus on Christ's sufficiency. Thank Him for His goodness, His perfect wisdom, His strength, His love. Thank Him for your weaknesses that display His strength. Claim His sufficiency for you in this day.

Listen to this song and worship Christ in truth: Adie: "Sufficient"

Meditation 4 for WWWC Hickory: Equipped to Serve

“Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” 2 Corinthians 3:4,5

Paul's words have great implication for us today in this place. No matter how you feel at this moment, the truth is that God has made you sufficient. You are enough. He has qualified you to be here this weekend. Each of us has the mind of Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We have all of God's resources at our disposal this weekend.

We know this in our head and this morning I want us to take time to bring truth into our heart. Our hearts may be filled with insecurity, misgiving, and dread. When women get together, we make comparisons with others. Our “I am not enough” songs can grow louder. On your index card, I would like each of you to list your insecurities. Going into this weekend is there anything that you fear? Where are you feeling not good enough? How do you feel unqualified to serve? Specifically list those fears and insecurities.

On the flip side of this card, write down “God has made me sufficient. God has qualified me to serve.”

Find your prayer partner and take a few minutes to confess your insecurities. Speaking them out loud is so important in reducing their power. Shame is reduced when we bring our fears and insecurities into the light. Then pray with your prayer partners. Spend time in confessing what you have written on the card. Then proclaim truth in prayer. Thank God that He has made you sufficient. That He has called you and qualified you to serve. Thank Him for your shortcomings and your perceived weaknesses. Invite Him to showcase His strength through your weakness this weekend. Thank Him for His grace.

10 minutes with prayer partner.

We are made sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant. As we prepare for our missioners, we are on holy ground. God has called every one of us to engage in a battle for hearts. The new covenant is the message of Christ. We are not called to a try hard life, but a dependent life in which we rely on the grace of God. The new covenant brings healing. It brings life. And this weekend, we are vessels carrying that life and healing to the missioners who show up. So be confident. We are not sufficient, but God is pouring His strength, His wisdom, His love through us to bring new life to women. His strength will be displayed through our weakness this weekend.

In large group, worship God by listening to “Who You Say I Am.” Close in prayer.