

THE HERALD

Newsletter of the Orrville Grace Brethren Church

Mom's You Are Not Enough

The Freedom of Depending on God

By Susan Narjala

“Mama, you got this. You are enough.” My heart sank when I read the last lines in an article on a leading website for Christian mothers. My heart sank, because it was my article.

The article was intended to encourage moms in the trenches of raising little ones and overwhelmed by trying to do it all. When I saw the article online, though, I noticed that the last lines had been altered. The original, unedited version read, “Mama, you got this, because He has got you. You are enough, because He who is in you is enough.” The published article had left out God.

One message women, including Christian women, have heard on repeat is these three words: “You are enough.” Christian authors and speakers have been incorporating this phrase meant to encourage women, especially moms, who

are bogged down by guilt and plagued by self-doubt. The words often seem perfectly acceptable and, perhaps, empowering. At worst, it appears trite, but harmless.

But what does the seemingly innocuous phrase really mean?

Am I Ever Enough?

“You are enough” is a well-intentioned way of saying, “Life is hard, but you got a handle on it, because you’re a fierce, independent woman.” When you forget your child’s kindergarten orientation (true story!) or lose it when your toddler throws a tantrum before you’ve even brewed your coffee, don’t beat yourself up, because being a mom is undeniably challenging. And don’t give up, because you are strong enough for motherhood — you can do this.

While that seems uplifting, as Christian women, we’re hearing less than the full truth. The message is slowly diluting the gospel. This may sound disenfranchising to women, but you and I are not enough. No one is. The calling of motherhood — and of the Christian life — is a high and overwhelming calling for anyone. None of us is good enough, kind enough, right enough,

or strong enough. And that's why each of us so desperately need Jesus in the trenches every single day.

Your Never-Enoughness

The idea of being inadequate is unpopular in our earn-your-way-up culture. We would rather lap up nice-to-hear platitudes than grapple with what God says in Scripture. The Bible is not undermining our worth. It is simply pointing out that we find our true worth in Christ alone. With Him, we are free to acknowledge that we are flawed.

When you've finally tucked the kids into bed and still have to load the dishwasher, it's okay to recognize that you are not always gracious enough to respond kindly to a little voice that hollers, "I need water." That's when you and I have the beautifully freeing option of confessing, "Father, I just don't have what it takes. I need You." That may be all it comes down to: acknowledging our never-enoughness, so God has the chance to pour out from His endless reserves of grace.

God often lets us walk in paths that are far beyond our ability to endure. When you've been awake every night for a week, toggling between a nursing baby and a toddler with the flu, you understand what "beyond your ability" means. But in the midst of our exhaustion, when we whisper, "I can't — God please take over," that's when we can build our dependence on the one who won't ever let us down. When Paul and Timothy faced situations that were beyond their ability to endure, they learned

to "rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead" (2 Corinthians 1:9).

Rejoicing in Weakness

Later in Corinthians, Paul speaks of his weakness. He doesn't just mention it in passing. He seems to advertise it, revel in it, even boasts in it. He tells his readers that he rejoices in his weakness. Why? Because in Paul's weakness, Christ's strength is made perfect (2 Corinthians 12:9).

The Beatitudes also turn the world's definition of power on its head. Jesus calls the ones who are meek, the ones who mourn, the ones who are poor in spirit "blessed" (Matthew 5:5–11). When we hear the mantra that we are "enough" on repeat, we are likely to stop rejoicing in our weakness, we don't celebrate our poverty of spirit, we lessen our dependence on God. When I truly grasp that I'm not enough in my own strength, I don't try to dig deep into myself to pull out resources that are running on empty. Instead, I dig into the word of God and pull out promises I can lean on.

When I am overwhelmed and have to count to three more times than I can actually count, I remember that His divine power has given me everything needed for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). When I feel isolated as a mom, buried under an avalanche of wet wipes, I rest in His promise that He has engraved me on the palms of his hands (Isaiah 49:16). And when I mess up as a mom, I don't just brush away my sin with self-glorifying platitudes. Neither do I beat myself up. Instead, I go to the one

who redeems my mistakes and gives me the grace to carry on (Psalm 103:12).

‘You Are Enough’ Is Not Enough

While articles or sermons telling women that we are enough are intended to vanquish self-doubt, perhaps they are misguided. “You are enough” puts the onus back on “you.” It’s a me-centric idea, where we’re called to scrape out every last bit of our so-called inner strength. But pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps is not how we tend to our souls.

John Piper tells young mothers, “Constantly pray, pray, pray, pray for whatever you need. That is how you make your days an act of worship. And then there may not be in your mind such a huge gulf between tending to your child and tending to your soul.” We need to take it — all of it, from the sheer exhaustion to the certifiable insanity of raising little people — to the Lord in prayer. We look outside of ourselves to a God who wants to strengthen us and give us rest.

He promises to gently lead those that have young (Isaiah 40:11). The more liberating and empowering message we need to hear is this: Christ in you is more than enough. It’s a message that doesn’t hinge on self-reliance, but on God-dependence. It gives us room to discover that He is an all-sufficient God.

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Originally posted on; <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/moms-you-are-not-enough>

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BIBLE + SCIENCE CONFERENCE



SEPTEMBER 17-18, 2022
WITH DR. DONALD DEYOUNG, PH.D



Come and hear one of the United States most respected Christian astronomers, Dr. Don DeYoung. Dr. DeYoung will teach on the Creation Week, the Genesis Flood, and Current Events in Bible and Science.

Conference Schedule:

Saturday 7:00pm: A Scientific Walk through Creation Week

(The Saturday Evening presentation is for students of all ages answering the question of how does real science and the Bible fit together. This is a kid-friendly event for families.)

Sunday 9:30am: The Global Flood

Sunday 11:00am: Current Events in the Bible & Science

Sunday 12:10pm: Lunch together

Sunday 1:00pm: Q & A Time with Dr. DeYoung

Dr. Donald B. DeYoung (Ph.D., Physics & M.Div.) is an avid creation scientist and educator specializing in astronomy and physics. He chairs the Department of Science and Mathematics at Grace College in Winona Lake, Indiana, where he has taught since 1972. He also writes and speaks for Answers in Genesis. Dr. DeYoung is on the board of the Creation Research Society with over 1,700 members worldwide. Dr. DeYoung has written seventeen books, including several books designed for children, and many articles on creation topics. Dr. DeYoung strongly believes that the details in nature definitively point to the Creator and His love for mankind.

FUNNIES

A seven-year-old boy was giving his younger brother advice on starting school. "Whatever you do, don't learn to spell 'cat'—because if you do, after that the words just get harder and harder."

Q. How do you get someone with a liberal arts degree off your porch?
A. You pay him for the pizza.

"I'll have to see your license in order to cash your check," the bank teller told the woman at the drive-up window. Without a word, the woman drove off, leaving the uncashed check at the window.

A few minutes later she pulled up to the window again and asked for her money. The somewhat startled teller repeated that she would have to see her license. "Well, good land!" the woman exploded. "If you didn't look at it the first time I pulled away, I'm not going to show it to you again!"

Wife, returning from fishing trip with husband, to her neighbor: "I did everything wrong again today—I talked too loud, I used the wrong bait, I reeled in too soon and I caught more than he did."

A boy telephoned the dentist's office and said, "I'm supposed to make an appointment for today."

"I'm sorry," replied the nurse, "but the doctor is out of town."

"Thank you," the boy responded. "When will he be out of town again?"

A class of students was watching the professor of chemistry give a demonstration of the properties of various acids. "Now," said the professor, "I am going to drop a half-dollar into this glass of acid. Will it dissolve?"

"No sir," replied one of the students.

"No?" said the professor. "Tell the class how you know it won't dissolve."

"Because," came the answer, "if the money would dissolve, you wouldn't drop it in."

The dentist in a small town had trouble obtaining payment on an overdue account. After thinking deeply about the matter, he decided to write the patient as follows:

"Dear Madam, Unless the dentures I made for you is paid for without delay, I shall be obliged to insert the following advertisement in the newspaper: 'Excellent set of teeth for sale. They can be seen at any time at Mrs. Bartlett's, 129 Pinetree Road.'"

The dentist got his money the next morning.