

Why Confidence Isn't the Answer to Fear

Rarely do I get headaches, but I think I'd been stressed over the last few weeks, which led to shoulder scrunching and a grand finale of muscle knots.

While the house was quiet on Saturday, I talked to God about this stress—trying to get to the root of it. Landing on the word *fear*, I acknowledged that I run a low-grade fear all the time. Fear that I'm not doing a good job teaching my students. Fear that I'm not taking care of my body or my home the way I should. Fear that I'm not loving my family and friends in a meaningful way.

Insidious Fear

I think what I need is confidence, Lord, I prayed.

So I looked up the word CONFIDENCE:

A feeling of self-assurance arising from one's appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities.

A definition full of “self”? That was definitely NOT what I needed. **Confidence is not what God prescribes.** He wants us to exercise poverty of spirit, a constant awareness of our weakness and great humility.

But I want to be confident. My soul screams for it.

I want to be confident!

I don't want to be inadequate. I don't want to be needy. I don't want to make mistakes that require an apology. I don't want to fail and have to relearn. I don't want to give anyone a reason to correct me. I despise this hunger I have, to do

what is right every minute of the day, only to find myself falling short of being good.

But Jesus speaks these words:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

Almost every day, when I thank the Lord for my food, I say to Him, "Thank You so much that I've never known what it means to truly be hungry."

But maybe I do know.

To have just one day where I do everything right? I know what it's like to be hungry for that. I yearn to be able to lift my head up from shame.

Jesus tells me that I am blessed if I live in this hunger, and He makes me a promise: *You will be filled. This voracious desire to do everything right will be satisfied.*

In her book *Living Fellowship*, Dr. Helen Roseveare says:

We are created to be containers.

Containers need to be filled, if they are to function. God's plan was that we should be filled with His Holy Spirit and so reveal godliness. This demands that we agree to be emptied of self first, so as to be filled with Him.

We do not seek to be self-confident, only to be empty, available containers.

So I wrote a book about my emptiness, about my hunger to be righteous, and as I scratched out my story, I saw evidence that, little by little, God has been fulfilling my desire to be good and to do what is right.

He is slowly making me blameless by filling my empty places.

And the same promise is for you. **If you struggle with fear of failing and you have an appetite to become a person who does what is right, there is great hope.** Jesus came to make you blameless, and as you take your hunger to Him, He will satisfy you. Walk closely with Him, and you will make progress to become a better person every day.

Come away from your shame, and begin to experience the blameless life Jesus has always intended for you. {eoa}