

Identity Theft Devotion 2 - Miss Perfectionist

OPENING PRAYER: "Jesus, open the eyes of my heart that I may see you clearly and have hope. Amen. (based on Ephesians 1:17-18)

Today we meet Ms. Perfectionist. She makes us think that we are defined only by what we do and how well we do it. One of her main tactics is comparison.

Ms. Perfectionist's Lies:

- You need to do ___ at least as good or better as them and then life will be okay.
- Just give a little more.
- If you're better at this, then you'll be happy.
- If you're bad at this, people won't like you. You need to earn their acceptance and God's.
- You'll never be good enough.
- Anything less than perfect isn't okay.

How These Lies May Impact Us If We Believe They Are True:

- Overwhelming stress all the time, hard to relax and have fun.
- Feeling like EVERYTHING depends on you. Take on more than necessary in group projects to pick up slack from other people.
- Constantly worry what other people think of you.
- Potentially may give up trying at all because it's just too overwhelming.
- Anxiety, fear, negative self-image, not feeling worthy of relationships with other people.

Truth from God's Word:

- *"Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.'" Matthew 11:28-30*
It's okay if life feels messy or overwhelming or hard. You don't have to figure it all out in order for Jesus to love you. He wants you to come just as you are and let him sort it out for you and with you. Come rest and let Jesus carry your heavy burdens!
- *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Ephesians 2:8-9*
Remember grace! You can't earn God's love! God joyfully gives us grace and longs for us to live in peace, knowing He DOES cover over any mistakes we do make with the blood of Jesus. In our baptisms we are washed clean and can live in our baptismal identity as His beloved sons and daughters. Enjoy that free gift!
- *"Unless the Lord builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted. Unless the Lord protects a city, guarding it with sentries will do no good. It is useless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night, anxiously working for food to eat; for God gives rest to his loved ones." Psalm 127:1-2*
God's not giving us permission here to be lazy and never work, but He has designed

patterns of work and rest. If we're not able to rest and trust Him to do His work, any work we do is useless. Builders and guards and other workers are still necessarily, but unless God is leading, our work is pointless. Take some time to enjoy the rest God gives to you, His loved one, so He can equip you for the work that He does have for you.

Questions to Consider or Discuss:

- Where in your life do you feel pressure to perform or find yourself comparing yourself to others? How does that make you feel?

- Do you find it easy or hard to rest and trust God? Are there certain times that's easier or harder?

- Who in your life do you feel like has a good balance of working hard, but also resting? Who is someone who understands working hard for the Lord, but also trust God is leading the whole thing?

- Which truth from God's word did you most need to hear today and why? What else might God be trying to tell you about the lies Satan tells us about perfectionism?

Closing Prayer:

Jesus, I come to you today and bring all the problems and burdens I'm carrying. (_____tell Jesus some of those specific burdens_____) Please give me rest. Teach me; show me your humble and gentle heart. May your grace ignite passionate work in me, never simply duty or obligation, that I may serve you with joy. Give rest for my soul and peace to my heart. In Jesus' Name, Amen.