

St. Matthew A.M.E. Church
Bible Study
Monday, January 28, 2008

Insecurity

God instructed Moses to go before Pharaoh and speak the words that He would give him. But Moses responded and said, "I have never been eloquent....for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." (Exodus 4:10) God reassured Moses that He would be with him every step of the way. The Lord said to Moses, "who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what to say." (Exodus 4:11-12)

Moses did not believe he could lead God's people out of Egypt alone. At some point in our lives we have probably felt like Moses. An opportunity has been provided for us but we did not feel we could handle it.

Do you feel good about yourself, or do you often engage in self-criticism? What is there about yourself that you do not like? It is one thing to feel insecure about a particular situation and another thing to grow up with insecurity and have it programmed into our thinking everyday. Insecurity is another landmine that the enemy plants to keep us from becoming the person that God wants us to be and destroying our lives.

What causes us to feel insecure? Many times it comes as a result of feeling inadequate. Each of us struggles with feelings of insecurity. There will be times when we wake up in the morning and feel as though we have no sense of direction. Deep inside there is a churning that does not stop, and you may ask yourself, "will I ever be content?" There are numerous causes of insecurity.

Feeling threatened, off balance, or on the edge. One of the primary reasons some people feel insecure is because they grew up in an insecure environment. Their world seemed very unpredictable, and there was an uncertainty to life that prevented them from feeling safe. Their parents may have had problems such as alcoholism, drug use, or they may have left home or died when they were very young. These create an atmosphere of instability.

Failure, financial loss or divorce. When we feel insecure about ourselves, we will not be able to accomplish the goals that God has set for us to reach. The reason is that we feel inadequate, inferior and insecure.

Having unrealistic rules and regulations. This can stifle the natural creativity that God has placed within us. For example, sometimes parents set rules that we could not keep. Rules give us boundaries to live by, but they need to have purpose and meaning. If we require a child to bring home straight A's and they can only make B's and C's then we develop a sense of inadequacy within the child.

Having a poor body image. Either we think we are too skinny or too overweight. This line of thinking can lead to insecurity.

Not receiving positive feedback. While growing up we did not have parents or others who encouraged us or gave us positive feedback. When people do not receive the right kind of praise and encouragement, there is a chance they will develop a negative self image.

Being overshadowed by siblings. We are constantly told that our siblings are smarter or better than us. This makes us feel insecure and frustrated.

Setting Our Focus on Christ

Don't allow our minds to be programmed with negative thoughts that lead to insecurity. We are children of God. He wants us to learn to view our life from His perspective. God has given us powerful principles to apply to our lives. He doesn't want us to believe Satan's lies that tell us that we need to live by chance. There is no such thing as chance or luck in the life of the believer. God knows everything we face and nothing we face is greater than His sovereignty. Therefore we are not losers.

When we start to live the life God intended for us, we will face opposition. The enemy is not going to give up and walk away quietly. He wants us to feel really bad about ourselves so we will give and no longer approach each day with a sense of excitement and hope. There are very harmful effects of insecurity:

- *a lack of lasting relationships
- *a perception of being prideful or snobbish
- *indecisiveness
- *a fearful attitude
- *a brooding sense of anger
- *the inability to meet others and establish friendships
- *the belief that success is based on the praise, acceptance and approval of others
- *the desire to be in charge of every conversation

The greatest effect that insecurity will have on our life is our relationship with God. The deeper the insecurity, the more likely we will struggle with our relationship with Him. We can't focus on worshipping Him, living and serving Him when our mind is set on self- how we appear to others and what we have to do to get ahead.

Overcoming Insecurity

If we are battling insecurity, how do we overcome it? We can't enjoy life or accomplish the goals God has given us if we are insecure. When we feel insecure, we feel hopeless, helpless, overwhelmed and unable to accomplish anything. At some point each of us will battle insecurity. There are some things we can and must do to overcome self-denial.

Acknowledge our feelings of insecurity. God already knows what we are feeling and He has a plan to help us view our lives differently from His perspective. Once we identify the problem area, we can go to work on changing our incorrect beliefs.

Make the decision to overcome insecurity. If we have never trusted Christ as our personal savior, then we will not be able to overcome insecurity. It requires a walk of faith with Christ. Once we give what we are struggling with to Christ we will begin to feel lighter and be more open to Christ work in our lives.

Realize that dealing with insecurity involves self-esteem. The way we view ourselves is not necessarily the way we are. Ask God to show us how He sees us. God wants us to step away from negative feelings and thoughts. He has good plans for our life and sees us as a person of tremendous potential because of the life of His Son, who lives within us.

Focus on positive qualities. Stop the negative self talk. Is there something God wants us to do, but we have held back because of insecurity? He is waiting for us to obey Him and leave all the consequences to Him. Obey Him and watch God work on our behalf.

Stop comparing ourselves to others. Once we compare ourselves to somebody else, we set ourselves up for failure. We also derail God's plan to use us in someone else's life. When we compare ourselves to others, we usually feel threatened as we battle feelings of insecurity and low-self esteem. We must ask God what He has planned for our life.

Avoid the trap of blaming someone else. We have to stop pointing our finger at others and saying they are the reason for our insecurities. We can leave our insecurity behind because God will never disappoint us when we are living in the center of His will.

The major hurdle to overcoming insecurity is overcoming our doubt of God's word. (Romans 8:33-35, 37-39) Remember we are more than conquerors. There is nothing too great for God. Whatever we face in life, He will bring us through it. Set our mind on being the person God wants us to be, and see what happens. (Psalm 37:3-6)