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## Finding Strength Within

One of the hidden battles that I faced after I asked Jesus in my heart was the fear of not being good enough for Him. It pushed me to be driven continuously to perform good works, which on the surface seemed great, but really I was being motivated by this feeling of inadequacy. For years I dealt with these deep-seeded concerns and had to struggle through them as I grew in the knowledge of who I was to Him.

Have you ever questioned the value you hold with God? How important you are to Him, really? Is He willing and able to cast you aside if you don't measure up? It can be a constant nagging tug upon a believer's heart always pondering if we're good enough. It can also feel like a daunting task to get to the place where God will begin to add Himself to us. Every thought I had started with "What must I do to be acceptable for a perfect God?". Sometimes we hope He doesn't see the areas of insecurities we may struggle with; and yet He does.

It was a defining moment in my life when I finally saw that I was born into His family. I was born as His child and He as my Father! What strength I gained when I saw that even in my struggles He still believed in me. He is always drawing us closer and closer to being the person He has destined for us to be. Now every thought begins with, "I can do this because I have been born a child of God."

Psalm 139:1-4 tells us, *"For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether."*

The understanding in this verse is that He knows my deepest thoughts and still believes in me and loves me. This has helped me to believe that I could really be the person He called me to be. There are so many wonderful and incredible things in our future that we cannot even yet see, but He does! You may not know it, but God has wonderful things ahead if you obey Him. You already have everything you need to move forward into victory. It's step by step growth into becoming what's already inside of you, "Christ in you."

There is no one in the world like you. In fact, you don't even know the real you like your Heavenly Father does. It's a wonderful revelation to finally realize how unique you are as a person and how God delights in our differences. Sometimes we can feel like He is in a hurry and scurries past us to go accomplish things and yet, truthfully, His main desire is for you to discover the real you that He sees. This is the real work of knowing Him that each of us must accept. We can have as much of Him as we want and there is nothing that can limit us. Many of us have cried out for God to change us and to take away our struggles, yet He has already changed us and filled us with His grace.

We have a park close to where we live that we would take our children to when they were little. It had a play area full of slides, swings and fun obstacles for them to play on. Harrison was always the

adventurous type on the slides, but he was hesitant when approached the climbing wall which is a tall wall with little places for your hands and feet to climb up.

He climbed up just a little when he began to ask me to help him go higher. I lightly placed my hand on his back and told him I was there to keep him safe from falling, but he needed to be the one to climb. He froze onto the wall afraid that he was going to fall, in his mind he was a mile off the ground, but in reality, it was only a foot up. We argued for a long time as I refused to lift him up over the wall, I knew he had the ability to climb over the wall, but he didn't believe it.

Other kids began to line up behind us for their turn to climb up, and I still refused to help Harrison, the only thing I would do was to encourage him to keep going and to place my hand on his back to promise that I would not allow him to fall. Little by little he worked his way up the wall with my hand slightly touching him all the way up until he was standing up on the very top no longer afraid. It was his greatest moment to look back and see the look of pride on my face.

This is exactly how our Heavenly Father deals with us. He knows what's already inside of you and will continually encourage you to challenge the weaknesses of your flesh, cheering you on along the way. He tells us in Romans 8:16-17, *"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."* He didn't leave you alone to figure out life! He sent the Holy Spirit as a witness to your born-again nature that you are already a child of God. You don't start out as a failure building up to a level of acceptance by God.

He told you to call Him Father because at salvation you start out fully equipped to walk from being His child into all that He has for you, and the Holy Spirit is the one who will teach you exactly who you are! As we pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit prays through us His perfect will for our life and brings forth a depth of spiritual knowledge that will empower you to believe that God is right about you.

Many people attempt to have God accept them where they are; they will say "He loves me just the way I am." Yet, I would say that He loves you too much to leave you where you are. Yes, He will always meet us where we are walking in our personal relationship, but instantly the Holy Spirit begins to draw us down a path of victory and hope, and into the person that He has destined for us to be. This place can only come from the Spirit and can only be developed by growing in the knowledge of truth. Therefore, as you pray and yield to the Spirit, there is nothing that you cannot overcome. Even the hidden things don't stand a chance. Let's keep going!

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