

You Are More Than ‘Good Enough’

By Bobby Schuller

I want to begin by encouraging you to see yourself through the Father’s eyes; to see your life, what you’re doing, where you are, not through the eyes of God the judge, or God the all-powerful, but God the Father. So much of Jesus coming into this world was realigning the idea of his disciples, that God is those other things, but he’s also our Father and he’s that first. I want to ask you to begin to view your life through the eyes of God who loves you just as you are, not as you should be because no one is as they should be. And if we’re ever going to have the power to be like Jesus Christ, as we say almost every week, we have to begin there. You have to begin by seeing your life through the eyes of the Father.

And when you do that, something happens. You begin to be at peace with where you are, and yes, with who you are. And even though there may be things in your life that you don’t like – everybody’s that way – and if you’re maybe not where, in life, you want to be or where you thought you’d be or you dreamed you’d be, somehow seeing our lives through the eyes of the Father gives us a peace to simply be where we are and who we are. And it doesn’t mean that we’re going to be there

tomorrow, but simply to live at peace, to say, “Yes, right where I am is okay.”

I want to begin there by saying that God loves you, and regardless of the things you’re disappointed in yourself about, or the things you’re angry at yourself about, or the things you feel shame about, or the ways in which you feel like you’re not a success, or you’re not a winner, or all the language that our society uses, I just want you to know that God, who is your Dad, doesn’t view you that way.

Kids are viewed differently by their parents than they’re viewed by everybody else in their lives. There are lots of people who are going to interact with kids, right? Teachers see kids a certain way. Peers see kids a certain way. Strangers see kids a certain way. But nobody sees kids like their parents do.

This last week, Haven, my daughter, she’s six years old and she goes to this little school. There are maybe two hundred students between kindergarten and second grade. And there was this great troupe that goes around, they’re like an improv team of four, two men and two women. They go to schools, they take some stories the kids have written, and then they act out the stories like in an improv. So they take one story from each class and then they like dress up and it’s really funny.

They get all the kids together in this auditorium and then these performers act out the kids' stories.

So the teacher told me, "Hey, your daughter's story has been picked." It was a story called "The Smelly Onion," and they were going to act out this story. So I went and I sat and watched this play acted out by these actors, who actually did a really awesome job. It was funny because there were four plays but how many of you know there's really only one play I cared about? Do you know what I mean? Like, yes, the other kids had their plays. I don't remember their names. But when my kid's play came on, my phone was on her and she didn't know it was coming. So, she like sat up, she's all excited and looking around. She finds me, she gives me a thumbs up, she's all excited. So for me, I cared most about my daughter. In fact, nobody in that room cared about Haven as much as I did. And that's what it means to see someone through the eyes of a father.

How does God see you? I want to promise you something: God is not as disappointed in you as you think. In fact, God is not disappointed in you at all. A lot of us who are really harsh with where we are in our lives; we didn't think we'd be here. God is not looking at you that way. We, in Christianity, preach a gospel of grace. And grace, by the way, doesn't mean mercy. It includes mercy. Grace is God's unbounded,

overflowing love and favor for you. He loves you just as you are, and he sees the best in you, and he sees a bright future for you, no matter how old you are. He still sees you as a father sees his child. He thinks you are absolutely unique and adorable. He does! He thinks you are wonderful, and he thinks you are one of a kind, and he thinks the mold was broken when you were made. He was there when you were born; he'll be there when you die. You are the most interesting topic in God's life, just as children are the most interesting topic in good parents' lives.

The reason I'm beginning here is because today I'm talking about the chronic problem of comparing ourselves to others. Lately, we've been in the season of talking about what it means to live at peace in an anxious world, and I just want to tell you that one of the main reasons people feel anxious today is because we compare ourselves to others. In the world we live in, there are always people that are going to be better than we are, and we are always struggling with the temptation to compare, to compete and to say to myself, "I'm not good enough." I want to tell you in God's eyes, you are more than good enough. You are unique and you are adorable!

So John, in John chapter 3, in this story, his disciples come to him and they say, "Rabbi John, that man you baptized who you said was the Messiah, all of the people that were following us..." Remember, there

were thousands of people following John the Baptist. "...all those people that were in your crowd, that were following you that you baptized, they've left us now and they've gone over to follow that guy Jesus." And you know what John says? He's at complete peace. He says, "A person can only receive what is given to them from heaven." And he totally submits to Jesus' authority and life. He says, "He must become greater that I must become less."

So there's this attitude for John. John is at complete peace because all he wants is just to send people to Jesus. All he wants is the good. For John, it's not about his ego, it's not about being some great rabbi, it's about simply doing what God asked him to do, and finding joy in the fact that he did something good for somebody. So much of the good that we do in our day is about ego and not actually about the good. And let me tell you something, if you do something good for ego, it still counts. Dennis Prager made that point. I thought it was a good one. If you do good because of your ego, it still counts, but it's not ultimately going to give you the kind of peace and life that John has by simply seeing good happen in the world.

So John is at peace and let me just say, you are at peace. You are at peace because you're the kind of person who cares more about good than about your ego. You care more about seeing God's will

accomplished than your own will. And the more you continue to build this attitude that “I want to see good; more of Jesus and less of me,” the more of an attitude you have like that, the more you’re going to thrive and succeed in life, and the deeper sense of peace and fulfillment you’re going to have in this life you live.

In our world, it’s so hard to be like John when there are so many people doing better than we do. In the world we live in, there will always be somebody that’s more attractive, more successful, or more virtuous. Right? There will always be people that are more talented or people that have the relationships that we want to have, and it’s so hard to not look at those people and compare and look at yourself and think, “I’m not like them. I don’t have what they have.” And the more you do this, the less peace you’ll have in your life. But not you. You are at peace with where you are and with who you are because you know that God loves you just as you are, and he’s going to get you where he said he would. Have faith in that.

This comparison thing starts early, doesn’t it? Have you ever had the mortifying moment in PE, where they line up everyone and then they pick a bunch of people and you’re the last one to be picked? That happened to me twice in my life and I still remember it. I was 9 and 11, or 9 and 13, or something, and it’s terrible when you’re one of two guys

and they're arguing between each other about who stinks worse at basketball. And when they're telling the other guy just to take them both, it's a terrible feeling.

Things like this happen in life when we're skipped over, when we're not picked, when we're not valued, when we're ignored. When there are ten people that are picked, you are picked tenth, and nobody wants you. It is truly so hard in this life to believe that I do have a life that's unique, that matters, that's valuable, that I'm talented, that I have a destiny in God's great universe. But let me just tell you something: everybody goes through that stuff because everybody's life is hard, because everybody faces challenges, and you don't need to compare yourself to others. Comparing yourself to others will never get you where God has called you to be. Amen? Don't do it.

Comparison. As Mark Twain said, "Comparison is the death of joy!" It really is. Do you know why? Because there's always going to be a better version of you that you see in others. So don't do it. God isn't comparing you to anyone. There is this thing Dennis Prager - funny, he came up twice today - he wrote this thing about the missing tile syndrome. He said he was with a friend somewhere in the Middle East and they were in this beautiful church. There was this dome that had a gorgeous mosaic on top. As they were both observing it, he was saying,

“Isn’t that amazing how awesome that mosaic looks?” And all his friend could see was that there was a tile missing, that right in the mosaic there was this tile missing and he just kept looking at it and he thought, “Yes but there’s a big black space right there.” And Dennis said, “Well, look past the tile. There’s this beautiful image.” And he called this the missing tile syndrome. This is something in our lives that, even though we’re blessed, even though we have good things, it is so easy to look at that one missing tile. What’s the missing tile in your life? If you can’t be at peace when a tile is missing, you won’t be at peace when the tile is filled.

He said that the way this works out in real life is he had a friend who hated the fact that he was bald. His friend was successful and he was tall and he was good looking, but he was bald. It was all he saw. Everywhere he looked, there were people with hair.

I remember when Hannah and I were trying for our first kid. We went six or seven years on birth control, and that seventh year we decided to have a kid. So, we were going to go to France. And we were going to conceive, forgive me for using that word, our kid in France. And it was going to be a French. I was hoping I was going to joke with him or her about how they were conceived in France.

And so we did this trip, we came home, we took the pregnancy test, and nothing. We went, “Oh, that’s a bummer.” And it took us about a year to get pregnant. Hannah said that towards the end of that year of not getting pregnant, when we started to sweat around the collar wondering if we could do this thing, she said all she could see everywhere were pregnant women. Everywhere. At the store, everywhere she went, all she could see were pregnant women. And see, this is the problem. When we want something in our lives, all we can see are the people that have it. And that will kill your joy. And it will keep you from seeing the wonderful things that God has given you.

It’s always a challenge because there’s always a better version of you. But, let that be a source of joy that you can never arrive, that no matter how great life gets, it can be better! That’s the Schuller way of looking at things, huh? Yes! There is always a better version and don’t let that get you down. Let it be an encouragement to you. You’ve made it this far and you’ve got even farther to go. You have a bright future, a wonderful tomorrow, and just don’t let it get you down. Don’t focus on the missing tiles and don’t compare yourselves to others. You are blessed.

When you compare yourself to another person, by the way, it’s always an illusion. Because people never show or tell the bad stuff,

especially on social media, right? I remember once when this girl came up to me, a good friend of ours, and she says, "You and Hannah have this perfect family. I always see you guys in all your pictures of you and your family doing all this awesome stuff." And Hannah and I had literally just gotten in a big fight the night before. And I was like, "Trust me, it's not perfect." I love my family, but Hannah's wrong all the time. We keep fighting about it.

No, but I mean it's so easy to think every other family is perfect. Everybody else is succeeding. Everybody else is doing well. And it's an illusion. It's an illusion. Even for the most successful people that you see in life, we never weigh the vast personal cost of success. And I don't mean just getting up in the morning every day, day after day, year after year, never giving up, never quitting. I also mean the cost of the times I didn't get to go see my kids play, the times I didn't get to relax, the times I didn't go into vacation. That for 20 years or 30 years, every single day someone sacrificed to succeed. We often don't weigh that cost and we don't think about how the reward that they may have may not be worth the cost that we would have had to pay to get there. You can never ever see or understand all the bad stuff that's behind all the good stuff you compare yourself to. So don't do it. Because you're just who you are, you are the person God made you, and if you have faith and you trust in him and you study God's word, man you're going to go so far and do so well,

so don't let that hold you down. You are blessed. You're blessed. It's so hard to notice how blessed we are until we lose those blessings.

You may know that I have been whining like a little baby girl all winter because of this El Nino that never came. We were told here in southern California that this was going to be the year of what they were calling the monster El Nino. No, Godzilla El Nino is what it was going to be. And hearing that I was picturing that southern California was going to become like Seattle for a few months, that I was going to be sitting by my fireplace in my robe, drinking a cup of coffee, reading my book, being all pensive – I can't go out, it's raining. I think we got three days of rain since October. And where is this Godzilla El Nino?

Then, to make things worse, two weeks ago, they kept saying, "Oh, it's coming, it's coming, it's coming." Finally, two weeks ago, they said, "Well, El Nino season is over, but brace yourselves because La Nina is coming and that's a really dry season. And I'm just thinking, "Man, where's this rain?"

So a couple weeks ago, I went to Washington DC and I went to New York and for about six days straight it was about 33 or 34 degrees with 30-mile-per-hour winds, and wet. It was that weird zone between not snow and not rain, like the worst it could possibly be, so you're wet and

freezing. It was that way for six days, and when I finally got home to southern California and it was around 72 degrees, and it was gorgeous, and yes, it's a little dry, but I was so glad to be home! God, never send me to New York! Keep me here in southern California. I love Orange County!

The point remains for you and me that we're all blessed, and we are. If you have air in your lungs, if you're awake right now, man, people don't know how much of a blessing health is until it's gone. People don't know how much of a blessing family is until they're gone. People don't know how much of a blessing a square meal is until it's gone. People don't know how much of a blessing good weather is, good friends are, good church is, until it's gone, and it will go.

That's the thing. When we compare ourselves to others, we lose sight of all the great things we already have. You do not need to compare your life to anyone else's because with all the challenges you have, you're blessed. And no matter what you're going through, your brightest days are ahead. Don't give up. No matter how sick you are, no matter what challenges you're facing, don't give up because we serve a big God who has the last word, who will have the final say in your life, and you have a bright future. Amen.

So, I believe that you are unique, and I believe that if you could see yourself the way that God sees you, that you would find a lot more peace in life. God isn't comparing you to anyone, right? God isn't comparing you to anyone. In his book, you are wonderful. And if you trust in him, he says to you he will get you where you're supposed to be, and it will be blessed. So relax, and be at peace where you are, and be at peace with who you are.

You are unique. You cannot be compared. How does one compare mountains to the ocean? You cannot do it. You are deserving of love and affection, and if you compare yourself to others, the inner love and power that God has already given you will erode. You know, when we compare ourselves, it continues to eat away at our souls, and I just want you to know God is faithful to you. And yes, God has blessed other people, but he is faithful to you, uniquely you, just as you are.

So you are at peace with the process, you are at peace with the place, and you are at peace with the person that is you because God is at peace with those things. He is not worried about your future. He's going to help you conquer your sin, he's going to help you conquer your weaknesses, he's going to help you conquer your fear, he's going to get you where you need to go, and all you have to do is trust in him, not give up, and have faith.

I'll just finish with this last thought. In Philippians, chapter 4 is one of the most quoted scriptures in the world: "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." That is true. Philippians 4, you can do all things through Christ who gives you strength. Absolutely. But, do you know what this passage is about? It's about being at peace or being content. So Paul actually begins by saying, "For I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." For what? "I can do all of this through him who gives me strength." That passage is about finding contentment and peace in the midst of the rollercoaster circumstances in life.

When I'm successful when I lose my job, when I have great relationships, when I go through a horrible breakup or a divorce – all these things that happen in life, Paul says that, no matter what happens in your life, you can find the secret of what it means to be content and be at peace through whom? Through Christ. Through Christ who gives you strength.

Simon Synich tells a story about how once he was in this room with a bunch of wealthy, successful people. It was a private invite only, and the person leading the group said, "How many of you have achieved

your financial goals?” He said 80% of the people in the room raised their hands. And then the guy leading the group asked a second question: “How many of you feel successful?” And, almost every hand in the room went down. Not being content, not being happy, and not being where you are is a part of the human condition, but Jesus gives us the power to be content with who we are, where we are, warts and all. If you can’t be at peace without that tile, you’re never going to be at peace when the tile is there. If you can’t be at peace with little, you’re never going to be at peace with much.

So friends, I want to say this over you: You are at peace. You are at peace with who you are. You are at peace with where you are. And it doesn’t mean that you have to be at peace with your tomorrow, it doesn’t mean you have to give up, but today you can relax and you can rest and you can smile and you can see the blessings that you have. I think tomorrow is going to be fantastic for you! And although it’s cloudy and you can’t see, you can be at peace because you can trust that God, because of his power and because of his love, wants you to have a fantastic future even more than you do! Just like a parent for his children, God wants you to thrive, to succeed, and will do everything in his power to help you thrive. He will do everything in his power. Nobody wants you to go to heaven more than God does. Nobody wants you to be a virtuous person more than God does. Nobody wants you to have great

relationships more than God does. Nobody wants you to be happy more than God does. He's going to help you, so today, be at peace. And you are at peace with who you are, with where you are, and you know that God will take you where you want to go if you continue to have faith, and not quit. Amen? I believe it for you.

Let's pray: Lord, thank you for all you've given us. And thank you, Lord, that you care about us even more than we care about us. I know you have given every person watching a destiny that is perfect for them, that will bring them fulfillment and joy. And I know, Lord, no matter how old, young, rich, or poor or whatever, I know, God, that you are at work right now with everyone to get them to their destinies where you called them to be. Help us, Lord, to stop looking back all the time. Today's a new day! Thank you that we don't have to compare ourselves to others, that you love us just as we are. We're at peace with that. In Jesus' name, we thank you. Amen.