

## 2. You're Not Good Enough:

### *The Heart of Insecurity*

Have you ever had someone lie to you? Perhaps someone lied about you behind your back? Let me tell you a story about that very thing happening to me in eighth grade. Keep in mind all the insecurities I had from seventh grade and understand that eighth grade improved greatly, but I was still dealing with obvious insecurities.

I took choir in my eighth grade year. Just for the record, I have a terrible voice. I am not musically-inclined, whatsoever. To be completely honest with you, I heard the class was an easy 'A' and several of my friends were in it. This is why I signed up.

Music was my last class of each day. It really was a great way to end the day. Just about the time my thirteen-year-old mind was about to give up for the day, I was able to wind down and relax in choir. I would have fun with my friends and we'd laugh our way through choir. The teacher really liked us too.

Therefore, as I walked to choir each day, it already felt like I was done with school. Choir was so easy and laid-back, I

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would already be relaxed by the time I walked in the doors. Which made it all the more surprising when I was met with serious confrontations and allegations in choir on one particular afternoon.

*(Important note: Please know that what I'm about to say, I say with a soft heart and endearment towards this individual. What follows is not an attempt to ridicule or belittle in any way. There was this one particular girl in our class who had a rather rough upbringing. It was obvious she wasn't afforded many of the luxuries most of us had. I was always very kind to her. I never, not once, mocked her or belittled her in any way. My actions towards her were always courteous.)*

Back to the story of me walking into the choir room, carefree and excited that the end of the day was almost here. I was shocked to be greeted with evil stares and confrontation. One girl screamed in fury at me and others ostracized me. That alone was shocking, but what was more shocking was their reason for hatred towards me. It had been said that I called this particular girl 'fat and ugly,' which couldn't be further from the truth!

The girl was in tears in our choir room, others huddled around her, with her insisting it was the truth each time I tried to deny it. It seemed that the more I tried to set the story straight and console her, the more upset she got, and the classroom hated me all the more.

I was obviously very upset by this. I was startled by the initial accusations. I was hurt to be ganged up on and screamed at. Added to all of this was the fact that none of it was true. It was a deep injustice with a girl in tears and people angry at

me. This only increased as the teacher came into the room, took the side of the girl, and sent me to the counselor's office. Again, I felt very hurt and confused by all of this.

I'm happy to tell you that the girl and I talked things through with the counselor and worked everything out. We learned that the story was completely made up. It was a lie. Plain and simple. While we didn't learn the origins of the story, we learned that I had not uttered one word of what had been claimed. The girl and I were friends and everyone stopped hating me.

That being said, I was still rattled. I was emotional. All the hate and frustration lobbed in my direction had still left an unsettling feeling in my gut. I didn't just bounce back from this. Even thinking on this story – with years separating me from it – is still a bit unsettling.

Lies hurt. Lies shock and leave someone in distress. Lies are not something we can get away from easily and dismiss quickly. Lies leave a lasting impact and a resonating influence of injustice.

The scary reality is, ***lies are in your heart and mine.*** Right now. This very minute. We walk around carrying lies every day of our lives. When we look in the mirror, text on the phone, share pictures through social media, converse with our friends in the hall, step on the athletic field, walk up on stage, answer a question in class, whatever the scenario may be, lies are there with us.

## THE HEART AND INSECURITY

The Bible tells us, 'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick; who can understand it?' (Jer. 17:9) This verse

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tells us that you and I, even though we may not be running a fever or feeling ill, are still desperately sick. Unless you have no heart, in which case ... you're dead or a zombie, which is dead.

But, since you're reading this book and you read that last line, you do have a heart. Any human heart is poisoned with sin. Sin's poisoning affects leave us deceived and sick. We are deceived by our hearts, deceive others by our hearts, and they deceive us. As soon as our heads pop off their pillows in the morning, we are being fed lies by our hearts.

The reality is, we often forget this. We wake up in the morning, check Instagram, get ready for school, put on our shoes, head out the door, and before we make it to our first class, we have been listening to lies. Our heart was feeding us lies without even noticing it. And, we become so accustomed to these lies, we believe them. We live under them. We obey them. We become identified by them.

In the previous chapter I said, '*insecurity is sinful.*' As I said, I know that can add guilt to some, but I hope it's more helpful than anything. Labeling it as sinful is not only accurate, but it will assist you in recognizing it and fighting against it. You see, it is out of this deceitfully, sin-sick heart, where we find these lies' origins. In short, you are lying to yourself and you often don't even know it.

Insecurity lies to you. Insecurity is deceitful. Insecurity tells you ...

### • **You're Not Attractive Enough**

You look in the mirror and wish your nose was a little smaller. Your eyes a little further apart. Your ears are too big. That acne is spreading across your face and there's no way you can hide

it. Every glance in the hallway assures you of other people's disgust.

As you begin to get dressed and take a passing look in the mirror – a passing look that lingers a bit longer – you notice your abs aren't defined. Your breasts are underdeveloped. Your arms aren't as muscular as the guy all the girls talk about. Your thighs are a little too big. You're too short. You're too tall.

For some of you, your heart has been feeding you lies about your physical appearance for years and you believe the lies. You start thinking these lies are truth.

### • **You're Not Smart Enough**

You're a straight-A student, but you messed up that one time and your GPA (grade point average) isn't what his is. Or, you got a 'C' on that test and everyone else did fine. While you're day-dreaming in class, you notice that everyone is listening and taking notes, but you just can't focus. Everyone in the class is moving along just fine, but you're still struggling with the work from two weeks ago.

There's no way you'll get that scholarship, no way you'll keep the grades. There's no way you'll make it in life. Maybe this is some of you? Your heart begins to feed you lies of hopelessness. Your heart is telling you your worth is in your grades.

### • **You're Unlovable**

Maybe you feel ignored. Ignored by your parents and friends. Maybe if you were funny you'd be able to win the attention of some, but you can't tell a joke. You just don't have a lot of

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those characteristics that attract people to you. You're often met with coldness from others.

Your heart tells you that you're just unlovable. And, your friends and family have made this lie an easy sell and you bought it years ago. Maybe your family is loving, but the coldness from your friends is enough to affirm you can't be loved, so you believe it.

Maybe you come from a broken home. Your parents divorced and you feel like it was your fault. You've carried the blame and your lying heart has only magnified that. It continues to feed you thoughts of how you could have kept your parents together. The sin in your heart loves to feed you with thoughts of guilt and you believe them.

### • **You Have No Value**

Now that you have bought the above lies, you've bought into one that goes a bit further. You have no value. Since you know you're not attractive, you don't make good grades, you can't make people laugh, and you're often ignored – you must be worthless.

Your lying heart may feed you with lies we might label as superficial. That is, lies that feed your insecurities about your appearance or grades. But, lies can become so compounded that they grow into something more serious, like depression. Those can compound into suicidal thoughts.

Therefore, it is important to see the truth of your lying heart and how it can truly torture you and lead you to thinking and believing things that can seriously harm you. We will discuss this more later, but you need to know that you do have value.

No matter your family context or your, seemingly, lack of gifts, you have great value.

## **THE INSECURITIES OF THE 'SECURE'**

There are also lies that swing us to the other end of the spectrum. Lies that tell us we are self-sufficient beings, who rely on our own strengths and gifts. Lies that tell us ...

### **· You Do Have Everything**

Your deceitful heart tells you, you have everything you need in yourself. It tells you that you're so attractive, all eyes are on you. You are the smartest. You're the most athletic. You're the funniest. Everyone worships you, including yourself.

As you get up in the morning, you can't wait for people to see you. To compliment your new dress. To say something about that shirt that you know makes you look good.

You can't wait for all the 'likes' that selfie is going to get. You know you took it at just the right angle to make your breasts look bigger. Your biceps nicer. Your waist thinner. You constantly pull out your phone to read the new comments and 'likes.'

You can't wait to get to school. Not for the classes, but for the praise. You can't wait for them to praise your humor, admire your body, or be impressed with the right answer. All of this feels good, but our lying hearts can use this to cause great harm to us.

Your heart has fed you the lie that you have everything you need. There is nothing outside you that completes you. You are already complete. Even though these people may appear overly

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confident – the opposite of insecure – security can never be found in oneself, so their insecurity is just below the surface.

Therefore, even the ‘good-looking’ and ‘popular’ are battling insecurity. The athlete knows his security can be taken so easily. The straight-A student knows there’s always someone smarter. There’s always someone prettier. Insecurity is in their hearts too.

While these lies seem more favorable, they are still lies. I know there are some who would rather believe the latter lie – that you do have everything – but it’s a lie that will ultimately destroy you. You see, all the previous examples are examples of insecurity, because none of our weaknesses or strengths were meant to be the place we find security or identity.

Here’s something to consider. Please know I’m not trying to hurt you or add to your insecurities ... brace yourselves. Maybe you aren’t that attractive. Maybe you really aren’t funny. Maybe you’re not athletic. Maybe you’re not that smart. You see, the answer to the former lies is not building yourself up, that’s Disney’s job. I love Disney, but their answer is following your heart and believing in yourself.

You see, your failures are to point you to Another. Your inadequacies are illustrative of the fact that you live in a fallen world and you need a Savior. Our looks, our smarts, our athleticism are often idols that simply need to be fed. But, feeding them won’t help you, it will only make you hungrier. More insecure. All the gifts we have – humor, looks, academics, etc. – are all imperfect. They are not the things we should look to for our security.

I don’t want to make light of those insecurities. Not being pretty, or smart, or accepted, or loved, obviously hurts. But,



the answer is not building yourself up. It's not looking to yourself and having a positive self-image or growing in self-confidence. That, ultimately, will not help you.

Many times the only reason we want to be better looking or funny is simply because our culture praises those things. Realizing you don't have those qualities does hurt, but the pain of not possessing those qualities doesn't mean you don't have worth. There's something much more valuable.

Think about it this way: some people will never be star athletes. Even with all the training and practice, they will never be gifted. Does that mean they have no value? Absolutely not! Therefore, if you haven't been blessed with brawn or beauty, take heart – that's not where value is found.

In short, the pain from our insecurities is there to point you in the direction of Jesus. He's the One who makes you beautiful, He's the one who redeems your mind, He's the One who has the unfading value. He's the only One who can help us. In order to see how Jesus gives us this security, however, we first must consider some characteristics of insecurity in the chapters ahead. But, before we move on, let me give you some advice. I know we will be discussing specific ways in which we fight our insecurities in later chapters. However, I didn't want to leave you here without some advice, and, this advice comes from a famous preacher named Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones.

He once said this: 'Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?'<sup>1</sup> In light of this chapter, we often **listen** to the lies of our heart, but we need to start

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1 Lloyd-Jones, Martyn, *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cures*, 2nd edition (Zondervan, 1998) p. 20.

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**talking** to our heart. Therefore, start speaking truth back into your heart when it's lying to you. Tell your heart to be quiet when it's feeding your insecurities.

As we move forward, you'll hear some more specifics about what truth you need to speak back to your heart, but this might be a helpful practice to begin at this point in the book.<sup>2</sup>

### TAKE SOME TIME

*Have you ever thought about your heart feeding you lies?*

*What lies have you been listening to?*

*Is it encouraging to know that you do have value regardless of your gifts or lack of gifts?*

### PRAY:

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see the lies of your heart. Ask God to forgive you for believing lies and living in light of them and not the truth. Ask God to help you begin to believe that your value is not attached to your accomplishments, but to the accomplishments of Another, namely Jesus.

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<sup>2</sup> You can also check out Appendix C for some bullet-point truths you can speak to yourself.