

“I’m Not
Good
Enough”

Sharon Jaynes



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House of Mirrors

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

3 JOHN 4



Carrie stood before the bathroom mirror putting the finishing touches on her makeup before rushing off to the county fair with her girlfriends. Just a bit of lip gloss and one more swipe of the hairbrush and she was ready to go.

Carrie heard the horn blow as the girls pulled in the driveway, and she grabbed her sweater and yelled to her mom still in the kitchen.

“Bye mom, I’ll be home by eleven.”

“Be careful,” her mom called out.

Carrie, Katie, Clair, and Meghan scurried from booth to booth as the carnival barkers drew them in. They watched boys humiliate themselves with attempts to fire rifles at metal foxes running across a black backdrop, shoot basketballs into hoops that seemed strangely small, and bang a giant hammer to prove who was the strongest among the bunch. The girls tried their hands at throwing darts to pop balloons, casting rings over old milk jugs, and tossing balls in slanted straw baskets. After eating a pink sticky cloud of cotton candy, the girls wandered over to various side shows.

“Come one, come all,” the barker called. “Step right up and see yourself as you’ve never been seen before. The House of Mirrors, sure to entertain and amuse. Step right up.”

“Come on in, little lady,” the dark man with greasy black hair and

toothy grin motioned to Carrie. She shivered and wanted to turn and run away.

“Let’s go in here,” Katie said. “This’ll be fun.”

Carrie was whisked away with the crowd and lured into the first mirrored room. Elongated reflections stared back, and the girls giggled at the taller, thinner versions of themselves. In the next room, they doubled over in laughter at their stubby arms and legs, expanded torsos, and chubby cheeks. They struck various poses and got a taste of what midget versions of themselves might look like.

The girls then ran to a third room, but Carrie stayed behind. She was silent as she stood mesmerized at what she saw staring back at her. Words began to appear across her chest, fading in and out in various scripted forms. *Worthless. Unloved. Ugly. Stupid. Unacceptable. Unforgivable. Dirty. Unhappy. Failure. Not good enough.*

Was this a trick? Did the others see what she saw? How did they know? Tears began trickling down her cheeks as hidden memories flashed before her.

“Carrie, come on!” Meghan called from down the hall. “Let’s go to the bumper cars.”

Carrie took a deep breath, put on her perma-smile, and wiped her eyes. No one noticed the mascara trail down her cheeks or the puffy swollen eyes. Like always...no one knew.

House of Mirrors

I was in the sixth grade when I first ventured into the House of Mirrors at my hometown county fair. Like Carrie, my group of giggling friends ran from booth to booth suckered into paying good money to play rigged games. For hours we gave our money to shady carnival characters in hopes of winning a stuffed purple polka-dot snake, oversized tie-dyed teddy bear, or a pair of fuzzy dice to hang from a car’s rearview mirror. Personally, I stuck with pickup ducks. A sure win.

We soared into the air on the Ferris wheel to get a good look at the small-town lights, rode through the darkened House of Horrors

with a favorite beau, and plunged down the mountainous rickety roller coaster with arms in the air. But of all the side shows at the carnival, it was the house of mirrors that captured my attention.

Like Carrie and her friends, we walked through maze-like halls giggling at the distorted images of ourselves. I looked at the various versions of me and tried to decide which one I liked best. But deep inside, in a place I didn't even know existed, part of me was *truly* in search of another version of me. I did not like the one I knew best.

Because I had no idea who I really was.

Now I have come to realize that many women grow up with a distorted image of who they really are. They look into the mirror of performance and see the words *not good enough*. They stare into the mirror of value and see *worthless*. They peer into the looking glass of success and see *failure*. They gaze into the mirror of competence and see *inferior, insecure, and inadequate*.

They live in a house of mirrors believing distorted interpretations of who they are...and it's all a lie.

Broken Mirrors

How did this happen? Where do the lies come from? Why is it so easy to believe the lies about who we are rather than the truth? What *is* the truth? We will look at all these questions and many more throughout our time together. But I will tell you this—it all began in the Garden.

After the sixth day of creation, when God looked at all He made, He said, "It is good." But something went terribly wrong. The enemy crept into God's perfect world and deceived His image bearers with lies. And while God's redemptive plan has restored what the serpent destroyed, the enemy continues to tell us lies even today. He tells us that we are worthless, powerless failures who are not good enough, smart enough, or competent enough to succeed.

And it is not the truth.

When God created the world and stocked the seas with marine life and the skies with winged creatures—when He ignited the stars

in the night sky and placed the sun to light the day and the moon to illumine the darkness—He did so with words. “*And God said...*” and it came to be (Genesis 1:3-26). God spoke and what was not became what is.

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made,
their starry host by the breath of his mouth (Psalm 33:6).

Amazingly, when God created man in His own image, He gave us the power of language. He didn’t entrust monkeys, zebras, or elephants with words. He gave words to man. Our words also have creative potential. The Bible tells us that “death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Proverbs 18:21 NASB). Our words become the mirror in which others see themselves. Our words affect children, husbands, friends, and the world. But some of the most powerful words we speak are the ones that no one hears...the words we speak to ourselves.

We can speak life to ourselves and we can speak death to ourselves. Our minds think about 130 words per minute and our mouths (women) speak about 25,000 words in a day. That’s a lot of words. A considerable amount of those words are spoken or thought to ourselves. Most of this self-talk is harmless, such as *What will I fix for dinner?* or *Where did I put my hairbrush?* But some are very destructive.

Saying, *I’m so stupid*, *I’m such an idiot*, or *I’m never going to be good enough*, can create habitual destructive thought patterns that can paralyze a person into inactivity. Negative self-perceptions repeated over time will brand themselves into our minds and eventually become our reality. If you repeat a misbelief or lie enough times, you begin to believe it. *Nobody loves me*, *I don’t have any friends*, or *I’m so ugly* becomes your reality...even though it’s a false reality. You can become stuck in the house of mirrors looking at a distorted reflection of who you really are.

The negative destructive lies of the enemy are like a tar baby. The more you play with it, toy with it, embrace it, the more you get stuck to

it. Each time we speak a lie about ourselves, the more we become bound to it. “For as he thinks within himself, so he is” (Proverbs 23:7 NASB).

God’s Mirror

When we look into God’s mirror, His incredible love letter to us we call the Bible, we discover the truth. God does love you (Colossians 3:12). You have an entire cloud of witnesses cheering for you (Hebrews 12:1). You are God’s masterpiece...a work of beautiful art (Ephesians 2:10). You are good enough because Christ lives in you (John 14:20). You are a chosen, holy, dearly loved child of God. That’s the truth. Let’s get out of the house of mirrors and start seeing ourselves as God sees us.

In one of John’s letters, he wrote, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth” (3 John 4). I believe that God has no greater joy than to know that *His* children are walking in the truth. When we are walking in the truth, the lies are exposed. We can recognize the lie, reject the lie, and replace the lie with truth. Then, and only then, can we be all that God has created us to be and do all that God has created us to do. We can experience the abundant life He planned all along.

I believe that God has great plans for all of us—His Word promises that He does.

“No eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
no mind has conceived
what God has prepared for those who love him”
(1 Corinthians 2:9).

But many of us are not experiencing the abundant life because we don’t know who we are. We have believed the lies that we are unloved, unworthy, and unforgivable. We have been looking in distorted mirrors far too long. God wants us to look into the only true mirror that will tell us exactly who we are, what we have, and where we are as a child of God—His Word.

It is time to start believing the truth. It is time to hear God say, “You are My daughter, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

Are you ready to walk out of the house of mirrors once and for all? Are you ready to begin seeing yourself as God sees you? Are you ready to begin living the abundant life that God planned all along?

Let’s grab hands and begin the journey of walking in the truth together.