BIG PROBLEMS? BIGGER GOD!
Part 16: The Problem of Inadequacy

INTRO: We encounter another all-to-common problem: Feelings and thoughts of inadequacy or inferiority. We all struggle with this problem somehow: as a spouse, a parent, at work, etc. Ever ask yourself questions like: "Am I successful enough, smart enough, wealthy enough, popular enough (nice, creative, brave, valued, pretty, thin, . . .?" We wonder, "Will I ever be enough?" These feelings of inadequacy lead to insecurity, fear, anxiety, uncertainty, etc. I've felt many times . . . Pastor's story … We are not alone facing this problem. D. Seamands …

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES – OT: Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Isaiah . . . NT: the disciples, John Mark, Peter, Timothy, John the Baptist, Paul . . . to mention a few. We are not alone, trust me.

CELEBRITY EXAMPLES – John Housman, Richard Burton, Barbara Streisand . . .

NATURAL RESPONSE? Gen. 3:1-13

- We *cover up* (v. 7 fig leaves) – Many varieties: we exaggerate, lie, brag, pretend, "imposter syndrome" (ex-celebrities . . .)
- We *hide out* (vv. 8, 10) – We stay home, make excuses not to, etc.
- We *put down* (vv. 11-13) – blame others, gossip about, tear down, etc.

JESUS' CHOICE OF DISCIPLES – They were not: cream-of-the-crop, most educated, smartest, most likely to succeed, spiritually elite, But ordinary, insecure, thickheaded, disobedient, unbelieving, doubtful. People just like you and me (Acts 4:1-13; 1 Cor. 1:20-21).

HOW SATAN USES OUR FEELINGS OF INADEQUACY

- To diminish our potential – "you can't so don't even try"
- To destroy our dreams – "you don't deserve it"
- To damage relationships – "you're not worthy . . . a failure"
- To discourage Christian service – "nothing to offer"

MANAGING THE PROBLEM OF INADEQUACY

- Embrace Your Inadequacy – No one is omnicompetent. Embrace not just about admitting (retain negative attitude), buy Satan's lies of we can live independently of God). All of us are inadequate in places. Essentially three forms of inadequacies:

  (1) *personal limitations* we can rarely change (inherited?) – can be physical, emotional, mental or can be talent limitation. Paul called it his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. 12:9-10). Only solution is trust in and to depend on God (Psa. 139:13-16).

  (2) *unreasonable people* – know any unreasonable, difficult, contrary . . . people? Work with any? Married to one? Timothy was put down for his youthfulness (1 Tim. 4:12). Such people: criticize, attack, judge . . . us. What's God's solution? We respond with patience and love (Eph. 4:2; 1 Cor. 13:4-13).

  (3) *Making comparisons* – Never ends well. Solution is to accept yourself.

  (4) *impossible situations* – Disciples felt inadequate when facing impossible situations (Mk. 4:35-41). They were timid and afraid. They forgot who was in the boat with them – Jesus. Already He had . . . What is solution? Lean into God's power. He is adequate, always! (vv. 39-41). This leads to next principle . . .

- Embrace God's Sufficiency – Jer. 32:17; Lk. 18:27; 2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 1:7; Eph. 1:19ff. We are more than adequate in His sufficiency. God always has adequate grace and power if we'll lean into Him. Return to Acts 4:13 "common (ordinary)" is *idiotes*, our word for idiot! You know those disciples battled feelings of inadequacy. But, here's what made all the difference: they had "been with Jesus" (Phil. 4:13; Jn. 15:5). Have you been with Jesus? Are you? Then you are adequate! My inadequacies are opportunity for God's sufficiency. The real issue in feeling inadequate is not who we are or what we can do but who He is and what He can do.

CONC: We can and may be inadequate, but with Him we are more than adequate. John Acuff . . . He can always work more easily with our inadequacies and insecurities than with our pride. The only opinion about us that matters is God's (not our critics).