

Mom-to-Mom: Not Enough

By Kate Ward

I wake up in the middle of the night to a crying toddler. I peel myself out of my bed and drag my body to his room. As I am walking, I know I should be patient, grace-filled, and loving, but I am exhausted and don't want to be up in the middle of the night. Why am I mad at my child for waking me up? I am not enough.



I wake up at 6:45 to get the older boys ready for school. The issues start right away. One child has an itchy bug bite and is complaining about the pain. The other doesn't have any underwear and forgot to let me know. I should have done laundry two days ago. I am hungry and dying for my coffee but their needs have to come first. Why do the small things around the house overwhelm and annoy me so much? I am not enough.

All day, I am entertaining my toddler. Now don't get me wrong, toddlers are the cutest things on earth, but they can challenge you, with no sign of backing down for days. Most days, I just get weary of all the questions and the bossiness. I wish he would just listen and not fight with me over everything. Why do I not enjoy being with him more? I am not enough.

The boys get home from school, and I feel like I should be refreshed for them. But the intensity of homework and after-school activities zaps my energy. I try to listen and connect, but it is so chaotic! Three people talking, asking, and demanding all at once. I can't hold my tongue when I hear one more whine about doing homework. Why do I want to yell at my kids? I am not enough.

My husband gets home for dinner, and I am so glad to see him but my energy is drained. If this is all I have to give him, I feel bad. He is very helpful with the kids, but I have nothing left. As I wrap up the day, I barely make it to the couch after bedtimes before I fall asleep. I am a terrible wife. Why don't I put more effort into my marriage? I am not enough.

Now, please don't hear me saying I don't love being a mom. (I feel like I have to make that disclaimer every time I am honest about my true feelings about motherhood.) I LOVE being a mom, but that doesn't make this job easier. It just makes it worth it.

I think we all have those days, weeks, months, and years where we feel like we are not enough. We might think we can fix it with a book, Pinterest, friendships, or activities. But I have found that the only real fix is going to the source of our strength and abilities. When I sit down with the Bible to read and pray, I feel renewed and refreshed to do what God has called me to do.

In Psalm 23, David writes, “The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Those words were written long ago, but they still pertain to me today. When I pause, and take time to read God’s wisdom in the Bible and talk to him through prayer, I remember why I am doing what I am doing. God called me to be the mom of my three wonderful boys, and he can help me do the job well. God doesn’t demand our obedience, patience, kindness, and love for others; he wants to give us those abilities in His strength.

1 John 5:14 says, “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” We try and live life on our own, but if we have a relationship with God, He wants to give us the power to be enough for our family and those around us.

So every morning, I am connecting to the source that will fill me with the sustaining energy that goes beyond my ability. In my daily time with God, He will encourage me with his faithfulness and remind me of what is eternally important. I feel renewed and ready to meet my day with all the joy and hardships it will bring. When the questions and doubt come, I can say, “my God is enough!”