



We are women who know the joy of the Spirit-filled life. We live and abide in the love of Jesus, trusting that He is enough to meet every need and satisfy every heart.

Throughout the month of May we will hear from missionaries who serve Jesus in various places around the world. As you read each week, please be in prayer for these specific women and their requests and join with Titus Women around the globe in praying for the missionaries Jesus puts on your heart. Today Hope Owsley shares about neediness.



*"My grace is sufficient for thee:
for my strength is made
perfect in weakness"
- 2 Corinthians 12:9*

The Blessing of Inadequacy

People often look to missionaries as experts in cross-cultural ministry, but we often feel overwhelmed by the challenges we face. Many times, in these last 30 years, we have cried out to God for wisdom and help, and each time we've received the opportunity to trust Him in new ways. Here's what I've discovered.

Our sense of inadequacy drives us to God.

Twenty years ago, when we moved to a new city, our kids struggled to adapt to the new school. They felt excluded by the close-knit group of missionary kids who had

grown up together. At church I was put in the children's department (not in my gift mix); the services were loud and disorderly. Sometimes after a particularly wild service, I would go into the bathroom and cry out to the Lord to help me. And He did! As my pastor's wife and I began to meet for weekly Bible study, He knit our hearts together and began to heal my hurts.

It relieves us of doing the work in our own strength.

For most of our missionary career, we've been involved in discipleship and theological training, but in 2012, when the Lord called us to plant a church in the nation's capital, we suddenly found we could not depend on our natural gifts. The work was slow and arduous. Many times I said to the Lord, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing!" (Luke 5:5). The Lord kept reminding me to launch out into the deep, trusting Him to do the work. After five years of casting out our nets, the Lord began filling them.

It leaves no room for pride.

When I felt the Lord leading me to edit John Wesley's sermons for modern readers, I was overwhelmed with insecurity. Like Moses, I said, "Who am I, Lord? I haven't got any high-sounding credentials. Besides I'm not eloquent" (Ex 4:10). I told the Lord that my Portuguese wasn't good enough and that He needed to find someone more qualified. The more I cried, whined, and complained, the more He took me by the hand and helped me to sit down in front of my computer to do the impossible. When the book was finished, I couldn't take any credit for it.

It fills us with wonder.

When we lived in NE Brazil, our young sons kept me pretty busy. But I cried out to the Lord for opportunities to minister to the girls in our neighborhood, and He answered. Because Petrolina was a small country town, there were no walls or locked doors like other cities in Brazil. Young people walked into our home all day; every day because they wanted to see how Americans lived. I was trying to homeschool the boys and maintain some kind of order. What to do? The Lord led me to start a girls' club on Tuesday afternoons. I shared a devotional to a living room packed with pre-teens and then we made an American recipe together. We often talked about God's plan for sex and

marriage since our city had a high rate of teen pregnancies. Each week when I sat down with my typed-out notes and pre-planned activities, I was overwhelmed with what the Lord had enabled me to do at a time in my life when I had no extra time or energy.

Your neediness is your opportunity to trust and to grow!

Satan uses our feelings of inadequacy to cripple us. Jesus wants to lift us up and look at His sufficiency. The next time the Lord leads you into an area where you lack expertise, and the devil tells you “There’s no way you can do it,” you can agree with him! Just be sure and remind him that God’s strength is made perfect in your weakness (2 Cor 12:9) and prepare yourself to lean into Jesus and be filled with wonder at what He will do.

Prayers for Missionaries Everywhere

Would you pray for those who serve Jesus in cross-cultural missions? Please pray that they would have a constantly deepening awareness of God's strength made perfect in their weakness. Pray that they would find help and encouragement from the godly people around them, even as they seek it at the throne of grace.

Pray for the missionary mamas who are trying to juggle ministry and motherhood while they face all the challenges of living abroad.

Pray that they would be responsive to Jesus' leading as new ministry opportunities arise and that their lives would be so transparent that all others see in them is Jesus.