

July 20, 2025 Sermon Title: *You Matter...You Are Enough*

Isaiah 43:1–4 NRSVUE

“You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you.” – *Is 43:4a*

But now thus says the Lord,

he who created you, O Jacob,

he who formed you, O Israel:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name; you are mine.

²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you,

and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;

when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,

and the flame shall not consume you.

³For I am the Lord your God,

the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

I give Egypt as your ransom,

Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

⁴Because you are precious in my sight

and honored and I love you.

This is the Word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

I believe there is a silent epidemic among us.

It doesn't show up in lab tests.

It isn't easily diagnosed.

But it quietly corrodes our sense of worth and belonging.

It's the belief—held more deeply than we care to admit—

that *we are not enough*.

It's that quiet inner voice...the whisper that says:

- *I'm not good enough.*
- *I've failed too many times.*
- *If they really knew me, they wouldn't love me.*
- *I'm too broken, too flawed, too...oh you fill in the blank...*

Whether it comes from childhood wounds, relentless comparisons,
or the noise of our achievement-driven culture,
the message comes through loud and clear: you don't measure up.

We may look like we're functioning well on the outside.

But many of us carry within us:

- The **fear** of not being enough.
- The shame of past failures....and
- The exhaustion of always performing,
always hustling to prove our worth.

Far too often, we measure our lives with invisible scorecards—
success, beauty, relationships, productivity.

And by those standards we often come up short.

But into this deep ache, this very real pain,

God speaks a bold and tender truth thru the prophet Isaiah:

"You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you."

This is not just a comforting sentiment. It is a holy confrontation
to every lie within us & our culture...that whispers *you're not enough*.

Friends, as we continue in our summer sermon series, *T-Shirt Theology*,
today's message is quite literally stitched into the fabric we wear—
and the Gospel we embody.

This is week three in the series,
and this shirt may be the most important one yet:

"You matter"...But there's more:

"To the person behind me: You are amazing, beautiful, & enough."

Friends, we're preaching with what's on our backs—and sometimes,
what's written there preaches louder than a pulpit ever could.

But back to the prophet. Isaiah was writing to people in exile.

Folk who were displaced. Weary. Uncertain about their future.

They had lost nearly everything—including their sense of identity.

And yet, God speaks into that disoriented, painful place:

- “I have called you by name.”
- “You are mine.”
- “You are precious.”
- “You are honored.”
- “I love you.”

There is no mention of what Israel—the people of God—has done to earn such affirmation.

No resume. No success story.

Just the sheer grace of being *seen* and *claimed* by God.

This is *inherent worth*— Not based on what we do, but on whose we are.

~Before you did anything...

~Before you accomplished or failed anything...

~Before the world measured you by GPA, income, body type, parenting success, or the house you live in...

God declared: “*You are mine.*”

The Good News is that your worth isn’t earned. It’s *bestowed*.

It’s God’s gift—grace without strings attached—saying to each of us:

You Matter. You are enough.

But oh, how hard it is to believe that.

We’ve internalized so many lies, all those unrealistic expectations we’re weighed down with...

repeating them to ourselves...like a bad refrain.

Dr. Brené Brown, researcher & author on shame, vulnerability, & courage can help us dig into this more. Brené describes shame as:

“The painful feeling that says, *There’s something wrong with me.*”

It’s not guilt—which says, “I did something wrong.”

Shame says, “**I am what’s wrong.**”

Did you hear the difference?

Guilt says, “I did something wrong.”

Shame says, “**I am what’s wrong.**”

And that lie is **spiritually devastating**.

It isolates. It silences.

It convinces us we don't deserve love, or grace, or community,
or even God.

But Isaiah's words push back:

"You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you."

O Let that wash over you: Precious. Honored. Loved.

This isn't from a Hallmark card.

It's **the living voice of God**—claiming you, surrounding you, filling you.

Let me tell you the story of this T-shirt.

A few years ago, my daughter Rebecca gave it to me for my birthday.

Rebecca is a middle school special education teacher.

She said, "Mom, I wear this to school—and my kids love it.

They read it and light up. They feel seen." Now that got my attention.

You need to know that Becca's not the kind of teacher
who stays behind a desk.

She's up and down the rows, constantly moving and connecting.

She told me, "More kids see the back of my shirt than the front,
and I want them to know—*they are amazing, beautiful, and enough.*"

She added, "My students often feel invisible. This shirt is one small way
I remind them that they matter. That I see the for who they really are."

Then she handed me mine and said, "Mom, you're always out there,
always moving, always caring. I thought you'd like to have one too."

Friends, every time I wear this shirt, someone says something.

"I love your shirt!" "I needed to hear that today."

"That just made my whole morning."

You never know who is reading the back of your shirt...
in the grocery line...at the DMV...or even in church.

This simple T-Shirt has become a quiet, subtle form of evangelism.
It preaches...it speaks the Gospel through cotton and ink.

Friends a single word of affirmation, encouragement, love...
can echo God's voice in someone's soul.

Jesus modeled this so beautifully.

He didn't just preach from the temple, but on the hillsides
and along dusty roads, in boats and around meals.

Jesus saw people. He affirmed them.

He named their worth over and over and over again..

- He crossed Social barriers to speak with the woman at the well,
to affirm her dignity, not shame her.
- He called Zacchaeus down from a tree—not to scold him,
but to eat with him.
- He welcomed noisy, active children when the disciples
tried to shoo them away.
- He saw the bleeding woman when no one else did and said,
“Daughter, your faith has made you well.”

Jesus didn't just preach love. **He embodied it.** He lived it.

And if He wore a shirt today, I think it would say what mine does:
“You matter. You are enough.”

So, what do we do with all this?

Well first, let God's voice be louder than shame.

If you struggle with Feelings of not being enough,
let Isaiah 43:4 be your daily truth.

Write it down. Buy this t-shirt on Amazon. Read that “You are Enough”
Flower Card the kids gave you today....**READ IT** until you **BELIEVE IT**.

Let it counter every lie the world, our culture, and our inner critic
tries to whisper.

Let God's voice be louder than shame.

Second, be someone who *SEES* others.

Ask God to show you someone this week who feels invisible.

Offer a text, a smile, a word of kindness.

Be a voice in someone's life that says:

You matter to me. You make this place better!

Third, Build cultures of belonging.

In your family, your workplace, your school...

and yes right here in church!

Build relationships based on *belonging*, not performance.

Value people for who they *are*, not what they *do*.

And finally, LIVE the message. Wear the message. Be the message.

Let what you wear, how you speak & how you treat people
say to the world:

You are amazing. You are beautiful. You are enough!

You may never know the impact of a few words...

But gospel words—spoken or worn—change lives.

Friends, the world will try to convince us that we're not enough.

But the God who formed you, redeemed you, & calls you by name says:

“You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you.”

Let **that** be the voice you and I listen to.

And the message your life preaches in the week to come.

Because it may be the only sermon someone hears this week...
and desperately needs.

May it be so, Amen and Amen.