

## Who Am I...A Child of God!

I John 3:1-10

October 14, 2018

Who are you?

For the next 7 weeks we will be asking ourselves the question:  
"Who am I?"

I want you to tell me one answer to that question out loud!

Who are you?

(take responses from the folks)

Now here is the other side of that i.d. coin...

Who do others say you are?

(take responses from the folks)

For the next 7 weeks we are not going to seek the answers to who we say we are. Nor are we going to try and sort through the answers of who others say we are. Nope! For the next seven weeks we are going to take a look at our true identity...not our mistaken or fake i.d.

I'm not going to ask how many of you ever had a fake i.d. in high school!

I will ask you how many times do you find yourself having to show someone your photo i.d.?

Who are you?

Our true i.d. is important in many arenas of life!

What is your true i.d.? Who are you...who am I!

We all have our true i.d.

The other side of that i.d. coin is that we all tend to have our mistaken i.d.

We all have produced a fake i.d. that we often show others more than our true i.d.

Dutch theologian, Henri J.M. Nouwen has commented that often when it comes to our spiritual i.d. we are all susceptible to being hoodwinked when it comes to answering the question, "Who am I?"

"Who am I?" is a complex question in which we are tempted to respond in one of three ways:

1. **I am what I do!** We think our accomplishments or our failures in life relationships and career identify who we are!
2. **I am what others say about me!** I am either my good reputation that I work hard at maintaining each day or I am what others gossip about me behind my back.
3. **I am what I have!** My house or my eviction...my Rockwell family or my dysfunctional family...my savings account or my last penny...

For Nouwen, our true i.d., our true spiritual identity, is not found in any of the above.

The answer to our question, "Who am I?" is not found in what I do for a living, what friends or enemies say about me or what's in my wallet.

Our true spiritual i.d. begins in remembering who loves us! What an amazing and powerful true i.d. statement was made in our bible reading this morning! Listen to it again as it holds the answer to the question: "Who am I?"

***"What marvelous love the Father has extended to us! Just look at it---we're called children of God! That's who we really are!" I John 3:1 MSG***

Who am I? Who are you?  
A CHILD OF GOD!!!

I don't have to tell you that you and I will always have rejection or questioning of who we truly are. Our true i.d. will be challenged, watched and even questioned by those around us. We are to remember who we are! We are beloved! We are loved by a Father who will not walk out on us. We are loved by a Father who loves us more than we even love ourselves. We are loved by a Father who wants us to become like Jesus! We are loved by a Father who desires His will, His best for us.

Tuesday, the day I was writing this message, would have been my dad's 90th birthday. I spent a lot of time throughout that day remembering my dad's love for me . I celebrated my identity as his son. The older I get the more I see my dad being lived out in me, physically, life skills and emotions. I remembered the marvelous love of my earthly dad.

Who are you? You are a child of the one true God. You are loved by a Heavenly Father. You are a son or a daughter of God. There is our true identity. There is the truth of a love we are not to forget. There is a love we need to remind ourselves of each day we walk through life. (Romans 8:15-17)

Every Sunday, the congregation at Shepherd's Grove Church in Orange County, California, recites a creed in unison. That creed is an insert in your bulletin today.

I want to ask you to take it out and let us recite it together.

**I'm not what I do.  
I'm not what I have.  
I'm not what people say about me.  
I am the beloved of God.  
It's who I am.  
No one can take it from me.  
I don't have to worry.  
I don't have to hurry.  
I can trust my friend Jesus and  
share His love with the world.**

Who am I?

I am a child of God!

What temptation do all of us face each day? It is the temptation to compare ourselves to others. We like to put our best Facebook face before others. Someone once commented that Facebook is where we get to view the highlight pics of peoples' lives while keeping our behind the scenes experiences to ourselves. For example...we see the fabulous pic of someone's son or daughter going to homecoming. What we don't see displayed is the week long argument about curfew, dress, dinner money, etc.!

The temptation to measure ourselves against others tends to make us forget our true spiritual i.d.

I am a child of God! I am His son or daughter! I am loved! The cross is our reminder of the kind of love we have been exposed to...a sacrificial, forgiving love! You are worth it! He chose to love you first. He is that kind of Father.

We cannot earn that i.d. We are to receive it, believe it and then live it. When we do we are given our true i.d....a child of God! (John 1:12-13)

What makes us think we have to earn it...impress God with obedience to gain it? He gives us grace, an undeserved gift...an inheritance that will last forever. What makes us think we have to do things to get God to love us? While we were sinners, living a mistaken i.d. life He loved us enough to send His Son Jesus to die on the cross.

We discover the promise that anyone who receives, believes and lives out this love is a new person in Christ. (II Corinthians 5:17)

Our Heavenly Father's love for us is not based on our past or present performance.

Our Heavenly Father's love for us is not based on what others tell Him about us.

Our Heavenly Father's love for us is not based on what we have or give.

Our Heavenly Father's love for us is unconditional. He loves us first. (I John 4:19)

God is to be our first love. When we love God with all of who we are then all our love for others falls into place. When our first love is God then all our other loves for family and friends will be strengthened. When we forget our first love then our true i.d. becomes mistaken and weakened.

There was a group of Christians who were warned about forgetting their "first love." The church at Ephesus, one of the churches mentioned in Revelation, (Revelation 2:4) were warned that they had lost their first love for Jesus. They were too busy *doing* that they forgot their i.d. of *being* in love with Jesus. They forgot who they were in Christ. Their i.d. became what they were doing for Christ. By doing they were not living up to their true potential.

Do you remember the movie, *The Lion King*? There is a scene in the movie where Simba, the son of the Lion King, who was falsely accused of killing his dad, and had run away from the shame and fear, is years later confronted by the monkey, Rafiki.

Rafiki tells Simba that his father is alive and he will show Simba the way. They arrive at a reflection pool and Rafiki tells Simba to look. Simba only sees himself. Rafiki tells him to look harder. Simba begins to see his father's face take shape. Rafiki then says, "You see, he lives in you!"

Suddenly, the clouds form the image of his father. Simba is awe-struck as he sees the image of his father, the King. Simba hears his father call out his name and then proclaims:

"Simmmmbbbaaaaa. You have forgotten meeeee."

Simba is confused and asks, "Father, how could I forget you?"  
His father stares deeply into Simba's eyes and says,  
"You have forgotten who you are, and therefore you have forgotten me."

The great lion King continues and tells his son Simba,  
"You are more than you have become...you are my child, the child of the King!"

The King then leaves his son one final and powerful statement of identity:

"Remember who you are!"

Simba weeps and realizes he has been wrong. He was living under a mistaken identity of what others were telling him who he was. He had forgotten his true i.d. as the son of the King. He was not living up to his full potential...what he was created and destined to be.

I want us to ask ourselves the question: "Have we forgotten our Heavenly Father by forgetting who we are? Are we living out a mistaken i.d.?"

"Who am I?"

What is my true i.d.? You are a child of the King!

Remember who you are!

Live the life He has destined you to live! He has a plan and purpose for your life...one of hope! (Jeremiah 29:11)

How much of life have you lost by letting others tell you who you are? How much of life have you lost pretending to be, living the mistaken i.d. in the hopes others will accept you and love you?

Our true i.d. is found in the unconditional love of our Heavenly Father.

Our true i.d. is found in claiming we are a child of the King!

Remember who you are!

Live out that true identity each day...as a child of your loving Heavenly Father.

Who am I? A child of God!

Who are you? A son or daughter of the King!

Remember your true i.d.!