

## WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

### BIBLE STUDY BY JAMIE MCNAB

11.2.17

There are probably about 7 billion people on the earth ... and we are all a bit different. You and I are different. Even siblings can be very different.

We tend to look at the world very differently too. We look at ourselves very differently. Some people have a positive, outgoing view whilst others are much more prone to be nervous, withdrawn and anxious. We are the product of our genes (?) ... upbringing ... experiences ... parents ... friends ... enemies :) ... peers ... school ... Church experiences?

The reality is how we see ourselves ... what we think about ourselves ... influences every aspect of our lives. Some see the glass half-full ... some see it half-empty (even though it is the same glass).

The problem is if you (in your heart) ... see yourself as worthless ... inferior ... a failure ... someone of little importance ... down-trodden ... undeserving ... that will affect your life ... your success ... will affect your relationship ... your happiness or joy.

There was a book I read years ago ... pop psychology: LSE --> MFT (low self esteem means friction and trouble).

However ... if we feel appreciated ... esteemed ... valuable ... if we feel loved ... then we'll see ourselves differently ... we'll feel very different. We'll relate to others around us very differently.

Maybe you were fortunate ... came from a strong home ... with great role models ... warm and supportive Church environment ... great

family and friends around you ... and you're very content with your life and very positive of your future.

But ... many aren't. Perhaps most?

In the 1800s ... Henry David Thoreau said, "The Mass of Men Lead Lives of Quiet Desperation".

That shouldn't of course apply to us! If we knew ... really knew ... who we were ... who we are and what our future is ... we should be among the most positive and encouraged of all people. We should virtually stand out from the pack around us. If we knew ... and believed ... who we were.

And we find that out ... who we really, really are ... by looking into the Bible ... to see what God's Word says we are.

Because the reality is that you and I are what God's Word says we are ... irrespective of how you or I feel about it.

So we're going to look at the scriptures ... to get the facts. Then we need to rely on ... depend on ... the facts of God's Word ... not our feelings.

Our feelings are up and down. What are the facts ... Bible facts ... are true.

Maybe you see yourself, in the main, as a sinner? A weak person? Unloved? A long way from God ... He's distant and remote ... God barely willing to acknowledge your existence?

The title of today's message is, "Who do You Think You Are?"

Let's see what the Bible says.

It may take some time and reflection to really come to see ourselves as God sees us?

### Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV)

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Transformed = change. How?

By the renewing of your minds = which of course ... will take time and input ... because it is being changed to something else.

Input? Dwell on past failures ... reflecting on your known weaknesses ... what our parents/teachers said about us ... what ministers said about us ... or input from the Word of God? What does God say about you and me?

Okay. A good place to start.

### 1 John 3:1-3 (NKJV)

1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

2 Beloved, now we are children of God; (right now!) and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

**PHILLIPS translation verse 1 ... "Consider the incredible love that the Father has shown us in allowing us to be called 'CHILDREN OF GOD' ... and that is not just what we are called, but WHAT WE ARE."**

If I apply that to me. I'm not just the 'son of Donald McNab' ... I'm a son of the Almighty. Fact ... I am a Son of the Majestic, Holy, glorious, Eternal God. Me!! And you!!

God is willing ... actually delighted ... to have us in His family. It's a real pleasure for Him. He relishes having us as His sons and daughters. In the natural ... some parents are embarrassed by their children ... and vice-versa. But ... God is very open ... very pleased ... to identify you and me as family. It's a demonstration of His great love.

Our human family may ignore us ... dismiss us ... turn away ... but the Righteous Judge of Heaven and Earth puts His hand of ownership on our shoulder ... for the whole universe to bare witness ... and says, "this is my son ... this is my daughter". And actually ... that's who we are!

When you look in the mirror ... do you see a son or daughter of God? Or ... some failure ... of little relevance or importance?

## **2 Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1 (NKJV)**

**14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?**

**15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?** *(Paul is bringing out that separation is important)*

**16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:**

**"I will dwell in them  
And walk among them.  
I will be their God,  
And they shall be My people."**

17 Therefore

**"Come out from among them  
And be separate, says the Lord.  
Do not touch what is unclean,  
And I will receive you."**

18 **"I will be a Father to you,**

**And you shall be My sons and daughters, (that's a fact ... a reality)**

Says the Lord Almighty."

## **Chapter 7**

1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

If we see ourselves as God's family ... we will be less likely to want to associate with darkness, lawlessness ... Belial?

"I'm the son/daughter of the King ... you won't find me yoked to the world's evils and corruption".

## **Romans 8:10-15 (NKJV)**

10 **And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.**

11 **But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit which dwells in you.**

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

14 ***For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.***

15 ***For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship by which we cry out, "Abba, Father."*** (Not everyone has this right)

RSV verse 15 "... the spirit of sonship". It's genuine! "Born Again" into The Family of God. Not just legal adoption. (Someone who is not your 'flesh and blood')

### **Galatians 3:23-29 (NKJV)**

23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

24 Therefore **the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.**

25 But **after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.**

26 ***For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.***

27 ***For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ.***

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

29 And **if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.** (We are Sons of God and heirs)

### **Galatians 4:4-7 (NKJV)**

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, **God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,**

5 to redeem those who were under the law, **that we might receive the sonship as sons.**

6 And because you are sons, **God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"**

7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but **a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**

It is very easy for people like us to look/focus on our weaknesses ... disappointments ... limitations ... our flawed family backgrounds. But ... who are we? Really? Sons and daughters of the Living God.

I suppose in some ways it doesn't seem real? Or ... it's overly familiar to us ("I've known this for 20/30/40 years ... it's old hat"). Or ... maybe just religious platitudes?

But ... it's actual ... real!

If we were the son or daughter of a President or Prime Minister ... or worldly billionaire ... it would mean something? We'd see ourselves differently? We would look at the world differently. Look at people differently. We are something more than that. Our Father is CEO of the Universe.

And if you think about it ... the corollary of being a son or daughter is that we have a Father! And ... unlike in human families ... not absent or irresponsible or incompetent. A good Father! Reliable ... dependable ... interested in His sons and daughters ... with all the time in the world for us. In many communities ... fathers have left the family home and the children don't know who he is.

**Matthew 6:24-34 (NKJV)**

24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon.**

25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet **your heavenly Father** feeds them. **Are you not of more value than they?**

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **will He not much more** clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

32 For after all these things the Gentiles (*the unconverted*) seek. For **your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.**

33 But **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**

34 **Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.**

There it talks about our Heavenly Father. A good Father ... who will provide what we need. How much more! We can see "much more" repeated:

### **Matthew 7:7-11 (NKJV)**

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

8 **For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.**

9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? (*The illustration is: Father and son*)

10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, ***how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*** *(It's the relationship ... a father and his son)*

It is very encouraging to have an Heavenly Father... an approachable Father ... who responds "much more" to requests and needs of His sons and daughters?

This is an important understanding to have ... to really know ... even in a sense to get a "feeling of it" ... that we are sons/daughters of Almighty God. Family. That's who we really are. And will be for all eternity.

Now the world doesn't know that. To the world we may appear irrelevant ... of minor importance ... perhaps "nobodies" by comparison to famous politicians or celebrities ... or sports stars.

But ... we do need to think about who we actually are.

Moving on ... if you think about human sons and daughters of famous, wealthy, important fathers ... and assuming in good graces with their dad ... it is normal as time moves on for the children to inherit good things. Something they can look forward to ... even when younger, they're aware ... know ... that one day ... they will inherit ... all things from their father. And their father may be training them for the future when they will inherit.

It is the same for us! Sons/daughters ... heirs ... who will one day inherit.

**Romans 8:14-19 (NKJV)**

**14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.** *(That's you and me)*

15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but **you received the Spirit of sonship by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."**

16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that **we are children of God,**

**17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,** if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which *(one day)* shall be revealed in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. *(The whole physical creation is waiting for you and me)*

Literally today we are heirs. That means something! Not a platitude. One day we will be inheritors. What is the value of the inheritance? Does The Father have much? GOD OWNS EVERYTHING. THE UNIVERSE. It's a pretty big inheritance.

### **Hebrews 2:5-13 (NKJV)**

5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. *(Talking of a future world. It wont be given to angels to administer)*

6 But one testified in a certain place, saying:

"What is man that You are mindful of him,

Or the son of man that You take care of him?

7 **You have made him a little lower than the angels;** *(for now)*

**You have crowned him with glory and honour,**

**And set him over the works of Your hands.**

8 **You have put all things** *(all things = universe ... whole creation)* **in subjection under his feet."** For in that He put all in subjection

under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. *(Mankind is over everything)* But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

*(There is coming a time when all things are under the feet of mankind ... but not quite yet)*

9 **But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels,** for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, *(Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers and sisters)*

12 saying:

"I will declare Your name to My brethren;  
In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."

13 And again:

"I will put My trust in Him." And again:  
"Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."

That's what sons and daughters ... brethren of Jesus ... will inherit. Everything! The Universe. It is worth waiting for.

### **Revelation 21:2-8 (NKJV)**

2 **Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.**

3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "**Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.**"

4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "**Behold, I make all things new.**" And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

7 **He who overcomes (sons/daughters) shall inherit all things, (the new heavens and new earth) and I will be his God and he shall be My son.**

8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

That's where we are headed. We'll be inheritors then ... but today ... we are already heirs.

#### **Galatians 4:6-7 (NKJV)**

6 **And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"**

7 **Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (If we are a son ... then we are an heir)**

We are surrounded 24/7 by a noisy carnal world ... very influential on us. It takes time and effort to renew our minds? Recognising that we are sons and daughters of God ... today.

And a fundamental question might be: **Why would God do this anyway?** Why invite us into His family? Why make us His heirs? Why offer us everything?

Answer. Because of His Great Love For Us.

In this world we might often feel rather unloved? It doesn't seem that we have much to offer? Many people maybe just "put up" with us? Many ... even family ... might think we're weirdos? What real value do we bring to our communities ... or to the world?

Well ... despite our weaknesses ... past histories ... pedigree of failures and let downs ... the Greatest Beings in the universe LOVE US. And if They do ... really ... who cares about the rest?

We read in I John 3 "What manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God".

Wow! That says it all! God's love towards us is so vast and all encompassing that He's given up everything that's precious to Him for us to be His sons and daughters. No price too high for God to pay such was HIS LOVE.

#### **Romans 8:28-39 (NKJV)**

28 **And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.**

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

31 What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?**

32 **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?** (*God delivered up His own son ... that's the ultimate ... there was nothing else to compare to that*)

33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long;  
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

37 **Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.**

38 **For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.** *(Nothing and no one can separate us from God)*

We are the BELOVED OF GOD (the world as a whole isn't ... only the called).

**1 John 4:7-11 (NKJV)**

7 Beloved, **let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is begotten of God and knows God.**

8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

9 In **this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.**

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that **He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

11 **Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.** *(God has done the hard work)*

### 1 John 4:15-16 (NKJV)

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

16 And **we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.** *(Is this true ... do we believe that God really loves ... or is it just a vague religious platitude?)*

### 1 John 4:19 (NKJV)

19 **We love Him because He first loved us.**

Do we "feel" this Love of God. Understand it? Experience it? Real? So. How do we see ourselves? Son of God? Heir of God? Beloved of God? Or ... just a struggling nobody ... living a life of quiet desperation? Does our mind need some renewing? That requires a spiritual component.

### Ephesians 3:14-19 (NKJV)

14 **For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

15 **from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,**

16 **that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,**

17 **that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,**

18 **may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—**

19 **to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.** *(This takes spiritual revelation!)*

(MSG) **And I ask him that with both feet planted firmly on love, you'll be able to take in with all Christians the extravagant dimensions of Christ's love. Reach out and experience the**

***breadth! Test its length! Plumb the depths! Rise to the heights!***

***19 Live full lives, full in the fullness of God.***

It's not "ordinary love". It's SUPERNATURAL LOVE ... and ... if we really "got it" ... it would certainly make us very different people.

God's love for us (the called) ... is said to be as great as His love for Jesus.

***John 15:5-9 (NKJV)***

***5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.***

*6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.*

***7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.***

*8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*

***9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. (to the same degree)***

***John 17:20-23 (NKJV)***

*20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;*

***21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.***

*22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:*

*23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have*

**loved them as You have loved Me.** (*The Father loves me the same way as He loved Jesus*)

**(Voice) You love them in the same way You love Me**

**(NCV) That you loved them just as much as You loved Me**

**John 17:25-26 (NKJV)**

25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

26 **And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."**

Did the Father love Jesus? "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased"!

In the same way ... He loves us (if we're the Called ... if we are "In Christ" ... "In Him" etc). :) Same standard.

Do we "get this"? Or does this require more renewing of our minds needed?

Interesting ... slightly humorous ... but thought-provoking phrase that occurs 5 or 6 times in the Gospel of John that's worth reviewing.

**John 13:21-23 (NKJV)**

21 When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."

22 Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke.

23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, **whom Jesus loved.**

### **John 19:25-26 (NKJV)**

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the **disciple whom He loved** standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"

### **John 20:1-2 (NKJV)**

1 Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

2 Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, **whom Jesus loved**, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

### **John 21:6-7 (NKJV)**

6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.

7 Therefore that **disciple whom Jesus loved** said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea.

### **John 21:20-21 (NKJV)**

20 Then Peter, turning around, saw the **disciple whom Jesus loved** following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?"

21 Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?"

Didn't Jesus love all of His disciples? Yes. Absolutely.

Who wrote the Gospel of John? :)

Who was the "disciple whom Jesus loved"? John.

John didn't say ... "I" or "John" ... he saw himself as "someone Jesus loved". Perhaps more so than the others ... John got this truth very early in his life.

But it applies to us all! You are "the disciple whom Jesus loves". I am "a disciple whom Jesus loves".

Without going overboard (can we?) ... why not say to yourself ... "I'm a disciple whom Jesus loves". Because actually ... it's true. The Father loves us. Jesus loves us. (If we're the Called).

So. Just who do you think you are? Son or daughter of God ... heir of God ... a joint heir with Jesus The Messiah ... a disciple whom Jesus loves ... with a Father who loves you as much as He loves the Lord Jesus.

This should be pretty encouraging. No wonder Paul could write letters full of joy ... even from his chains in prison.

So ... we need to renew our minds and these points we have discussed today are worth thinking about!