

Pathways

Session 6
God's special creations



Resources for participants



Living from Belovedness

When Jesus was baptised in the Jordan, he heard a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased' (Matt.3:17). These words revealed the true identity of Jesus as the beloved ... I know now that the words spoken to Jesus when he was baptised are words spoken also to me and to all who are brothers and sisters of Jesus.

My tendencies toward self-rejection and self-depreciation make it hard to hear these words truly and let them descend into the center of my heart. But once I have received these words fully, I am set free from my compulsion to prove myself to the world and can live in it without belonging to it. Once I have accepted the truth that I am God's beloved child, unconditionally loved, I can be sent into the world to speak and to act as Jesus did.

The great spiritual task facing me is to so fully trust that I belong to God that I can be free in the world – free to speak even when my words are not received; free to act even when my actions are criticized, ridiculed, or considered useless; free also to receive love from people and to be grateful for all the signs of God's presence in the world. I am convinced that I will truly be able to love the world when I fully believe that I am loved far beyond its boundaries.

[Henri Nouwen, Modern Spiritual Masters Series, p72]

- What does God say about our value or worth?
- How does Nouwen suggest our value impacts on the way we live?



God's special creations

I think about the heavens. I think about what your fingers have created. I think about the moon and stars that you have set in place. What is a human being that you think about him? What is a son of man that you take care of him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings. You placed on him a crown of glory and honour.
Psalm 8:3-5 (NIRV)

God's gifts of grace come in many forms. Each of you has received a gift in order to serve others. You should use it faithfully. If you speak, you should do it like one speaking God's very words. If you serve, you should do it with the strength God provides. Then in all things God will be praised through Jesus Christ. Give him the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.
1 Peter 4:10,11 (NIRV)

There are different kinds of gifts. But they are all given by the same Spirit. There are different ways to serve. But they all come from the same Lord. There are different ways to work. But the same God makes it possible for all of us to have all those different things. The Holy Spirit is given to each of us in a special way. That is for the good of all.
1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (NIRV)

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!
Psalm 139:13-17 (NIRV)