

Saturday 2nd March 2019



Beloved

Over the last few weeks I've been reading *The Life of the Beloved*, by Henri Nouwen. It speaks of Jesus being the beloved son of God, as spoken at Christ's baptism (Matthew 3:17). The book encourages us to see ourselves as beloved children of God.

We live in a world where we are constantly hearing that we aren't good enough, we don't look right, we don't work hard enough, and much more. Sometimes that is all we hear. We find it easier to believe that we are not worthy, and that the gospel of an upside-down kingdom and God's love, grace and forgiveness are too good to be true. Yet we need to remember that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" in the image of God. We are God's children, loved by God. Or, as Nouwen puts it – beloved.

This is a positive and powerful look at our lives, as beloved children of God, important, special, cherished – when at times we feel downtrodden, it may help us to remember that God loves us, we're special, important to God. As such we are all brothers and sisters, all chosen by God and beloved by God. If that doesn't change how we see ourselves and others, nothing will!

There are many hymns that ask God to forgive us, reminding us of what we have done wrong, and these are important, usually moving on to forgiveness and love. There are less that focus simply on how loved we are by God. Two that come to mind are Rob Hayward's 'I'm accepted, I'm forgiven' (*Singing the Faith*, 427), and Dave Bilborough's 'I am a new creation' (*Singing the Faith* 553).

God of all people,
I thank you that I am fearfully and wonderfully made in your image.
Thank you that we are your beloved, your children,
blessed by your forgiveness, love and grace.
Help me to remember I am your beloved,
even when the world tells me otherwise
Help me to remember that others are also your beloved children
and to treat them as such.
Thank you for loving me and forgiving me.
Amen.

You can download this Prayer for the Week at www.mwib.org.uk
Prayers for March 2019 by Revd Claire Rawlinson
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