



SPRING-TIME DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

May 26, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

WHO AM I?

To all who did receive him . . . [Jesus] gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:12

READ John 1:6 - 13

In 1859, Joshua Abraham Norton declared himself Emperor of the United States. Norton had made—and lost—his fortune in San Francisco shipping, but he wanted a new identity: America's first emperor. When the San Francisco Evening Bulletin printed "Emperor" Norton's announcement, most readers laughed. Norton made pronouncements aimed at correcting society's ills, printed his own currency, and even wrote letters to Queen Victoria asking her to marry him and unite their kingdoms. He wore royal military uniforms designed by local tailors. One observer said Norton looked "every inch a king." But of course, he wasn't. We don't get to make up who we are.

Many of us spend years searching for who we are and wondering what value we possess. We flail, trying to name or define ourselves, when only God can truly tell us the truth about who we are. And, thankfully, He calls us His sons and daughters when we receive salvation in His Son, Jesus. "Yet to all who did receive him," John writes, "he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). And this identity is purely a gift. We are His beloved "children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision . . . but born of God" (v. 13).

God gives us our name and our identity in Christ. We can stop striving and comparing ourselves to others, because He tells us who we are.

By **Winn Collier**

PRAY & REFLECT

God, I know that I'm Yours. Help me feel confidence in knowing that I'm born of You - a child of the King. Amen

How do you know you're chosen by God? How does being His child help you understand your true identity?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The Gospels are witnesses to the life and work of Jesus during His incarnation on earth. However, three of the four gospels begin with discussions of John the Baptist (Mark 1:1 - 8; Luke 1:8 - 25, 57 - 80; John 1:6 - 13). Here, in John 1:6 - 13, he's described as a "witness to the light" (v. 8), but it's made clear that he himself was not that light - Jesus was. Later, in 3:27 - 30, John the Baptist himself corrected any misconceptions that he was the Messiah. Using the metaphor of a wedding, he affirmed that he was not the bridegroom but the "friend who attends the bridegroom" (v. 29). Today, this is what we would call the best man. In Jesus' words, there "is no one greater than John" (Luke 7:28). He still, however, wasn't the Messiah. Jesus was.

— By **Bill Crowder**

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