

## Be Yourself

Children's Chat:

I'd like to start this off with a joke, a man was talking to God, he said you know you are so great, big things to us must be minuscule to you. God said, "yes this is true." The man asked, "How long is a million years to you?" "One second," said God. Hmmm the man thought. "How much is a million dollars to you?" "A penny," replied God. The man said, "can I have a penny?" "Sure! Just wait a second!"

So the message today is about being yourself, can any of you tell me what it means to be yourself?

Can anyone tell me who or what God wants you to be?

God has blessed us with a guiding force inside us, much like the force in star wars. Wow, we're a lot like the Jedi if we can learn how to use it. Can anyone tell me what that force is called? It is called the Holy Spirit. The Holy spirit fills us with every good thought we have, which later becomes every good thing we do. To make things simple God wants us to be good, deep down we are all good at our cores. I would like to challenge you all to tap in to the good, and to be the good children of God that we were meant to be. I said we because I am going to do it with you. Sound good?

Okay let's get quite on the inside and quite on the outside, let us pray.

Dear God,

Please help us to be who you have created us to be, bless us with happy, kind, caring thoughts and actions. Please help us to show our friends, family and everyone we come across the love and kindness that we all so desperately want. Please help us to be the good you wish to have in this world. Also please help us with our homework, I know we all would love that. Thanks for everything you have done and will do, we love you God and all that you are! In Jesus name we pray, Amen!

Message:

Aside from technology it seems to me that little has changed since what was written in this scripture took place. We live in a highly competitive society. This isn't true for everyone, but the majority of people want the nicest cars, homes, clothes, spouses, the best jobs, the most money, ad infinitum. I'm not saying I'm not guilty of this, because I am, I mean look at my clothes. I'm not necessarily saying that living this way is unhealthy, but it can and does lead to a series of unhealthy outcomes. One upsmanship is one of these outcomes, for example a man gets a Chevy Camaro so his friend immediately decides he is going to get a Mercedes. Not only can this lead to resentment but this can lead to a blurred sense of self. When we base our actions off of the

actions of others in a sense we are living their lives, or at least trying to. God didn't anoint us to live anyone else's life but our own. I know from personal experience that when I try live other peoples lives not only does my life become a mess, I loose my sense of happiness, inner peace, and most importantly my sense of self. A very important question that every person should ask themselves, not once but throughout our lives is simply "Who am I?"

I believe that this competitive, materialistic way of life that is predominant in western society stems from the need to feel important. The problem I have found with basing my importance off of my possessions or by comparing my life to others is that none of these things remain constant. Let me put it this way If I anchor a ship to a sand bar the ship will eventually float away. Now if I anchor it to a rock the ship will stay in place. I feel that if I anchor my sense of self and my happiness to materials or to how I compare to others my sense of self is going to drift from trend to trend. While my happiness will falter the second I see something wish I could have. There will always be someone with more prominence or more possessions than me. I could do a whole other sermon on this and maybe I will. But my point is if we anchor ourselves to the rock, which is God, we will continue to grow while remaining true to ourselves. Thus our happiness will remain constant as well, because it says in the bible that God wants us to be prosperous, full of love, peace and joy. I am not saying we should give up all of our material things and never listen to others. What I am saying is we should spend time with God, in reading the word of God and find out who God wants us to be. I can tell you from experience that when I was who I wanted to be, not only was I not me, my life was a disaster.

I can attest to something that was written in the scriptures that were read today. In the quest of trying to be ever more important, I found myself falling flat on my face. Now that I have humbled myself, put others first and cultivated courtesy, people hold me in a much higher regard. More importantly than that, God holds me in much higher regard. Jesus was a great example of this, as an exceptional leader he definitely could have stayed hold up in a palace planning ways to build his power. He did not do that, he went to places that the religious people of that time wouldn't step foot in. He healed the sick and infirmed, and he helped the prostitutes and criminals come into the light. He was there to make this world a better place. He was always true to himself, he never tried to be like anyone else. We can all learn many things from Jesus, this is an important lesson.

God was gracious enough to bless us with the Holy Spirit. We have a reservoir of resources we can use to grow and to be the best versions of ourselves. The thing is, that reservoir isn't in a Bentley, a pair of Nikes, a million dollar house, or even our dream spouse. Personally I am glad it isn't because I don't know about you but I can't afford a Bentley, maybe a pair of Nikes. The reservoir is within. We can cultivate a life of love, happiness, abundance, and fellowship simply by reminding ourselves that we already have these things. It may sound confusing at first, but if we look in the scripture it says that God has blessed us with these positive traits and much more. When our sense of self is based on who we are on the inside this is when I believe we are actually being true to ourselves. I have also noticed that when I have built my life using the resources God has blessed me with on the inside, my outside life is far better. Gratitude is something that plays a big part in this as well. If I am thankful for what I

have, more things tend to come my way. If I constantly want more, it doesn't matter how many things come my way, I will never be content.

I would like to tell you of a technique I use to cultivate the resources that the Holy Spirit makes available to us all. Some of you may already be familiar with this technique, but it is called affirmation. When I start to feel a little down I silently remind myself "I am Happy". The most incredible thing happens, the more I tell myself I am happy the happier I become. Then when I feel better I thank God for blessing me with this eternal bliss. The same works for every situation. When negativity arises in my life I quickly find its positive counterpart and remind myself, I am that positive. God wants us to be positive, and full of all positive attributes. I believe that being true myself isn't necessarily being who I want to be, it is being who God wants me to be. I feel serenity when I am seeking God's will for me and I am carrying it out to the best of my ability. I invite you all to do the same. When the urge arises to be like someone else, don't worry it happens to me too after all we are human, we should remember that God anointed them to be who they are. He didn't anoint us to be them, he anointed us to be ourselves. No one in the history of this planet has been you, and no one in the future will be you. God made us who we are for a reason, we all serve a purpose, it is our job to find that purpose and to fulfill it as best we can. We will be much more effective, successful, and full of love, joy, and peace if we can strive to be who God has anointed us to be. Thank you all and God bless each and every one of you!

Benediction:

God, Please make us aware of our inner resources. As we go about our weeks, please help us share the love, joy, peace and positivity with everyone that come across. Please bless us with a greater understanding of who you have anointed us to be and the purpose you have for us. Thank you God for guiding us and for blessing us with all of the resources necessary to carry out your will for us. Thank for everything, we love you God and all that you are! In Jesus name we pray, Amen.