

WHO ARE YOU?

When we meet someone we ask this –maybe not in these words...we ask

What is your name?

Where are you from?

Who's your family?

What do you do?

WHO ARE YOU?

Our ideas about someone are shaped by the answers to these questions.

At some point everyone has asked this question of themselves...

WHO AM I?

To answer this question and the ones that follow it—where am I from, who is my family—we can simply sing a primary song—or 2.

Who am I? I AM A CHILD OF GOD.

Where am I from? I LIVED IN HEAVEN A LONG TIME AGO, IT IS TRUE.

Who is my family? OUR FATHER HAS A FAMILY. IT'S ME! IT'S YOU! ALL OTHERS TOO. WE ARE HIS CHILDREN.

Without words or music, most of us here today could sing at least the first verse of I Am a Child of God.

You're singing it in your head right now, aren't you? But do we really know – in our mind and our hearts – who we really are?

This idea, this doctrine, that we are children of God, is so basic, so simple and repeated so often, that I may seem ordinary, commonplace – and is taken for granted. But it is actually the MOST IMPORTANT THING we can know (My apologies to all the others speaking today who will tell you that their subject is the most important thing...)

When difficult things happen in our lives, what is our first response? Doubt, anger, blaming God? Or is it remembering who we are and that our loving HF has a plan? We live in a world that can cause us to forget who we are and we think that is new – but that has always been true, really.

All the way back at the beginning, Adam and Eve walked and talked with God. They knew who they were and where they were from – but they had to leave the Garden of Eden and go live in a mortal, fallen world. They suffered lots of hard things – children who turned from the right – a son who was murdered - and a son who became a murderer – and separation from God. It would have been easy to throw in the towel and say HF has forgotten us – there is no hope. But they held on to what they knew, who they were - and they continued to seek for HF guidance and have faith that all they'd been taught was true and that there was a long-range plan.

Remember Joseph – and his coat of many colors? And his loving brothers who sold him into slavery? And then he got a great job managing Potiphar's household...but then his boss' wife tried to seduce him?....and for choosing the right and running away instead of giving in to temptation he was tossed into prison? He could have easily lost his faith. We feel like if we CTR then things will always go right. But even after all this and many years in prison, Joseph held on to the knowledge of who he was. The result? - he rose to a very high position in Pharaoh's court and saved thousands of lives during the famine that engulfed Egypt and most of that part of the world – the lives he saved included his own family.

And what about Moses--

There was a death sentence hanging over this baby's head even before he was born. But he was saved and raised as an Egyptian in Pharaoh's house. But later his compassion for the Israelite slaves got the better of him and he killed an Egyptian who was being cruel to one of the slaves. Exiled from Egypt, once again a death penalty hanging over him—

so many troubles. But the man who was going to be a great prophet one day needed to know who he was.

“And he saw God face to face, and he talked with him and the glory of God was upon Moses; therefore Moses could endure his presence.

And God spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I am the Lord God Almighty, and Endless is my name; for I am without beginning or days or end of years’ and is not this endless?

And behold, thou art my son;...

And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; ...

And now behold, this one thing I show unto thee, Moses, my son, for thou art in the world, and now I show it unto thee....

And the presence of God withdrew from Moses, that his glory was not upon Moses; and Moses was left unto himself....”

In this relatively short scripture, the Lord called Moses my son, my son, my son.....three times. Later when Moses was tempted by Satan, to worship him, he told him “hey you can’t fool me...I’ve seen God and you’re not Him—And I know who I am – so leave me alone.” Wouldn’t it be great if we could always respond to temptation in this way?

He not only save his own soul, but later, 1000s, - the whole Israelite nation, when he led them from slavery.

Who can forget Ammon – an awesome missionary to the Lamanites in King Lamoni’s land. Most kids know this story from the Book of Mormon. Ammon was serving the king, guarding his flock, when the bad

guys showed up to “scatter” the flock and steal them. But Ammon saved the animals by fighting the bad guys. It says that they couldn’t harm Ammon, and those who tried, Ammon cut off their arms with his sword...Great story.

When the king heard the story he wanted to talk to this awesome guy. From all the reports, Lamoni assumed Ammon was some kind of god—even the Great Spirit maybe. He told Ammon he could have anything he wanted! WOW, what an opportunity!

Ammon was a man of great power – because the spirit of God was with him—the scriptures say “now Ammon, being wise, yet harmless (wouldn’t that be great if we could say that about all leaders), he said unto Lamoni; wilt thou harken unto my words, if I tell thee by what power I do these things? And that is the thing that I desire of thee.” He could have anything he wanted and what he asked for was an amazing missionary moment. Ammon started at the beginning and told King Lamoni all about HF and his great plan! And we know Lamoni and many others – a whole people were converted.

The scriptures are full of stories like these. Men (and women) who knew who they were! Abraham, Nephi, Esther...and most importantly, our Savior Jesus Christ.

I asked several people why they thought it was important to know who you are. Some responses I got:

It just is?

If you know who you are, you can be confident.

You can help others learn who they are.

You won’t easily be deceived by the lies and half-truths of Satan.

It’s like an anchor for a ship, so you won’t get blown off course and get lost.

And from our missionary son:

Knowing who we are gives us something to hold on to when all goes wrong—it is something to anchor us when we have nothing left. It's like coming home after a hard day's work to a place that is safe and welcoming and comfortable. What a great way to live our lives when our souls are "at peace" like coming home after a hard day's work.

When our kids were still at home we would tell them to Remember who you are and where you live when they left home each time. It was a family joke (the where you live part). But you can't return home if you don't know where home is.

I lived in heaven a long time ago, it is true. Now I have a family here on earth, they are so good to me. My family can be together forever if I follow God's plan for me, holding fast to his words and his love. Please, teach me all that I must do to live with him someday. Because I am a Child of God!

I bear testimony that I know these things are true. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Carol Cutchen