

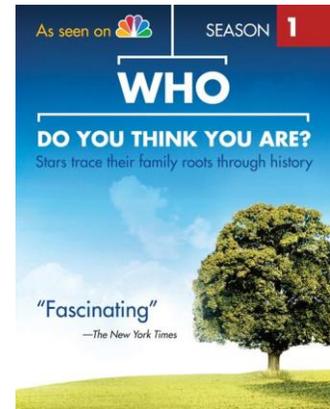
2015 Summer Sermon Series (Inspiring Songs of *Fresh-Brewed Faith!*)

“Remind Me Who I Am” (by Jason Gray)

Texts: Psalm 139:13-16 & I John 3:1-2

Rev. Jo Ramsey ~ August 30, 2015

Perhaps you’ve seen the TV show called “Who Do You Think You Are?” It’s part reality show, part investigative journalism, where famous people trace their genealogy with the help of online data bases, county records, local historians, cemetery visits and trips abroad. Celebrities like Cindy Crawford, Jerome Bettis, Valerie Bertanelli, Martin Sheen, J.K. Rowling, Brooke Shields, and Josh Groban have all appeared on the show.



It’s really kind of entertaining---these stars soon uncover all sorts of unknown, and sometimes, unsavory stories buried in the past. Their family histories are littered with kings and criminals, achievement and



abandonment, success and scandal. Usually through tears of joy and sorrow, they discover those stories are part of their story—what makes them who they are.

What stories make you, you? Where do you come from? Where are you going? Who are you?

These are the very questions Jason Gray asks in the song “Remind Me Who I Am.” Today, we wrap up our summer sermon series---which highlights some of the songs we’ve studied in our Fresh Brewed Faith youth Sunday School.



Now I have to say, my grandmother wouldn’t have liked this video much. Two of the reasons why are right in this picture. First of all, he’s wearing a hat. She didn’t like hats. And second, he’s wearing a flannel shirt. She didn’t like them either. The good thing is...he’s not wearing a tank top, because she really didn’t tank tops...mostly, because

they involve, well, armpits. Anyway, I just want to say to the older folks here that we know not every song we’ve featured this summer has been what you would choose. We have tried to include a combination of hymns and contemporary songs, but this last

one is another contemporary one. It's a little country for my tastes, but it has a great harpsichord sound that I like.

This morning's song is one I personally shared the kids. Now, you know I love our youth for many reasons, not the least of which is that they humor me. They're like, 'Ok, Pastor Jo, what do you want us to do now?' They're such good sports, and I have to tell you, they were so open and honest when we discussed this song. So, I hope you'll humor me too, and open your heart and mind as we watch "Remind Me Who I Am" by Jason Gray.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKyY8zfjBMQ>

When I lose my way,
And I forget my name,
Remind me who I am.
In the mirror all I see,
Is who I don't wanna be,
Remind me who I am.
In the loneliest places,
When I can't remember what grace is.

Tell me once again who I am to You,
Who I am to You.
Tell me lest I forget who I am to You,
That I belong to You...To You.

When my heart is like a stone,
And I'm running far from home,
Remind me who I am.
When I can't receive Your love,
Afraid I'll never be enough,
Remind me who I am.
If I'm Your beloved,
Can You help me believe it.

I'm the one you love, I'm the one you love,
That will be enough, I'm the one you love.



Like many videos, 'Remind Me Who I Am' tells a story. It uses a particular metaphor as its framework. Can anybody tell me what it is? [hitch hiking – journey] Of course, you know that under no circumstances are Jason Gray or I advocating hitch hiking! It's a bad idea! But in this case, it's a symbol for the journey of faith.

We are all on a journey. Our lives have a starting point and a destination, and ups and downs, twists and turns, all along the way. Where are you on your journey with God? Is this a good patch, when the road seems clear and the burdens light? Or are you wandering a bit, restless and bored? Perhaps it feels like the trail has gone cold—God seems far away. Maybe you're looking forward to all that lies ahead. Or perhaps you're near the end of your journey, and you can look back on all that paths led you to this moment. Life with God is a journey.



Our journey of faith is not just about finding God—it's also about finding ourselves. Jason Gray says, "For the last few years my journey has circled around the idea of identity--where we find it, and why it matters." 'Remind Me Who I Am' is a song about identity--how we define ourselves, and how we get defined, along the way.

Jason uses the image of cardboard signs throughout the video to capture this notion of identity. What are some of the words on those signs? [angry, addict, victim, rejected]



If you had to choose one word to sum up how the world sees you, what would it be? What word would others use to describe you? How would you define yourself? What's your reputation? Do you have an issue or life experience that defines you?

In your pews, there are slips of brown paper and markers. Please take one and pass them along. Once you have yours, take a minute and write down one word. This is private and you won't have to share it. When you're done, turn it over. (See, I told you!)

Sometimes it really does feel like we carry a sign for all to see---A label that holds us back, distracts and diminishes us. These are the things that bind us, that keep us stalled out or wandering in circles. They make us forget who we are and whose we are. They are the voices that crowd out grace. They are the fears that drown out hope. They are the yesterdays that take up too much of today.



But, here's the deal --- you are not a label! You are not your past. You are not your sin. You have become a new creation in Christ! Do you remember in our song that even Jesus, in the form of the troubadour, has a sign? It reads 'rejected.' Jesus is the cornerstone that the builders rejected. Yet, he leaves that sign behind. He joins us on the journey. He takes time to listen to each person he meets, to hear their story, and take their picture. He does the same for us.



Remember what happens next? The troubadour tapes all those pictures of everyone holding their cardboard signs to his guitar. It's another metaphor. You see, Jesus takes our pictures and our cardboard signs and nails them to the cross.



Then, suddenly, we see a new word appear on everyone's signs! 'Beloved!' We are God's beloved! We belong to him like children to a father! Through the saving grace of God's love, we are made whole.

So, now on the blank side of your sign, please write beloved. Hold it against your chest...so I can see it!

Who do you think you are? You are you, God's beloved—unique, flawed, quirky and lovely. God created you with a plan and purpose. Your past is part of you, but it doesn't define you. Your bad habits, your mistakes are not the whole story. You are God's child. No matter what! No matter where you are or where you have been! God is with you on the journey---whether you're four or fourteen, forty seven or seventy four. You are God's beloved. Now, don't you forget it!



In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.