

Henri Nouwen Daily meditation 4 January 2020 *You are beloved*

Personally, as my struggle reveals, I don't often "feel" like a beloved child of God. But I know that that is my most primal identity and I know that I must choose it above and beyond my hesitations.

Strong emotions, self-rejection, and even self-hatred justifiably toss you about, but you are free to respond as you will. You are not what others, or even you, think about yourself. You are not what you do. You are not what you have. You are a full member of the human family, having been known before you were conceived and molded in your mother's womb. In times when you feel bad about yourself, try to choose to remain true to the truth of who you really are. Look in the mirror each day and claim your true identity. Act ahead of your feelings and trust that one day your feelings will match your convictions. Choose now and continue to choose this incredible truth. As a spiritual practice claim and reclaim your primal identity as beloved daughter or son of a personal Creator.

Henri Nouwen Daily meditation 13 January 2020 *The truth about me*

You have to keep unmasking the world about you for what it is: manipulative, controlling, power-hungry, and, in the long run, destructive. The world tells you many lies about who you are, and you simply have to be realistic enough to remind yourself of this. Every time you feel hurt, offended, or rejected, you have to dare to say to yourself: "These feelings, strong as they may be, are not telling me the truth about myself. The truth, even though I cannot feel it right now, is that I am the chosen child of God, precious in God's eyes, called the Beloved from all eternity, and held safe in an everlasting embrace."

Henri Nouwen Daily meditation 10 January 2020 *The trap of self rejection*

Over the years, I have come to realize that the greatest trap in our life is not success, popularity, or power, but self-rejection. Success, popularity, and power can indeed present a great temptation, but their seductive quality often comes from the way they are part of the much larger temptation to self-rejection. When we have come to believe in the voices that call us worthless and unlovable, then success, popularity, and power are easily perceived as attractive solutions. The real trap, however, is self-rejection ... As soon as someone accuses me or criticizes me, as soon as I am rejected, left alone, or abandoned, I find myself thinking, "Well, that proves once again that I am a nobody." ... My dark side says, "I am no good ... I deserve to be pushed aside, forgotten, rejected, and abandoned."

Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the "Beloved." Being the Beloved constitutes the core truth of our existence.