

REFLECTION | *The Three Lies Of Identity*

It's the kind of love we've been singing about already that we are here to experience together this morning. A love that shatters all barriers and boundaries, no matter who you are, or where you're from. God made you 'good', and you are loved.

But it's so easy to miss out on God's love in the midst of our daily lives, as we're constantly being bombarded with messages that erode our sense of identity and belonging.

In his book entitled, "*Who Are We?*" late author and priest Henri Nouwen describes three key lies of identity that can mess with our heads and create barriers to us experiencing the love of both God and community. He names these lies as:

- I am what I have
- I am what I do
- I am what other people say or think of me

Do any of those resonate for you, as they do for me? I don't want to believe them! But sometimes I see them in my heart. And every single one of them pulls us out of the centre of our belovedness with God, and our belonging in community.

So we want to pause right now and give all of us a moment to consider whether any of these lies have been affecting us recently. Do you feel any of them in your heart – see any of them coming through in your life? Take a minute in quiet, honest reflection, and just ask the question together with God.

And I'd even invite you to hold your hands open lightly in your lap, both as a posture of openness to God's spirit, and also as a sign of release, as a way of letting those lies go.

God we thank you that the core of who we are is good, through and through. Made in your image, held in your love, we are enough simply because we are. We release all of these lies to you now in Jesus' name. Amen.

And now I'll invite you to take your hand – or even both of them if you want – and press them over top of your heart, as I read these words from Psalm 139 describing the truth of who you are and how you're loved:

O Eternal One, You have explored my *heart* and know *exactly* who I am;

You even know *the small details like* when I take a seat and when I stand up again.

Even when I am far away, You know what I'm thinking.

You observe my wanderings and my sleeping, *my waking and my dreaming,*

and You know everything I do in more detail *than even I know*.
You know what I'm going to say *long before I say it*.

It is true, Eternal One, that You know everything *and everyone*.
You have surrounded me *on every side*, behind me and before me,
and You have placed Your hand *gently* on my *shoulder*.

It is the most amazing feeling to know *how deeply* You know me, *inside and out*;
the realization of it is so great that I cannot comprehend it.

For You shaped me, inside *and out*.

You knitted me together in my mother's womb *long before I took my first breath*.
I will offer You my grateful heart, for I am Your *unique* creation, filled with wonder and awe.

You have approached even the smallest details with excellence;
Your works are wonderful;
I carry this knowledge deep within my soul.