

Meant to Be Sermon by Rev. Mark Moline
 Sunday Dec. 23, 2018

“When I was a child I could see the wind in the trees and heard a song in the breeze, it was singing out my name. When I was a child there were flowers that bloomed in the night unafraid to take in the light, unashamed to have braved the dark. And though I may not know the answers, I can finally say I’m free and if the questions led me here, then I am who I was born to be.” Words by Audra Mae and John Fransson, taken from their song, “Who I was Born to Be.”

The baby Jesus was God incarnate. As such he was a very human baby who was born to be the Messiah. Just when he personally realized who he was born to be, is up for some discussion. But we do know that at a very young age he said to Mary and Joseph when they found him in the temple, ‘Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?’

He knew who he was born to be and lived out that purpose even to death on a cross. Of course there were many who denied who he claimed to be. “Some say you are John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” Some scribes even dangerously called him the devil.

While we are not God, I think we are each born to fulfill some God-given purpose. And while it may take us a while to grasp such, I think we eventually know who we were born to be.

Ray Charles once commented, “I was born with music inside me. Music was one of my parts. Like my ribs, my kidneys, my liver, my heart. Like my blood. It was a force already within me when I arrived on the scene. It was a necessity for me - like food or water.” There were those in his career who attempted to discourage that innate gift, talent and purpose in Ray Charles life.

To one extent or another, we each know from personal experience, that the world is full of folks prepared to tell us - that we are not who we know we were born to be. One does not have to be a popular celebrity singer to find such elitists who think they know us better than we know ourselves. There always seem to be those who are prepared to tell you who you ought to be, what you ought to do, how you ought to think, and how you should behave. They are the same ones who have God and your relationship with God all neatly prepackaged for you. And they will love you and accept you as long as you comply with their culture-based prerequisites.

If you want to guarantee yourself an absolutely miserable life, then listen to those who would stereo-type you to fit their agenda. Go ahead listen to them and try to comply, but I seriously doubt you will find their social strait-jacket all that Christ-like.

On the other hand you could listen to those who would love you unconditionally; those who have time to hear you sing your song —whether that song reflects some grand and extra-ordinary talent, or simply living out your faith in some personal and unique manner on behalf of God and others. There are those who love you enough to accept you just the way you are.

You could listen to the teachings of Christ as you find them in Holy Scripture, not as some preacher, teacher or author interprets them for you. Holy Scripture is God's love, not your straight jacket. The word is the truth and the truth will set you free. You could listen to the Holy Spirit that is love – the spirit of a God who is love.

Listening goes hand-in-hand with reason and thinking, and true wisdom comes in listening and recognizing the truth in some and the untruth in others.

Being who you were born to be is not a self-centered approach to life. If God created you in his image then being who you were born to be is obviously living out God's purpose for your life. Long ago there lived a Rabbi by the name of Zusya, he is a hero of early Hasidic folk-tales and is cited as saying, "On the Day of Judgment, God will ask me, not why I have not been more like Moses, but why I have not been more like Zusya."

Two Thousand Plus years ago A baby was born and who that baby was born to be, still greatly concerns us today and is quite relevant to whom we were born to be. Angels flying close to the earth knew who he was born to be. His mother and step father knew, some shepherds knew and also some sages from the east knew. King Herod knew. The innkeeper apparently did not know. But you know.

He too spent his life dealing with folks who didn't want to let him be who he was born to be. He was born to love us and to bring us eternal life. That does not conflict with who we were born to be. This Christmas, let us all strive to be who we were born to be, as we let the Christ child grow in our lives to be to us who he was born to be.