

**We Are Who We Are!
Galatians 3:23-29
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In the 1980's and 1990's, the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator, was all the rage. One professor of mine in seminary has said that it was one of the most overused type indicators in modern memory and equated it to "astrology gone awry." Many people and especially many pastors in the United Methodist Church, went to workshops learned a little something about themselves, were trained how to administer it. Here was the problem, though. People used it for more than it was ever intended to be. People began to say things like, "Well my Myers-Briggs type says that I am not an organizer so that is just the way I am going to be. Rather than being a useful tool to help us identify our strengths and growth area's, it was a crutch and excuse. It still in use today, and can be a valuable tool in helping one understand their

characteristics and behaviors. Fortunately, however, the craze has passed.

We are who we are and we know what we are best at, and we also know though we may not admit it, what we are not good at doing. The amazing thing is that God calls us to be sisters and brothers in Christ despite our shortcomings. In the same token, God also wants us to continue to grow and mature in faith. The fact of the matter is that God came to us, with all of our flaws, all of our shortcomings all of our inadequacies God came to us, specifically in Christ Jesus, and made us who we are..."children of God through faith" (vs. 26).

Paul sums this up nicely when he writes in verse 29 "if you belong to Christ, then you belong to Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise." But we Christians are also a funny bunch. We like to keep score. We like to think of

ourselves as more righteous than others who don't go to church, or others who only come to church on occasion, or because we are involved in more committees than someone else, or because we are involved in the district or the conference or you name it. We like to pad our resume to show others how great a Christian we are.

But through Christ Jesus we are who we are just as Paul says in Romans 15, "By the Grace of God I am who I am", We are no longer Jew we are no longer Greek, we are no longer slave nor free, there is no longer even male or female for we are all one in Christ Jesus. We are no longer subject to the law but our faith in Christ is the measure of who we are. And because of Christ we will always measure up.

In the end our type indicator is Jesus Christ. That defines our very identity and takes away all other labels we would place on ourselves. To what extent do we identify ourselves

as Christians? What other things do we identify ourselves by?

I think of the line from A Few Good Men, when Lt. Dawson recites a very well disciplined response about where his loyalties lie. “Unit, Corps, God, Country.” Well at least God was in there. I’m not sure what Hierarchy he was using but weather it was from least to greatest or greatest to least, but either way something superceded God.

Even in the church we can identify ourselves along lines of conservative or liberal, we can insist on our “way” being the right way and want to cast others out , we do this through denominations and even within the denomination. I even heard one pastor say to another person that they had invalidated their baptism because of a group they were apart of. What! One can envision God with giant hair dryer blowing dry everyone with whom this pastor disagreed with. We can do it through styles of worship, through how we are organized and how we are dressed. Paul reminds us that

we are who we are in Jesus Christ through our baptism. Or more simply as Wesley put it, in essentials unity, incidentals harmony, in all things charity.

Derek Webb of the group Caedmon's Call puts it best in their chorus "For who you are you're the great "I Am". For who you are you're the Son of Man, for who you are I am who I am." And we are Christians, by God's grace, through the faithfulness of Christ, heirs of the promise. That is who we are and who God calls us to be. In the church and I don't mean inside this building, but I mean in the church, we are not Coke people or Pepsi people, or Yoopers and Trolls, or conservative or liberal, Democrats or Republicans, rich or poor, we are one in Christ Jesus.