

Big and Little Identity

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John 15.9-10,12

Who are you?

I pick or (CNN or Fox News).

I am a ____ .

My heritage is ____ - American.

Here's something I'm really good at:

I invest money in my hobby which is

Physically I see myself as a (check as many as you want):

Fit person ____ Out of shape ____ Young person ____ Older person ____

Attractive ____ Unattractive ____

If we take the New Testament as truth and follow Jesus as our Lord, we must eventually struggle with two challenging things: Jesus's unconditional acceptance and his radical call to discipleship. These things meet in Jesus command to love:

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul. (Mk. 10.30)
- Love your neighbor as yourself. (Mk. 10.31)
- Love your enemy and pray for him or her. (Matt. 5.44)
- Love each other. (Jn. 15.12)

What is Peacemaking?

1. Refusing to objectify others.
2. Being a person of reconciliation.
3. Bringing the Kingdom where it is not.

A glimpse at the small identity of Jesus's disciples:

1. Peter - a brash, outspoken leader quick to speak his mind.
2. Andrew - Always in the right place at the right time with good advice and offering support
3. James - Super ambitious
4. John - the beloved disciple, a man of tradition.
5. Philip - he often gets it wrong
6. Nathanael - a truth teller
7. Matthew - a gangster
8. Thomas - the skeptic
9. James, son of Alphaeus - no idea
10. Simon - the zealot, or terrorist
11. Judas - son of James, a brave heart
12. Judas Iscariot - the traitor

The point: To love others, to be a disciple, to be a peacemaker is to set aside the things I feel my identity entitles me for the sake of others. I do not abandon these things. Rather, I seek to serve others by using my identity or setting it aside, as the case might be.

A challenge: Think of the person who most offends you, whether you know them or not - pray asking God to give you his heart for that person and, if possible, give that person your undivided heart and attention this week.