

Madison Heights Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
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MADISON HEIGHTS MESSENGER

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Child of God

We live in a modern world that challenges our faith. If you look at religion from the perspective of living in this world it can be challenging. There are various cultural stumbling blocks that hinder the ability of the modern church to reach out to younger generations. The world has changed to where religions, and faith practices, are no longer a central focus in daily living and many people around us do not worship God or attend any church. The church is seen in many different ways from a diverse population. Some think that a church is an organized religion with a political agenda. Others see a church as being judgmental and negative. Some have experienced a church life that is dominated by males that oppresses females. Many others think that the church is full of fundamentalists who take the whole Bible literally. None of the misconceptions are applicable to who we are as a church body. We are a different entity than just any other church in society. We were built upon reformation, with the goal of being the church that Jesus built as best as we possibly can within the realm of contemporary society. This takes commitment to the teachings of Jesus and the essentials of discipleship, stewardship, and love.

When I was growing up I was taught the concept of being born again. However, in mainstream society professing that you are born again seems to be more of a denominational identity than a reality. Being born again means you surrender the old life of this world for a new way of living that is focused on the teachings of Jesus. Many people that claim to be born again seem to cling more to the earthly realm with very little change. We are to be like Jesus. By the time I was a teenager we focused more on our commitment to the public confession of faith than the words "born again." Each of us confessed that we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and the Savior of the world and along with that is a commitment to surrender the old life for a new life. This was the same concept as being born again but less emphasis was placed on saying it and more emphasis was placed on living it. We were still highly influenced by the world and lived within the realms of society but living for Jesus was our goal. As a pastor I began to embrace a more in depth worldview concept that not only deals with the individual but the congregation's values, attitudes, and ways of being in the world. In Genesis we learn that human beings are created in the image of God. We are made like God. Reflecting upon this is exciting! We are made in the context of God. The worldview being you are actually in God's family; a member of the family of God.

There are two fundamental questions that govern every human life. Who am I and what am I to do? So often we start with what am I to do? But the more primary question is who am I? From a Christian perspective we are a child of God. That is a powerful identity! Everything that you do, the decisions that you make, how you treat others, all come from the essential understanding of who you are. We are born of God (John 1:12-13). When we know who we are then what we do is expressed through our identity. Children of God do not pick and choose a religion, or a church, looking for one that suits them. We are drawn to the ministry with a passion. Children of God do not worship God when it is convenient. We are drawn to it. Children of God do not go looking for something that suits them. We focus on pleasing God. A child of God loves God with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength. A child of God worships, prays, studies, and serves with a wonderful passion, excitement, and enthusiasm whenever and wherever possible. You are a child of God. That is your identity. That is your worldview. That is who you are.

George