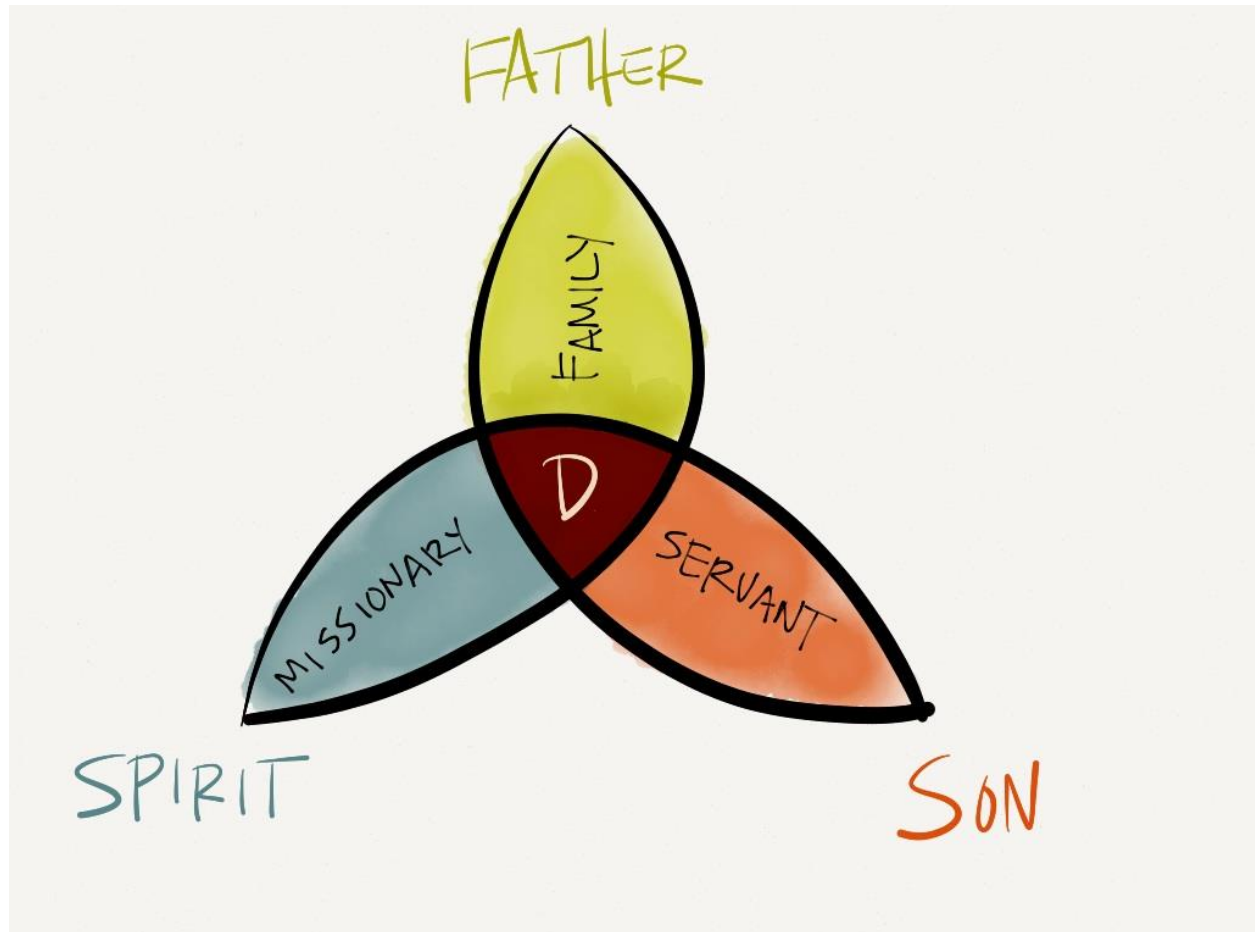


Who We Are

As disciples of Jesus, we have been given a new identity that shapes all of life.



Nick was excited about having Tom as a neighbor. Not only were Tom and his family fun people to hang out with, they were Christians and shared much of the same faith and family values that Tom did.

“Sit down for a second, I’m taking a break to grab a cup of coffee—you in?” Tom said, “Sure buddy. But you should borrow my blower thing. It’ll make short work of that mountain of leaves out there.”

“Awesome...now you tell me. If I had that earlier I would be finished by now! You’ve probably been watching and laughing at me for hours. Hey—are you gonna be there tomorrow when my daughter Heather gets baptized?” Nick asked.

“Not sure, but I’ll be there if I can. I love baptisms. Mine was a long time ago and I wish I had understood it better back then. Have you been baptized Nick?”

“Yep, when I was in college. Up above the choir loft in a little tub behind some curtains. I particularly liked that white robe they gave me to wear. At least the whole thing was over quickly. I was just glad I didn’t drown the pastor before it was over!”

Tom thought for a second before saying, “Baptism is a super significant picture of something amazing. And beautiful. When Jesus told his disciples to go and make more disciples baptizing them into the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, that was all a huge statement of their new identity as his followers—as Christians. There, in short order, Jesus confirmed the church’s identity and mission.”

“Whoa, I thought it was just some ancient tradition and what is called a sacrament.”

“It is Nick, but it’s really important stuff. Tomorrow when Heather is baptized she will be starting a new life with a recreated identity and purpose. She will be baptized into the name of the Father. With God as her father she—and everyone in the Church—are part of the same family, God’s family. She’ll be baptized, immersed, into the name of the Son, Jesus. With Jesus as King of her life, she will now begin to live as one who serves him—and others with her entire life. The way Jesus did. And she is being baptized into the name of the Holy Spirit. That same Spirit, Nick, that sent Jesus on his mission, and empowered everything he did now lives in and sends Heather out on the very same mission. All of that is true for us too.”

“Even if we didn’t always know or understand it?”

“It’s true of us because it is true of God.”

Now Nick stopped to think for a moment. “As Christians...we are all part of God’s family of missionary servants sent as disciples who make disciples. Amazing. It sounds like a great adventure! I’ve got some catching up to do. And I want to make sure Heather understands how awesome tomorrow is going to be.”

Nick paused for a second then said, "I wish I had understood all of this years ago."

"Me too Nick. Me too."

3 Questions:

1. What is God saying to you right now in light of this?
2. What will you do about it? When?
3. Who else do you need to share this with?