

## **Your First Identity**

I am writing this article on the morning of Tuesday, November 3: Election Day. As I write I have no idea what the results of this election will be, no idea what the hours and days to come will bring in terms of our collective life as a nation. But even so, I already know the most important fact about this election: nothing in these days or weeks to come will change that we belong first to God.

We are alive during a horrifyingly divided and polarized time, dear ones. Our nation is torn apart by disagreement, anger, and vitriol. We have found ourselves unable to have meaningful and faithful conversation with those that disagree with us. Perhaps most tragic, we have often let our political opinion take precedence over our identity in Christ. On this election day, regardless of who you vote for, you are not voting for a savior—you are not voting for someone that you can put your whole trust in, who will save us from ourselves, who will cure us of our brokenness. Only Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, can rescue us from the sinfulness that we are steeped in as people. Only our baptism and the grace poured out for us in those saving waters can wash away all that keeps us from worthiness in God's eyes.

Your first and most important identity is grounded in what Christ has done for you. Though we may disagree about many things, I pray that in this season of our life we can agree on this: that we are called to do justice, love mercy, walk humbly, and extend forgiveness, as Christ has first done for us. Our God is committed to caring for us—may we be committed to caring for one another in God's name.

A charge for us: May the power of Christ lift us above despair. May the energy of Christ move through our weariness. May the peace of Christ settle our anxiety. May the challenge of Christ raise our expectations. May the grace of Christ assure us of forgiveness when we fall short. May the love of Christ, greater than we could ask or imagine, set us dancing into the future. Amen.

In Peace, Pastor Marissa