

Let's Go Deeper...

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

On Sunday we passed Milepost 3 on our 40-day Lenten Road to Renewal: Compass Points. The compass points we focused on are the central tenets of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

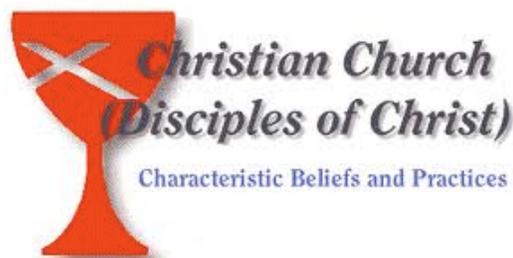
I told the congregation that **Robert Welsh**, retiring this year as President of the **Council on Christian Unity**, made a presentation 20 years ago at the Disciples Regional Assembly in North Carolina on the hallmarks of being a Disciple. Though I didn't remember the content of his speech, but I remember he titled the sermon "You Might be a Disciple if..."

He drew his title from comedian Jeff Foxworthy who poked fun at his Southern roots with a stand-up routine that included the refrain "You might be a redneck if:

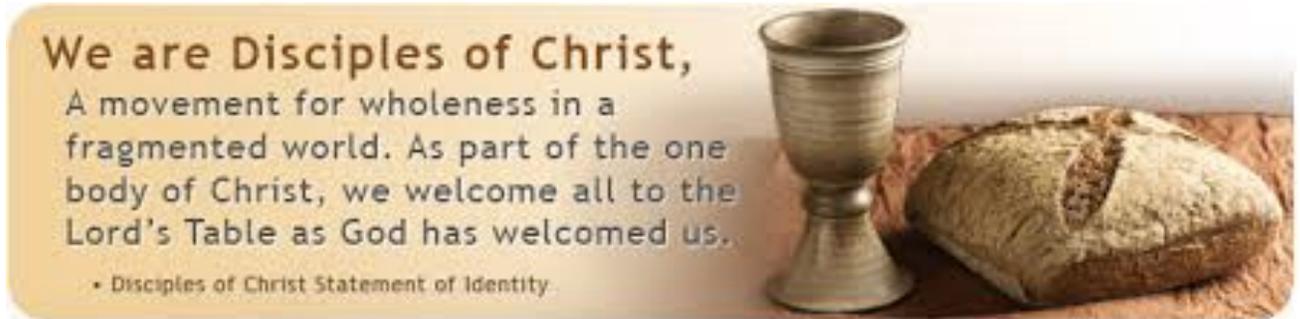
- you've ever done your Christmas shopping at a truck stop.
- you think the last four words of the National Anthem are "Gentlemen start your engines."
- you think a hot tub is a stolen bathroom fixture.
- Thanksgiving dinner was ruined because you ran out of ketchup.
- you wonder how service stations keep their restrooms so clean.

With all due respect to Jeff Foxworthy and Robert Welsh, I explicated Disciples' central tenets using the tagline, **You might be a Disciple if...**

- **your favorite piece of furniture is the kitchen table** (An open communion table).
- **you love a good book** (The centrality of Scripture).
- **you prefer bridges over walls** (A passion for unity).
- **you prefer milk and honey to fire and brimstone.** (An emphasis on God's mercy and grace vs. judgment and wrath).
- **you prefer the taste of a flavorful stew to bland, plain yogurt.** (Our "melting pot" composition of people from a diversity of backgrounds and faith traditions).
- **you know there's nothing like a soak in the tub to restore body, mind, and soul** (Immersion baptism).
- **you believe church is a team sport and not a spectator sport** (The Ministry of All Believers).
- **you see yourself more as a pioneer than a couch potato** (Disciples are pioneer people who risked, dared, and pressed beyond comfort zones).



Several years ago, Disciples adopted this Statement of Identity:



Read a summary of Disciples history:

<http://disciples.org/our-identity/history-of-the-disciples/>

Enough for going deeper this week. How about a little mid-Lenten levity? Is that all right? Following Sunday's sermon, Anne Taul, who is graciously assisting me with this year's Pastor's Class, brought me a copy of a 1997 book titled "*You Might Be a Disciple If...*" Published by Chalice Press, it is long out of print. I couldn't resist sharing a few of its contents with you. You'll know you're a Disciple if you resonate with the below. Enjoy!

You might be a Disciple if...

- you have a chalice-shaped soap-on-the-rope in your shower.
- you think of Campbell's soup as Alexander's lunch.
- you picked TCU to win their bracket in the NCAA basketball tournament
- you're pretty sure the Millennial Harbinger wasn't the name of Han Solo's space ship.
- the young people in your congregation know that Chi Rho isn't a city on the Nile.
- you know that the five-finger exercise isn't what a violinist does to warm up.
- your pastor owns a pair of waders and doesn't fish.
- when you're asked what Disciples believe you say, "Which ones?"
- you know that Barton W. Stone was not Sharon's first husband.
- your preferred liturgical dress is a navy blazer and khaki pants.
- you don't immediately think of *Ivanhoe* when someone mentions Walter Scott.
- you know that our polar star is not a part of the Big Dipper.
- you've heard it said, "Where there are three Disciples, there are four opinions."

Warts and all, I still love being a Disciple.

See you Sunday as we return to the serious business of Lent with Milepost Four: "Food for the Journey." Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 presents the three hallmarks of Lenten piety: prayer, almsgiving, and fasting. --Pastor David