

Understanding Who and Whose You Are

In this current series of posts, I've described some important aspects of my growth as a man of God and their foundations for my God Buddy concept.

It was not until I understood who I was – and Whose I was, did this growth really begin for me though.

For most men, the answer to the question, "*Who am I?*" really begins when we know "***Whose am I?***".

Let's have a little vocabulary lesson.

The Difference between "Who's" and "Whose?"

According to Dictionary.com, "*Whose*" is the possessive form of the pronoun *who*, while *who's* is a contraction of the words *who is* or *who has*. More simply: Who owns vs who has.

Also, capitalizing the first letter is considered "reverential capitalization", which is the practice of capitalizing religious words, particularly pronouns, that refers to a deity or divine being. For Christians, it means "of God" or "of Jesus Christ".

Identifying Who We Are As Men

Today, we often hear or use the question, “What do you do?” after we meet someone. While predominantly used by but certainly not exclusive to men, it’s become the standard follow-up question once you know someone’s name.

It seems like a harmless question but does anyone ever say more than a description of our vocation, our career title, or the company we where we work for the answer?

Most guys today try to find our personal identity as we enter adulthood.



Gerd Altmann from Pixabay

How we see yourself –our personal identity is shaped by our early experiences in life.

We grow from an awkward teenager into a young adult starting college or a career once we get out of high school. Maybe our identity is formed by our role in school as a jock, stoner, band- or choir-guy, or the nerd. We may have had a great childhood and always had a relatively healthy self-image. Conversely, we may have endured emotional or physical abuse that left you with no self-worth so you seek affirmation in other ways: sexually, through workaholism and self-medication, or perfectionism. Psychology Today indicates perfectionism turns life into an endless report card on accomplishments or looks that becomes a fast and enduring track to unhappiness that leads to depression and eating disorders.

As I wrote in my earlier post, **Addressing Your “Wounds”**, many guys are held back in their understanding of becoming a man by at least one of 5 significant wounds of their past: an Absentee Father, being Overly-Bonded with Mother, a Lack of a Compelling Vision for Manhood, living All Alone, and having some sort of Depravity in their past.

But as we address these wounds, we begin to understand who we really are.

Testing for Who You Are

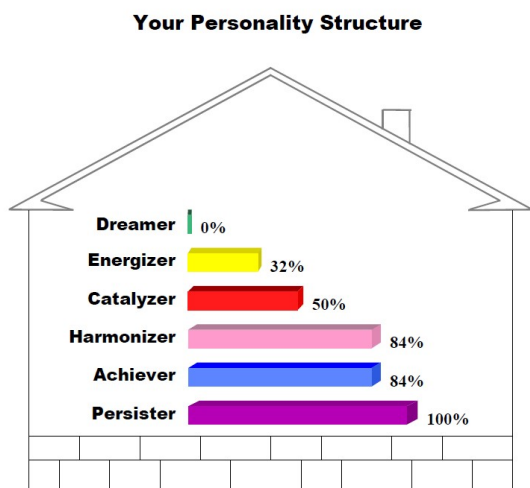
There are a multitude of personality tests such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (based on four psychological functions:

sensation, intuition, feeling and thinking), the Enneagram, the DiSC Personality Profile (designed to measure dominance, influence, steadiness, and conscientiousness), the Rorschach Inkblot Test and the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, among many others.

Each has pros and cons but all can help you get a better sense of who you are.

Learning My Unique Design

During one of our church's men's group retreats, we completed a *Servants by Design*® profile that is a self-report inventory tool and not necessarily a personality test.



Rich's *Servants by Design*® Profile results

The tool is based on ten key attributes such as your Personality Structure, Abilities, Personality Strengths, Setting (environment which best supports your design), Viewpoints (how you view life), Relationships (your leadership and supervision preferences), Motivators (what energize you)

Life Tips (how you connect to others and motivate yourself), Subject Matter (resources you enjoy working with most) and Potential Pitfalls (the ways you may react negatively to stress).

The details in my *Servants by Design* report also explained the strengths and weaknesses that come from my driven, achiever, personality.

While I am always learning how to use my strengths and temper my weaknesses, the results and subsequent reflection helped me understand who I was.

In previous years, I also took the Myers-Brigg test, a more traditional personality test

ISTJ Responsible Executors	ISFJ Dedicated Stewards	INFJ Insightful Motivators	INTJ Visionary Strategists
ISTP Nimble Pragmatics	ISFP Practical Custodians	INFP Inspired Crusaders	INTP Expansive Analysts
ESTP Dynamic Mavericks	ESFP Enthusiastic Improvisors	ENFP Impassioned Catalysts	ENTP Innovative Explorers
ESTJ Efficient Drivers	ESFJ Committed Builders	ENFJ Engaging Mobilizers	ENTJ Strategic Directors

Myers–Briggs Type Indicator

The test categorizes my responses to determine I'm equally ESFJ (conscientious helper, sensitive to the needs of others and energetically dedicated to their responsibilities) and ESTJ (consummate organizers, who want to bring structure to their surroundings and value predictability and prefer things to proceed in a logical order).

But all these tests out there, it's no wonder I'm was so confused!

But I Am God's Workmanship

The most important thing to know though is **Whose** you are, which is your identity in Christ. Knowing this eliminates any confusion.

I believe that God made man and woman *uniquely* for His purposes and in His own image so we are equal in value (see Genesis 1:27). Since everyone is created differently, we should stop trying to live like everyone else (that's called the "Comparison Trap"). It also means we should use our unique gifts and talents to glorify and honor God in whatever we do (1 Cor. 10:31).

The great news is that the Scriptures tell us God knew us before we were even born (Jeremiah 1:5), that we are God's workmanship created for doing good works (Ephesians 2:10), and that God so loves us that He sent His Son, Jesus to take away our past, present and future sins (John 3:16).

This is the essence of **Whose** we are. **We are God's!**

The God Buddy Principle

Once I understood I was created uniquely for God's bigger purposes and that I was forever flawless in God's eyes, I could begin to let go of my perfectionist tendencies and any

wounds of my past.

Now, I'm still a work in process but the knowledge of **who I am** and **whose I am** helped me become a better man. It also gave me the confidence to begin helping men become better men, which is the tagline for my God Buddies concept.

The God Buddy principle is that having some close authentic relationships helps teach you that God made you for a purpose despite your flaws. Your GB can also model how to become honest about yourself and begin to help sharpen you into a more godly man.

The end result is gaining confidence to use your gifts and talent to glorify God, the subject of an upcoming post.