

“Going Public” // Matthew 16:13–24 // *The Whole Story* #34

MATTHEW 16 if you have your Bibles. I think the more technologically sophisticated our society gets, the more we crave anonymity.

- I’m certainly like that. It annoys me when I go to a convenient store to buy batteries and they want my phone number and email address. I’m just trying to buy batteries!

Anonymity leaves you with a lot more freedom and control.

- (A lot of us wish we had a fake social media account where we could post all the things we really think. (Some of you want to know who @fakejdgrear is on Twitter; I wish I knew, because there are a lot of things I’d love to say that I just can’t because I’m a pastor...))
- So many times during the debate the other night I typed something out on Twitter and then thought, “I can’t say that.”
- (*FakeJD = 16K followers. At some point the **fake version of me is going to have more followers than the real version of me, at which point I’m going to have a personal crisis.***)

And, it’s true: **Anonymity certainly releases** you from a lot of accountability. It **reminds of the lady I heard about who came in a little late** to the church service and asked the usher to be seated on

Works Consulted:

John Mark Comer, “Jesus Heals a Blind Man”

Steven Furtick, “We Are That Church”

Andy Stanley, “The Fine Print”

Tim Keller, “How to Find Your Self”

James MacDonald, “Get Off the Fence”

the front row. And the usher said, “I’m happy to take you there, but you don’t want to sit on the front row, because our pastor is very boring, he will put you to sleep and that might be embarrassing to you.” And she said to him, “Sir, do you know who I am?” And he responded, “No ma’am, I do not.” She said, “I am **the pastor’s mother.**” The man dropped his head in embarrassment. And then he looked up at her and said, “Ma’am, do you know who I am?” She responded, “No I do not.” And he said, “Thank God” and walked off.

So, anonymity has some privileges in certain spheres, but I want to show you why Jesus never let people remain anonymous in regards to him. As we’ll see in this passage, he forced acknowledgment—public acknowledgment.

The **most important form of public acknowledgment** is baptism, and so this weekend, we’re going to give you a chance to do that if you never have.

- Last weekend, **we had 147 people** come forward to do that.
- At the **end of the service today**, we’re going to offer you another chance to do that—to go public with your faith, to own it, and to confess Jesus through baptism if you never have.
- **As always, we’ll have everything** you need to do that—towels, a change of clothes.

Matthew 16:13–24

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

- **Little background** here. *Caesarea Philippi* was a Roman city built within the borders of Israel up on a hill overlooking the entire Jordan valley.
 - I've been there—it is a **beautiful spot**, right by a natural spring.
 - One of the main natural features of it is this huge rock face wall where the Romans had built temple after temple after temple to god after god after god. It was **basically a strip mall** for the gods.
- The **newest temple, at the time of Jesus, had been built for Caesar**, who called himself the son of God, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. That was inscribed in his temple.
- **By this point in Jesus' life**, a lot of people have opinions about him, so he takes his disciples there, and probably stands right in front of this rock face with all these temples, and says, "Who do people say that I am?"

¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven."

- (Interesting, **in Mark's account of this**¹, which our small groups are studying, we see that this event occurs right after the **healing of the blind man**. **This is an illustration of Jesus healing spiritual blindness—giving *spiritual* sight to people**. Spiritual sight, you see, is being able to see the truth about who Jesus is.)

¹ Mark 8:27–38

² Of note, *Petros* is masculine in Greek while the word for "rock," *petra*, is feminine, which indicates that the rock Jesus will build the church on is not simply Peter all by himself. It is

¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter (Gr. *petros*), and on this rock "petra" (Greek word for rock) **I will build my church...** It's a play on words. He's standing right there in front of this big rock at Caesarea Philippi, he's saying it in contrast to all these pagan temples carved on the rock.

- *On this rock, Peter—not on these, I'll build my church...*

Now, there's a little theological controversy surrounding this verse:

When Jesus says, "Upon this rock I'll build my church, is he referring to Peter, or to the confession of faith Peter just made, as the rock on which Jesus builds the church?"

It is both: *The confessing Peter will be the rock on which Jesus builds his church*. This is a prophecy that through the **Apostles—Peter the chief among them**—Jesus would write the Bible, and on that Bible—that record of their confessions of faith in Jesus—God would build his church.²

...and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

- What this means is that **they're going to be his representatives, accurately recording** the way people can find salvation.
- When he says, "You have the keys of the kingdom, what you bind on earth will be bound in heaven," he's *not* saying, "You know, from here on out I'm going to let you decide who goes to heaven; I'll leave that judgment to you." No, that would contradict way too many other things the Bible says.
 - It simply means that **they are going to lay out**, as his representatives, the boundaries of the faith, and the way

Peter *combined* with his confession: "Peter is the rock, but Christ is the Builder who sets his apostle in a foundational position In his inspired confession Peter is a stone of foundation; in his rejection of the cross, he is a stone of stumbling." Edmund Clowney, *The Church*, 40.

they lay out the particulars of who goes to heaven will be an accurate reflection of what Jesus thinks.

- Jesus did not leave a Bible, it is true, but he left a group of Apostles authorized to write one.
- And he is here promising that the Bible they write will be accurate, and that what the Apostles explain to us about Jesus and the way of salvation is what he really thinks, too.
- Make sense?
- I meet people who are ok with Jesus, but say, “I can’t accept the Bible.” Jesus here told us to accept the Bible, so you can’t be ok with him if you don’t accept the book he authorized.
- One more thing there in those verses: “On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades (Greek for hell) will not overcome it.” This had been the place where Israel, during their years of idolatry, had **built this big altar to Ba’al**. Ba’al was the god of the underworld, so, this was considered to be literally the gates of hell, where Ba’al came out.
- Jesus is saying that **all the idolatrous confusion coming out of hell itself** will not be able to withstand the Apostles’ testimony about Jesus.

Then, a really strange verse: 20 Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Why would he do that?

- **Well, you see, for the Jews, “Messiah” was as much a political title as a spiritual one**, even more so, because everyone assumed in that day that the Messiah would come as a warrior to throw off the power of Rome.
 - *And Jesus knew that once it got out that he was claiming to be the Messiah, it was on.*
 - To claim that you’re a king in a world that already has one—and a really insecure jealous king like

Caesar—is treason — like walking into the Vatican and claiming you’re the new Pope.

- *It would be either revolution or execution; there was no middle ground.*
- But Jesus isn’t ready to die yet, so he doesn’t want them out there claiming that...
- **Because what Jesus means** by Messiah and what Peter means are **two different things**,

and so ²¹From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples (what he meant by Messiah) that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. ²²Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. *Every week I have a group of guys who, after the 1st service, critique my sermon. What I said poorly; factual mistakes I made; jokes that were lame... Takes a bold move to give that kind of sermon critique to Jesus. But that’s what Peter does. Head like a rock. Probably not what Jesus meant, but still applies.*

“Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” ²³Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! Talk about a spiritual high followed by spiritual low! **Can you imagine Peter talking to his wife at dinner that night?** “How was work today?” “Jesus told me I’d be the anchor of his new church, and then that I reminded him of Satan.”

- (BTW, **one of the reasons we know the Bible is authentic** is that it records encounters like this one. Peter would one day lead the church, and here in their founding documents they included a story where Jesus calls him “Satan.”
- Be honest: **If you were making up stories to gain support for your religious movement, is this the kind of thing you’d make up?**
- Imagine you were trying to get someone skeptical to come to church with you... is this the kind of thing you’d want to tell them?

“Hey, come to our church—our pastor got kicked out of seminary for cheating and one of his professors called him “Satan.”

- No, they wouldn’t make that up and put it in there. This was a cleverly devised myth to help foster a movement. They put it in there because it was true.

Jesus continues: ²³...You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” (Peter you’re thinking about victory, about vengeance against the Romans, and prosperity on earth. I’m thinking about something much greater and more eternal than those things).

²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”

OK, let’s stop there and see what we learn about the **importance of public confession of truth** from this (and by that I mean publicly professing what we believe)

1. Confession of truth is the rock upon which Jesus builds his church

Did you see how Jesus **ties all his power** to this confession of faith?

- **When Peter makes this confession, vs. 17, Jesus tells him**, “These things were not revealed to you by flesh and blood.” You didn’t just “figure this out.” Only the Spirit of God can give you this kind of vision, this kind of insight.
 - Illus. of guy on rock face: after giving the “shot,” ask the same question, giving the exact same explanation.
 - “The difference is not in how well you presented the choice; the difference is in the sanity of the heart that heard you.”
 - In the same way, it has nothing to do with how well my flesh and blood mind and tongue can present the

arguments for Christianity to you. It is a spiritual blindness that has to be healed.

- I don’t stand up here and lean on my intelligence to convert you, as if I’m the smartest guy in the room and I just want to **out-reason** you into the faith. I’m trusting in the power of God to give spiritual sight through his word.
- It’s why I lean so much on the Bible—the Bible is like the needle with the power of healing.
 - As it is preached, spiritual sight is given
 - You see, I’m not up here trying to get **dumb people to become smart**, or **uneducated people to learn**, but **blind people to see** and dead people to come to life—and that takes the power of God, not the powers of persuasion.
- Furthermore, vs. 18, Jesus said, **“Upon this rock I will build my church.”** Jesus takes the confession of faith and uses it as the conduit through which he unleashes his power in the church!
 - **One of the reasons we urge you to go through baptism** is we know that that confession of faith becomes this great catalyst of the outpouring of God’s power in your life. When you do it, the Spirit of God begins to work in your life in a new, more powerful way.
 - Like the HS descended on Jesus at his baptism, he begins to work in your life in a new way.
 - **Why a big deal? We know God starts to work in your life in a more powerful way when you publicly confess him...**

Jesus’ uniting of his power to this confession of faith is also why we are careful not to change the confession.

You see, our temptation today is to reshape our message according to what we think will work in our society. To make Christianity more appealing by altering it where it is most offensive.

- “Oh, people will never believe it if you say there is only one way of salvation.”
- “Oh, if Christianity doesn’t change its views on sexuality, then it is going to die.” I hear that all the time...

That’s so appealing—to alter the confession—but when you do that, you **cut yourself off from the accompanying power** of God.

- **This confession was unpopular** in those days, too—Jesus was standing in front of this rock saying this!
- The **Roman empire had lots of gods**, and they said you could worship whichever one you wanted, *just don’t say your God is the only God...*
 - Pantheon—they could have changed it very easily and gained acceptance
 - King of Kings and Lord of Lords

But the disciples wouldn’t change it because they knew that if they changed that confession they’d lose the power of God.

- **Illus. Phone number** (possible alt: BERTA)

In every culture there is a temptation to compromise something in order to be more acceptable to culture. In our day one of the biggest is to remove **what Jesus teaches about sexuality**. Just change that, and you won’t be so hated...

- **In Revelation 2 Jesus talked about a church** that was faithful in every way except that they tolerated those who taught and practiced sexual immorality, and because of that, Jesus removed his presence from that church (2:12–18).
- People say, “If you don’t soften your stance on this, you’re going to lose people.” I’d rather lose people than lose the presence of Jesus.
- You can keep your pundits; I’ll take Jesus.

When you confess faithfully, you gain the power of God.

- **The power of God**—the power that gives sight to the blind and heals the leper and makes the lame walk and raises the dead—begins to flow in the church and in your life.
- That’s **what we need**, not a Christianity that reshapes itself to fit society.

Which leads me to #2...

2. If we confess faithfully, we are unstoppable

¹⁸ “...and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades (hell itself) will not overcome it.”

- **People usually treat this verse** like it promises that Jesus will protect us from all of Satan’s vicious attacks on us.
 - “*Don’t worry when the church is attacked*, because the gates of hell will not overcome you!”
- **But this verse is about Satan’s inability to keep us from plundering his kingdom**, not his inability to plunder ours.
- See, let me ASK YOU this—are **“gates” an offensive weapon**? Do you attack someone with a gate? Beat them over the head.
 - No. Gates are a **defensive** weapon! Gates are designed to keep people out.
 - Jesus is saying that when we confess faithfully, not only will he protect our church, he’ll enable us to advance God’s kingdom into Satan’s most well-fortified strongholds.
- God has **grown this church tremendously**. We’ve baptized almost 5424 in the last 14 years. **Are we satisfied?** Are we going to huddle up and say, “OK, God, now protect us and our families... God the candidates this year for president are terrible and America’s going to hell and how are we going to survive?”
- Jesus **didn’t promise that he would enable us to survive** a slow retreat in our culture. He promised us that if we’d be faithful in our confession he’d let us advance deeper and deeper into enemy territory.

- It reminds me of a story about **Abraham Lincoln**: *When the Union army finally pushed the Confederates back into Richmond, one of Lincoln's generals burst into Lincoln's office and said, "President Lincoln, I am pleased to tell you we have finally pushed the enemy out of our territory and back into his own." Lincoln said to the other generals in the room, "When will my generals learn that the WHOLE COUNTRY is our territory?"*
- Jesus is not content to be Lord of the Church. He died to be Lord of the whole earth.
- There are still **6400 UPG's** with no witness...
- **Parts of the Triangle** with no credible witness...
- A **new generation of college students** that need to be reached
- Communities of **refugees** displaced around the globe, many hear in RDU, that need a gospel witness; populations of prisoners; foster kids to be taken care of.

So **hear me say it clearly**, Summit: I confess that

- Jesus is the **Lord of the whole earth**, the **King of Kings** and Lord of Lords, not Caesar...
- He is the **Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the Living God**,
 - that salvation is found in him, not in the Republican platform or the Democratic platform, that salvation did not come riding on the wings of Air Force One, but cradled in a manger.
- and that he, this Messiah, is the **one way of salvation** for all people,
 - the one and only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved
- that whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved, that there is **no difference** in the Jew or the Greek, the black and the white, the rich or the poor, the Democrat or Republican.
 - The **same Lord is Lord** of all, bestowing his riches on whoever calls upon him,

- Since the beginning of time, there's only been **one race of human**—sinner, and one Savior, Jesus.
- And he is **not willing that any should perish** but all should come to repentance.
- I confess this **because the Bible Jesus authorized teaches it**, and I believe that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God"
- And whether that confession is unpopular or not, it comes with the power of God—and that's the last thing I want to lose.

And, Summit, **because of Jesus' promise** that he puts on this confession here, we will never be satisfied when there is such lostness in our community and our world. The **whole country** is his territory!

- People ask me, "**Isn't Summit big enough already?** When are you going to quit trying to grow?"
 - My answer: *When Jesus comes back or the last person in RDU gets saved.*
 - **Hell doesn't rest** and so neither will we.

3rd truth about confession...

3. Satan tries to get us to reshape Jesus according to our liking

The **strongest rebuke ever given by Jesus, recorded in Scripture**, was this one he gave to Peter here, and it was **instigated by Peter trying to force Jesus** into the mold of what he assumed the Messiah should be. **Vs. 22, as Jesus begins to explain how the Messiah has to suffer,** **22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"**

This is **still Satan's greatest temptation** to us: To **reshape Jesus** according to our expectations.

- We **don't do it in exactly the same ways Peter** and his generation did it—most of us don't grow up dreaming of a war with Rome like they did. (Unless we're super into video games)

- But we grow up in a me-focused culture **swimming in consumerism**, and so we envision an **Americanized Jesus** who is one-part genie, one-part fan club, one-part financial advisor, one part American patriot and the rest therapist.
- Or we like to think of **Jesus as the great Comforter**—who is progressive and morally permissive like we are, approving of all the things we approve of. A big **cosmic blanket** you curl up and just find yourself in.

That is a **Satanic distortion**. You've got to let Jesus be who he is, which means that sometimes he contradicts you, or confuses you, and you don't "rebuke" him, or the guy whose telling you what Jesus said, when you don't like it.

- **Illus. Me** watching a talk show, as they debate some moral issue. One person, to their credit, who was trying to explain what the Bible says; and another person, a little more free-thinking, who kept saying, "Well, MY Jesus would never..." "You don't get your own personal Jesus!" There is a real Jesus and the one you made up, who is not real.
 - ~~Biography. How do you think Jesus feels when you do that with him?~~
- He's not Burger King Jesus, where you "have it your way". Or "Build-a-Bear" Jesus where you assemble the deity you like best.
- **There's the real Jesus**—and then the fake ones you make up—that are really just a deified reflection of you.
- You ever see how **weird the concoctions** people put together at a Golden Corral line are? They come back with a yogurt parfait, spare ribs, a waffle, 4 cookies, and an egg-white omelet.³
 - It's just whatever appealed to you while you were up there.
 - This is what I feel like people do with Jesus... they have this obnoxious concoction of Jesus.
- Accept him, or just own it and reject him

4. Satan's biggest distortion is a Jesus who keeps us from suffering in this life

Specifically, Peter objected to the concept of a Messiah who suffered, and even though we're in a different time and place, that's still the substance of his biggest distortion today.

Peter expresses what I would call "**the heart of Christian immaturity**," the belief that *Jesus Christ came so that I wouldn't suffer*.

But Jesus said, "No, Peter—I'm not going to save you from suffering; I am going to save you through suffering." I'm going to save the world by going to a cross; and I'm going to work out my salvation in you by means of a cross, too."

- So I'm **not going to stop** your pain; I am going to **redeem** your pain, and **give it meaning**, and work through it and use it to bring life to yourself and the world...

(And, btw, **Jesus tells Peter, vs 23**, that until he understands this he should stop speaking for Jesus.

- "Get behind me, Satan!" means, Peter, *shut your mouth until you understand this.*"
- **You see, many immature Christians today teach that Jesus** is some kind of ultimate good luck charm, and if you walk with him he's obligated to remove any bad things that would ever happen to you—financial hardship, health problems or challenges with our kids. He promises to make all your foul shouts go in and your stocks soar.
- And so what happens when people believe this, when they go through bad things, that God has somehow not keeping up his end of the deal.)

³ This string of things from Jerry Seinfeld.

Jesus never said that when we came to him he'd end all the problems in our lives; in fact, sometimes coming to him intensifies them. His promise is that in these problems, he will work to produce life—in you and others.

So here's the question: When you figure that out—that Jesus may not save you from all earthly pain—will you keep following him?

- To Peter's credit, he doesn't go away. You got to hand it to Peter—it takes a lot of gumption to get called "Satan" by the pastor publicly and not go away.
- **(It doesn't record this here**, but one time when Jesus made statements like this one a lot of people quit following him—they were like, "Whoa, we were all about the healing and the blessing and the **solid families**, not this '**suffering for me**' stuff.""
- At which point Jesus turns to Peter and says, "Peter, are you going to leave also?"
- What Peter says is not inspiring. Peter throws up his hands and says, "Where else am I going to go?" We literally have no where else to go. And, you have the words of eternal life." Yes, I am frustrated by you, and I don't like what you are saying, but at the end of the day I'd rather have you and be mad than anything without you."

Ultimately Peter passed his test. Will you?

- There's a new show on TLC: 90 Day fiancée. Pretty unoriginal... but the gist is this. Some of you have started to follow Jesus, and it's gotten hard.
 - He's demanded some area of obedience and it's difficult.
 - He's not doing something you thought he'd do. When that happens, will you **stay with him**? Will you pass the **90-day test**?

Which leads me, lastly, to #5:

5. Jesus seeks committed followers, not anonymous consumers

Jesus ends this discussion by saying: ²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

- I've told you before: In those days, they would **not have regarded the cross** as a piece of sentimental jewelry or a **cool tattoo**. I had a friend who **collected ornamental crosses** from around the world and displayed them on the wall. And that's cool... But **nobody in those days** would have done that. It would be like wearing a **necklace with little dangling electric** chair charms or having as your **screen savers** pictures of **beheadings** and **hangings**. The cross would not become an ornamental piece of jewelry for hundreds of years later. For them, it was a horrific, evocative symbol of death and shame.
- Jesus was **telling them that if we were really going to follow him**, sometimes our obedience to him would not feel like abundant like, but **like death!**

Write this down: Salvation is free; it costs us nothing. But following Jesus will eventually cost you something. Maybe everything.⁴

- **You see, there** are all kinds of things Jesus provides for you when you follow him: The assurance of heaven; stability in your family, the assurance he is working in all things in your life for good.
- But at **some point faithfulness to him is going to feel like death—your desires** are going to go one way, and he is going to tell you to go the other.
- **For example, he tells you:**
 - To end a relationship that you don't want to end
 - To uproot your life and go with a church plant even though it's not part of your 10 year plan

⁴ Adapted from Stanley, message on Mark 8.

- To make a financial sacrifice that will significantly alter your lifestyle
- To not live together, and save sexual intimacy for marriage, even though that's inconvenient and financially disadvantageous for you
- To forgive someone you don't want to forgive
- To deny your desires and submit to his vision of sexuality
- To take a stand on something it'd be easier to be silent about
- To take someone into your home you don't really want to
- To speak the gospel to someone you are intimidated by
- **For some of you, it is simply the call is to be baptized.** If you can't get wet for Jesus, can you really say you are a follower?

At some point, obedience to Jesus is going to take you in a direction 180 degrees opposite of what you want.

- **When that happens**, you will have to answer this question. **Why are you following Jesus?**
- **Are you following him** because of something you think he can do for you, or because you want him more than anything and you'd be willing to give up anything to have him?

You see, a **consumer is someone who follows Jesus to get something from him.** A follower is someone who would leave anything else **just to have him.**

And what **Jesus says to Peter, he says to us:** "I'm not going to tell you that if you follow me you'll avoid pain. But I promise you that *I'll* always be with you in that pain, I'll never leave you or forsake you. **Is that enough?"**

Is he enough? *Are you a consumer, or are you a follower?*

TO GET ALL UP IN YOUR BUSINESS: Here's a few indications you are a consumer, not a follower (I'm not your judge, but here are a few things that probably suggest you're still a consumer)

- You have areas of your life where you *know* that you are not in alignment with what God wants. Maybe small areas... but you want God in your life, and you just don't want to deal with these areas yet. *You're a consumer, not a follower.*
- You've never offered your career or your future to God. Newsflash: He wants more than Sundays—he wants the other 6 days, too!
- You've never offered your possessions to him ask what he wants with it
- You don't spend time with God daily
- Your attendance at church is sporadic.
 - And when you come, you are on the sidelines.
 - You don't volunteer, you are not involved in ministry, your kids are not involved in student ministry, and you are not involved in a small group.
 - You're a consumer not a follower.
- How about this one: You've yet to act on Jesus' first command, to **be baptized** as a **public confession** of your faith.

Conclusion

You see, Jesus asks us, like he did Peter, for a confession. He says, **I don't want you to be anonymous.** I want you to **own it publicly**, declaring to others that you are **not ashamed** of me.

He wants you to own it, personally: CHECK THIS OUT: ANNA BAPTISM VIDEO?

I want you to own this, personally.

Like we saw in this passage, **all Jesus' power begins to flow in your life with the confession.**

- When you, like Peter, confess it publicly, he **begins to build** his kingdom in you, and **hell itself will not be able to stop** the good

things Jesus wants to do in your life and through you, in your family.

Two questions we ask in BAPTISM:

- *Do you trust that Christ has done... received his gift?*
- *Will you do whatever he tells you to do...?*

This is the confession of faith. We're going to offer you a chance to join these 145 from last week, and the 5424 from the past decade, in making this public declaration.

- We have a **change of clothes** for you and changing rooms at all campuses, plus all the hair and deodorant products you could need.
- **"I'm not sure I'm ready."** Come have the discussion. Coming forward is not a commitment to baptized, but getting into the discussion.
 - We're going to **have a conversation** with you—**answer any questions**. And if you decide it's not for you, or we think there are still some things that are unclear, we'll postpone it for a while until we can get those questions answered. **Every time we do this we have some people who wait** until a later week.
 - But you can **at least come forward** and have the conversation.

Here's how this will work:

- **In just a minute, I'll ask you to stand, and when we do, immediately, you step out come at all campuses, all in one motion.** Don't delay.
 - The **person beside you will step back**, and you'll step **out into the aisle**, and one of our **people will greet** you in the aisle and we'll go have the conversation.
- **This important.** This will be a **defining moment** in your life, **where God begins to work in your life in a new way; a moment that will**

literally reshape the rest of your life, quite possibly your **eternity**—

- **Your future hinges on what you do in the next few seconds.**
- **Stop resisting. Stop putting off to tomorrow what you know he wants you to do today.** Are you ready to confess Jesus, like Peter did. He says to you, "Who do you say that I am?" Are you ready to say, "I know who you are. You are MY Savior, and MY Lord!"
- **If so, you come.**

When we stand, you come immediately, and when we do, Summit, let's put our hands **together in celebration** of those who came last week, and the ones who will be coming this week.

OK, let's all stand together...

