

WISDOMSHOUSE



Wisdom's House Briefmail: Sunday Salvations 1/1

(Next series of Briefmails: Elijah & Wisdom)

Consider a worthy principle to follow in life: ***“That which costs little is usually of little value.”*** Largely it is an idea that pops up in multiple forms throughout our lives. “No pain, no gain”, the coach would say. “There aint no free lunch!” someone famous said (I almost thought my dad came up with it.) It surely is a principle that Jesus was getting at when he talked about the cost of being a disciple in Luke 14. Though salvation is a free gift - confess with your mouth and believe in your heart and you will be saved - the consequences of offering this free gift, outside of the invitation to a way of life, will have unintended consequences for the individual being saved, and the House of God.

Most don't know that **“Sunday Salvations”**, as we have known them, are a relatively recent phenomenon, and are truly a far cry from the 'cost' that Jesus clearly lays out for those who want to be disciples. Separating the two (salvation & discipleship) could be the reason we have lost a generation. Altar calls can be powerful, and very real, yet this method in a consumer context is a huge mistake. Heroes like Billy Graham knew the result of this kind of invitation, but I don't think they could imagine the impact it is having generationally.

As a young youth pastor my altar calls were always cumbersome. I way overused the “if-you-were-to-get-into-a-car-accident-as-you-drive-home-tonight,-would-you-go-to-heaven?” line. It seemed to work especially good on snowy nights. It was all I could think of, and it was all that had been modeled for me, for the most part. Many pastors are like I was. I hope many hear this invitation to join me as I repent out of a paradigm built on the wisdom of the age, and into one that agrees with the method the Spirit of Wisdom uses to build the House of God, the Family of God, the Church. I share these short ideas and testimonies as a call to the leaders of the modern day church.

Sunday Salvations are just like they sound, and statistics confirm, short lived.

Please hear me: I know many that were saved and are walking with the Lord who gave their life to Jesus after a Sunday sermon. We must acknowledge that these are a testimony to the work of the Holy Spirit in our weakness, for His desire is for all to be saved. Yet the handful we know of who were saved at an altar on Sunday pale in comparison to the multitudes that are reflected in the statistics (See Briefmail: Do Statistics Really Matter?). These reveal that there are many more who

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call themselves Christians because of a Sunday Salvation, yet who live no different than the unsaved. I leave the question that asks whether they are saved between them and the Lord.

There was a season when a pastor I worked for would tell the people who would stand in response to the salvation invitation, "Pray about it, get with God, and if you are serious, come back next week." It was rather salty. I forget why he stopped, but I do remember that there was something that felt right about it. I can see now that our context of program Christianity didn't provide a platform for that kind of call to weigh the costs before making a decision.

Where did the 'altar call' come from? I've linked an ebook by Patrick McIntyre called 'The Graham Formula.' In it he gives testimony to Billy Graham's idea of the altar call, and its limitations. It is too big to send through email, so I've uploaded it to the home page at www.wisdomhouse.org. It is a powerful and clear picture of some of the underlying causes of our condition today.

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