

Your Commitment

Confirmation Sunday

A few years ago, someone shared with me a list of the “Top Ten Statements Your Pastor Would Like to Hear.” I modified and updated it a bit and share it with you now:

10. There is nothing that inspires me and strengthens my commitment to the Church like attending a Voter’s Meeting.
9. I was so enthralled by your sermon I didn’t even notice it was 20 minutes longer than usual
8. Personally, I find sharing my faith much more enjoyable than golf or fishing.
7. I wish our pastor wouldn’t spend so much time in the office!
6. Pastor, I’ve decided to give the church the \$500 a month I used to spend on the Home Shopping Network.
5. I volunteer to be the permanent Sunday School Teacher for the Junior High Class. When can I start?
4. Your last Bible Class was great! When does the next one start?
3. I love it when we sing hymns and songs we’ve never sung before!
2. Pastor, we want to send you to that Bible seminar they are holding in Hawaii. You and your wife pack your bags.
1. Hey, it’s my turn to sit in the front pew!

It is your turn to sit there today! As you sit there, I don’t want you to worry about what the Pastor wants to hear. Don’t worry about what your parents and everyone else sitting out there expects to hear. There is only one thing that is important today and everyday for the rest of your life: **What does Jesus want to hear?**

You six young people will be making a special commitment in your lives today. You will be stating for yourself your faith in Jesus Christ, the same thing spoken for you by your parents and sponsors at your Baptism. You will be saying that you believe in Jesus as your Savior from sin; that you will be faithful to Him; that you want Him to be the Lord and Master of your life. That is **exactly** what Jesus wants to hear!

Part of that statement of faith comes now, as those of you in the front row share with the congregation these essays that you have toiled on for the past 5 or 6 weeks. Take a deep breath, go slow, and talk loud enough for everyone to hear you.

STUDENTS READ ESSAYS HERE

At some point, your parents brought each of you to be **baptized** so that God could wash your sins away. You have been instructed in **God's Word** by your parents, in Sunday School, and I'm sure your favorite instruction was having me as your Confirmation Teacher the last two years! Hopefully you have gained more insight and understanding of God's Word. In just a few minutes you will stand before this altar to confirm your faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior. You will then be communicant members of this congregation, able to receive the **Sacrament of the Altar**, which will continue to build you up in your trust in Jesus Christ. Communion also reminds you that you are forgiven for all those times when you have failed to put Jesus first in your life.

This is a big day! But something I don't want you to miss in all of this is what is really going on here. **You are saying that you need help**, that without Christ you would be eternally lost and doomed to destruction. You are confirming that He has given you the help you need. He has claimed you as His own, having laid down His life for you and then taking it up again in the Resurrection. You are confirming that Jesus is YOUR Savior, that you believe in Him and that you will follow him.

The sun was just coming up. **The motorcycle cop** turned on his flashing lights and followed the red pickup that just ran through a stop sign. As he pulled up behind the slowing truck, he thought, "This guy is probably late for work." Little did he know that this man had just robbed an all night grocery store. The driver had his nervous hand on his gun, thinking, "the cop already knows." The officer approached the driver's side of the pickup and said, "Good morning sir. May I see your..." He didn't get to finish the sentence. The driver stuck his arm out the window, the barrel of his gun two inches from the center of the officer's chest. He was knocked to the ground seven feet away. For a moment, all was silent. Then, to the horror of the gunman, the officer stood up. He brushed himself off, then realized what had happened, drew his own revolver and fired two shots into the side of the pickup. One shattered the windshield. The other ripped into the robber's leg. "Don't shoot" he screamed, throwing his gun and money out the window." How did it happen? The officer was saved because he was wearing his **Kevlar vest**. Only 3/8 of an inch thick, this Kevlar fabric layered together is strong enough to stop a bullet.

A few months later, another officer went to serve a search warrant on a well known drug dealer. As his partner knocked on the door, he yelled "Police" and started to kick down the door. From inside the apartment four slugs were fired through the door. One hit him the same place the motorcycle cop had been hit, right in the center of his chest. The bullet ruptured an artery and he died in less than a minute. He was 27 years old. He left behind a wife, three children, and a Kevlar bullet proof vest in the trunk of his car parked 30 feet from where he was shot.

Police officers believe in bullet proof vests. They work. It would be hard to find a cop that does not believe those vests save lives. But that is not enough. An officer must do more than believe in the vests. He must live out that belief. There must be personal commitment. He must be willing to wear that vest at all times.

Today you are expressing your faith in **Jesus**. You are doing so in front of God and all these witnesses. And I know that you mean it sincerely. My prayer for each of you this day is that it not be something you lay aside or leave behind, like the officer who left his vest in the trunk. If Christ does not go with you, you leave yourselves wide open to the attacks of the Devil, the World and your own corrupt nature. But if you clothe yourself with Christ, you are protected. Put on the risen Christ every day of your life. Let Him be the one that guides and directs and influences everything you say from this point onward.

As special and important as this day is for each of you and your families, this day is really not about you. This day is about Jesus, and what He has done for you. We rejoice with the angels and all the saints in heaven that today you are stating your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior. It is something to celebrate. But there would be no reason to celebrate, no Confirmations, if Christ had not come into this world to take your place in punishment, pay for all your sins with His life, offer Himself for you on the cross and then rise again triumphantly on the third day. Praise and thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!