

“One God or Many?” // Something Better #3 // 1 Kings 18:17–46

Announcement:

As you can tell from the video, this story has happened very close to home for me. It's been awesome to watch a family be transformed by the gospel.

Eric told me a couple of days ago that the most incredible thing has been how God saving them is impacting their kids. He said, “It seems I developed this insatiable thirst for my kids to feel God’s grace and be empowered by the Holy Spirit.”

This all reminds me of the strategic role that fathers play in the family.

As Tony Evans has said, “As goes the man; so goes the family. If you want to change the family, change the man.”

- Studies show that if it is a child that is first to put faith in Christ in the family; there is a 3.5% chance everyone else in the household will follow; mother, 17%; father, 93%.

Dads here today: *I’m grateful for you and the great impact that you have here at the Summit. I want you to know that I pray for you regularly...that God would lead you as you lead your wives and your kids to follow Jesus. In fact, let me pray for you right now...*

Introduction:

There are certain things in life you just have to make a choice on, even though it often feels easier sometimes not to make a choice.

- If you’ve ever ordered tickets off of Ticketmaster, you have exactly 2 minutes from the time you request your number of tickets to make **all the rest of the decisions** before the system kicks you off and cancels your order. *I never second-guess myself more than during those 2 minutes:*
 - “Am I sure this **date** works?” “Wait, do I want **MEZZANINE?** What is the mezzanine anyway? Do I really even want to see **“Legally Blonde: the Musical?”**”
 - But if you don’t make your choices they kick you off and then you’ve lost the tickets forever.
 - Sometimes I’d rather them simply say, *“Here’s the price. We’ll tell you where to sit when you get here.”*
- Sometimes it feels easier to not make a choice, but then not to make a choice becomes in itself a choice.
 - I’ve told you about my engagement... I popped the big question. The most terrifying moment of a man’s life (you women have to give birth, we have to pop the question). Veronica didn’t say anything, for like 15 seconds. She just started to cry. My thought, “What does that mean? You are going to say no and feel sorry for me; you know you are going to say yes but you can already sense some of the pain coming?” You have to say one way or the other! Your relationship is at a crossroads and you have to choose.
- **“When you have to make a choice and don’t make it, that is in itself a choice.”** (William James)
- **Israel is at a place** they have to make a choice in regards to God—they’ve been going on without making one, and Elijah is going to say: you have to make one; **to not make a decision is in itself a decision.**
 - *This is where a lot of people are with God. They’ve not rejected God, per se, but **haven’t chosen him** either. If you rejected God, you wouldn’t be here. but you haven’t gone all-in.*

1 Kings 18 // Context:

Israel has been on a **downward spiral** for many years in which they've begun to worship a lot of others gods besides Jehovah.

- The king is a guy named **Ahab**, and he's a **spineless wimp**.
- **On the one hand**, he's kind of a worshipper of Jehovah—he gave **his kids** God-honoring names: **Ahaziah**, which means “owned by Jehovah” and **Jehoram** “Jehovah is exalted.” (which was significant in those days)
- On the other, he chooses for his wife the **wicked witch of the west, Jezebel**, who is fully committed to ba'al and she has a lot of God's prophets killed and is trying to make ba'al worship the state religion, and Ahab won't do anything about it.

So **God raises up the prophet Elijah**, and his mission is to show that there is only one God, Jehovah, and to call Israel back to him.

- **Elijah's name** in Hebrew means, literally “the Lord is God” (Eli-jah) and his whole life's mission is to show what is **distinctive** about Jehovah and what makes him **different** from all other gods.
- And we come today to the **epic battle** on the top of the mountain. All the stories we have looked at in Elijah's life have been leading to this scene: ***Is there one God or many?***
- **Remember: Not just one ba'al, but many.** They had ba'als for everything: sex; success; fertility; power.

Now, a lot of times we think, “*Well, look at all these silly, primitive people with all their gods,*” and we think we're so far **advanced** them. Yet **we worship** the same things they do (sex, prosperity, family), and at least they recognized that these things had a spiritual dimension to them—the ability to grab ahold of our souls and consume us. We often do not recognize that.

- (Which makes them, in many ways, **ahead of us**.)

You see, *all humans are worshippers*. We all find something to which we assign ultimate worth (worship = worth-ship); something that defines us; something without which we could not be happy and life would not be worth living.

- You say, “**Not me! I'm not a worshipper. I'm not religious,**” then you don't understand how your soul works. You might not be religious in a traditional sense but you have found something that gives you worth; something that makes life worth living, and you worship that thing; you have to have it!
- You can no more turn off your drive for worship by not being religious than you could turn off your sex drive by not being single. That's not how it works.

An idol is something that has taken on **ultimate worth** for you. You couldn't imagine **life being good without** it. It, **instead of God**, becomes your primary **security; fulfillment; or identity**. An idol is not usually a bad thing; it's usually a **good thing that you make into a god thing**.

- For many, **MONEY is their primary form of SECURITY**. Nothing wrong with money, but it becomes the thing that at all costs you have to have! You are **worried** about it all the time. You **won't obey** God and be generous or tithe. You become **willing to sacrifice** your integrity or your family to get it.
- For some, **FAMILY is FULFILLMENT**. You can't imagine being happy in life single, or without the perfect family structure; kids living close. You put so much weight on it that you are constantly **unhappy; bitter**—at the fact that you **don't have the family** you always dreamed about; or bitter at **how your family** has neglected you.
- Some people find their **IDENTITY** in their **ACCOMPLISHMENTS, e.g. ME** For years, I was devastated if I **didn't preach** a good sermon. Or if I was **compared negatively** to someone else. My identity was **not in being a child of God**, but in being an admired and successful pastor.

These are things we worship. In our day, there are **hundreds of false gods**, just like there were in Elijah's day. (**John Calvin**: human heart is an idol factory)

- You have **as many ba'als in your heart** as Jezebel tried to put in Israel.

- So don't think this battle is not relevant for you. This is the battle for your heart.

1 Kings 18:17–40, ESV

(you must read this with a dramatic drumbeat behind it)

[17] When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is it you, you troubler of Israel?”

- “Troubler” means one who wreaks havoc, a pestilence; a plague. They would have used it to describe the plagues, or the snakes that came in one time to punish them.¹
- He’s saying, “there you are, you plague, you pimple, canker sore; you asP.” (my wife said to make sure I aspirated that last P)

[18] And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father’s house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the LORD and followed the Baals.

- So the first question is, “Who is the troubler?”
- Let me ask you this: Are you in a place where someone is speaking truth into your life, and are you hating them for it? **IS THAT PERSON ME?** Trying to find something wrong with them? What if they have been put there by God?
- Do you ever experience pain in your body and just wish you could make it go away? Pain is a help. If you turn it down, you continue to harm yourself. **Hand on stove.** Turn down stove?
 - **Leprosy** is a condition where pain is gone... and in the Bible it’s a picture of sin.
 - Ultimate stages of sin are when you no longer feel the pang and pain of guilt and sin.

[19] Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel, and the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

- *How big was that table?*

¹ Schultz, C. (1999). 1621 עִבְרָה. In R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (666). Chicago: Moody Press.

[20] So Ahab sent to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. [21] And Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.”

- Limp. Some translations say waver, but the Hebrew literally says, “sink.” Limp is a good translation.
- They are not fully committed to God; they are not fully committed to ba’al. They limp along between the two, without being committed in either direction.

But some things require a verdict. To not decide is in itself a decision...

If you are one who says, “All religions are the same,” you’re limping intellectually.

- **“God is like a mountain...”** And if we could just get some perspective we’d see that they are all climbing up the same hill toward the same destination. You go up one side, I go up another... You are saying you see the whole mountain, which means you are claiming the very privilege you are denying to others.
- ~~**Three blind men and an elephant:** You are claiming the very privilege you deny to others.~~
- “I don’t like how dogmatic Christians and Muslims are.” Yet when you say, “All religions are alike,” that is a very dogmatic statement and you don’t even seem to know it.
 - I have a Muslim friend who thinks I am **dead wrong** about God. We’re ok with that. Had him over for dinner.
 - Kharis’ story, praying in front of them.
 - I can get along with him. He loves our country and respects our freedoms.
 - What neither of us can get along with is the dogmatic person who **says what we believe is the same and refuses to even hear** what we have to say on the matter. That is the **height of arrogance and bigotry**, because it refuses to even give us a hearing!

- You see, **to hear what I have to say about God and reject it is one thing.** To not even hear it because, in your **enlightened view** of the world, you understand us so much better than we understand ourselves, is close-minded and bigoted.

To not decide if you are going to serve God or something else leaves you limping in life. Elijah says, "Look, if ba'al is god, serve him." I would tell YOU:

- ***If money is your god, serve it with all your heart.*** Get all you can. If you have to **cheat**, then do that—if it is the ultimate good. Sacrifice your family, or integrity? Don't **give any way.**
 - What bothers me: we have a lot of people who will say that **God is their God**, but they won't **obey God** with their money: don't do what God wants with it; they prioritize it in every decision; they **hyper-schedule** their kids to make sure they get into **all the right extracurricular** activities, so they can get into the right schools to get the right job to make money... that matters more than if they grow up to know and please God, which is why you don't have them involved in our student ministries.
- ***If the approval of people is your god, please them*** (Sell out! Do whatever you have to do to earn their approval.
 - You'll find, like I did, that you burn yourself out... get to the end of your **high school career** and realize...)
 - ~~Fame and popularity: Veronica said astutely about fame as our church grows and books sell, etc. "Fame is pleasing a bunch of people you don't care about at the expense of those that you do."~~
 - **Is that your god?** Go all out for it.
- ~~***If beauty is your god, serve it.*** Like I told you last week: **Nip it. Tuck it. Lift it. Tighten it. Tan it. Tweak it. Twist it. Tat it. Puff it. Funk it. Color it.** Whatever.~~
- ***If romance is your god:*** then go anywhere to find it.
 - **Leave your marriage** if you must...
 - You feel like getting **divorced...** do it. It's **not worth living for God** if you got to stay in a bad marriage.

- *Go all the way with that!*
- Forget about your **responsibilities** to your **kids**—find good romance.
- If you feel like the person best suited for you just **happens to be married to your best friend**, well, forget your friend, get the good romance if it is god
- (***You know it's not***—you know that there are some things more important than good romance—I'm just trying to push you to the logical end).
- *Is it really what you want to make your god? If so, go all the way with it!*
- If **sex is god...** serve it. Make all your fantasies come true. Give yourself away to whomever whenever you want. Think you'll be happy then? Try the full spectrum of sexuality. Go for it.

But if Christ is the one, true God, then *serve him*—with all your heart! ***How long will you go on limping between two opinions?***

- **Spurgeon:** if you're going to be saved, be saved all the way!
 - **Most Christians are trying to be a little into the world and a little into God;** but they are **enough into the world** to be miserable in God; and **enough into God** to be miserable in the world. Choose one and go the way with it!
 - My friend Matt Chandler says that **church is a terrible hobby.** You have to get up each weekend, come to a **crowded place** where you **park and walk** to the auditorium and sit in a **big room** filled with people where they are always pressuring you to **volunteer**, making you **feel guilty**, and then you have some guy get up and **yell at you** for 45 minutes? That's a terrible hobby.
 - Matt says it's like having to go through "**Halloween**" every week. You get all dressed up and put on your "Christian facemask" and pretend to be something you're not. When asked, "**How's it going?**" you respond, "**Good, brother, praise the Lord.**" Then you walk away knowing you just lied and not feeling going about yourself.

- **That's a terrible hobby.** What a waste of a perfectly **good weekend!** If you **don't love Jesus.**
- So go all the way or don't go at all. Go big or go home.
 - If you're going to come here, go **All-In.** Join. Start volunteering. Give generously. Get in a small group. Start sharing your faith. Go on mission trips. Be passionate.
 - Fall so in **love with Jesus** that all these things become **delight, not drudgery.**
 - **The joy in my life**—witnessing. Giving. Going on **mission trips.** Seeing my faith formed in my **kids' lives.** Stories like the ones we just **saw on video.** Fellowship with **Christian friends.** Prayer. **Spending time** with God. *None of these things would bring me joy if I were in this half-heartedly.* **Christian joy is the privilege of only the wholehearted.**
- *How long will you go on limping between two opinions?*
- **If you'd rather not give everything to God, go all the way with that.** I can respect a guy like **Richard Dawkins...** what you can't understand are those who say they believe there is a God and live like there's not. **Functional atheists.**

So Elijah throws the question out there... [21]... And the people did not answer him a word. Crickets.

So, Elijah says, let's take **two bulls**, and they'll take one and put it on an **altar over there**; and I'll take the other and put it on an altar over here. [24] And you call upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the LORD, and the God who answers by fire, he is God." And all the people answered, "It is well spoken." (Good idea)

[25] Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many, and call upon the name of your god, but put no fire to it."

- *They are thinking, "You idiot! Ba'al is the god of rain and lightning."*

[26] And they took the bull that was given them, and they prepared it and called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no one answered. And they *limped* around the altar that they had made. (there's that word again!)

Now, this is awesome... [27] And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, (*which means daydreaming, staring aimlessly into space, checking his facebook page*) or he is on a journey, (or, this is the best one) or maybe he is **relieving himself,** (the NIV really tries to clean this up and just say "busy," but the ESV gets it right, the Hebrew word here is a euphemism for "on the john"²) or perhaps he is asleep and must be **awakened,"** (He is doing righteous smack-talking. Holy sarcasm, Batman. *Not all sarcasm is wrong. Some things need to be mocked.*)

[28] And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them. [29] And as midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention.

Two characteristics of false gods:

-- *False gods require strenuous dancing to please them.*

- If you obey well enough; they will accept you. "Gods" like "Allah" say, "Are you dancing hard enough? You keeping the commandments well enough?" I'll crush you.
- **Secular false gods**, like popularity, or money, or beauty, say if you succeed well enough to get me, you'll be happy?
 - So you constantly dance, **like a slave**, to **get into the right school**, to get the right job, to have the money.
 - If beauty is your god, you Zumba hard so that you'll be beautiful so you'll feel good about yourself.
 - You'll dance for your **circle of friends** so they'll like you... "Hey... like me!" Life is one **big American Idol audition:** trying to please the Simon Cowell.

² 1 Kings. 1909 (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.). The Pulpit Commentary (423). London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

-- False gods push you toward destruction.

- They keep pushing for more. Work harder. Do better. Obtain more. You're not getting my attention. Slash yourself!
- For some, this **literally becomes slashing**. They don't get the attention of friends they crave, so they cut themselves.
 - For others, the slashing is more **metaphorical**.
 - They slash their bodies through **crash diets** or become anorexic to get that perfect figure.
 - They slash their families by **overworking** to make the extra money.
 - Or they slash their souls by **compromising their integrity** to get everyone's attention or succeed.
- Tim Keller: *"How do you know there are idols? Look for the dancing. Look for the slashing."*³

[30] Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." And all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been thrown down.

- *Picture Elijah, he's laying back in a lawn chair watching on all of this; got shades on, a margarita; his robe, Hebrew prophet so he has long Duck Dynasty beard... smack-talking them... he's kind of like Uncle Si... he slowly gets up...*

[33] ...And he said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." [34] And he said, "Do it a second time." And they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time." And they did it a third time. [35] And the water ran around the altar and filled the trench also with water.

[36] And at the time of the offering of the oblation, (which means, normal time 'it's time for afternoon prayer') Elijah the prophet came near and said,

"O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel... [37] Answer me, O LORD, answer me,

that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back."

[38] Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. *God was just showing off... don't you love it?*

[39] And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God."

- Literally, "Eli-jah!" (*They are not chanting his name... they are chanting worship*)

And then, Elijah goes over, gets into a kneeling position, and starts to pray. And he sends a servant (**18:42-43**) over to the cliff edge to look and says, *"Do you see anything coming out from over the ocean?"*

- No, 6 times. A **cloudless** sky.
- And then, on the 7th, he sees a **small cloud**, rising out of the ocean, about the size of man's fist... which turns into **deep, dark, black clouds**, that pour torrential rains down upon the heart for the first time in **3.5 years!**

How to Know the True God from a False One (According to Elijah)

1. Whereas false gods require strenuous efforts, the true God is known by grace through faith

- They danced strenuously to get ba'al's attention. Elijah prayed in faith.
- The gospel is **unlike every other religion**. Every other religion says that your **acceptance is based on your obedience**.
 - *I obey; therefore I am accepted.*
 - The **gospel reverses** that: I am accepted; therefore I obey.
- The gospel is **not like every other religion**; it turns the whole system of religion on its head. **Not "I obey, therefore I am accepted; but I am accepted by a gift of God's grace; therefore I obey as a loving response!"**

³ Tim Keller

2. Whereas false gods mutilate you, *the true God mutilated himself for you*

- They cut themselves to get ba'al's attention. Jesus was cut for us.
 - Very illuminating picture in Luke 9.⁴ Jesus and the Apostles are **rejected in Samaria**, and the disciples says, "Should we **call down fire** from heaven like Elijah, to **show them** that you are the one, true God?" But Jesus **rebuked them**, telling them they don't get it!
 - They misinterpreted the meaning of this OT story we're looking at. *Write this down: **Jesus isn't Elijah calling down fire; he is the sacrifice who will receive the fire of judgment.***
 - Jesus took into his body the fire of God's justice so that you could take into your life the fire of God's love.
- **Other gods say, "Dance for me! Slash for me!"** There is only one god who was slashed for you. Every other god will make your blood run; only the true God bleeds for you.⁵

3. Whereas false gods are ultimately powerless, *the true God answers by a miracle*

- "Well, it would be great if he would **do this today!**" Two piles of twigs out there, have God start a fire on his pile. Have God do something **impossible**. Dry up a **lake**; **split** the ocean. Make **NC State** win a national championship.
- But the **greatest miracle** was the resurrection, when God raised a man from the dead, something **no other god**, no other religion has ever been able to do.
 - Remember the **excessive conditions** Elijah created that made fire improbable? He poured **12 huge jugs of water** over the altar so that it covered the altar, **filled the little moat** around the water, and saturated the ground.

⁴ Luke 9:51–56.

⁵ Point owes much to Tim Keller message on this passage.

- And the fire of God **burned it all up**—not just the offering but, it says, the wood and the stones and the **dust** around the altar.
- Jesus was **not just killed**. His body was **mutilated**. After he died his **heart was pierced** through with a spear until water and blood flowed out. Then he was lay in a grave with a **big heavy stone** and a **Roman garrison** put out in front of him.
 - And God answered, not by simply restarting Jesus' **heartbeat** (he wasn't inside the tomb knocking (Hey, let me out... I am alive again!) but (Romans 1 says) raising Jesus in **power** and great glory so that he **rolled away** the stone, **scared the Roman guards** so badly they passed out, then **ascended on his own** to the right hand of the Father, then flew back down and **walked through walls**.
 - God was just **showing off**.
 - Jesus did not just **defeat** death; he **demolished** it.
- *The greatest miracle is not fire falling from heaven, but Jesus rising from the earth.*
- And in Acts 2, the Spirit of the resurrection comes in their hearts and how do they show it? He puts fire on their heads. Believers have the resurrection power of God surging inside of them, which is its own proof. The power of a changed life—is a testimony to God's power.
 - **I was interviewed once by an atheist college student...** Atheist: some say Christ is all an illusion.
 - I had just received a letter from a wife whose husband had been on drugs for many years, abandoned his family, who had come to Christ through the ministries of our church, was delivered from his addictions, and moved back home his wife and kids. I pulled it out, had him read it, and said, "**Why don't you ask his kids if he thinks it is an illusion?**"
 - That's not my **only proof**, but that certainly **gets my attention**.

4. Whereas false gods lead to soul drought, the true God deluges us with living water.

- The land that had been thirsty for 3 years and 6 months now flowed with water.
- ***This one is hard to describe***, but you know it after you've experienced it.
 - There is a sense in which you come home to God and then you know that **this is where you've always belonged**; that he was the **One you had always been searching for**; that this was the **country for which you had always been homesick**.
- And **waters of joy and peace and new life** begin to flow through and out of your parched soul.

Tim Keller: "Jesus is the only God that if you find him, will satisfy you; and, if you fail him, will forgive you."

- Other gods don't satisfy. They leave you thirstier.
- Other gods, if you fail them, they crush you.
 - Religious gods, like Allah: if you fail him, he will crush you. The Buddhist god—or system of reality: if you disobey, you'll have bad karma forever.
 - Secular gods: popularity, and beauty and money say, "Get me, and I'll make you happy. Fail me and you'll be miserable!"
- Jesus says, "***You have failed me. I forgive you and receive not on the basis of what you've done, but the price I paid to save you.***"

"Jesus is the only God that if you find him, will satisfy you; and, if you fail him, will forgive you."

Now, watch the ending... [41] And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of the rushing of rain... Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.'" [45] And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. [46] And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

I love this little detail. *Elijah outran the chariots*. Outran a horse (imitate—tucks up robe). **Why that detail?** Compare that with the word "limping." They limp along; Elijah **waits upon the Lord** and mounts up with wings as an eagle; he runs, and is not weary; he walks, and does not faint.

When you've made this decision; you'll know long longer limp along in indecision; you'll soar.

- It doesn't mean you always feel strong; but rather than limping along in indecision, you begin to soar with daring faith; exuberant joy, and extravagant, joy-filled sacrifice.
- ~~I think of:~~
 - ~~**Zacchaeus:** that's not what saved him, but money had been his god, so he throws it all away extravagantly, evidencing a whole new life! He's running; soaring; doing things that blow everyone's mind!~~
 - ~~When a lot of people were converted through Paul's preaching in Ephesus, they burned their old magic books publicly. Acts tells you it was valued at 50K drachmas. 1 drachma = 1 day's wages. That's 138 years of wages! In our terms, they made a \$3,739,972.50 statement of faith.~~
- ~~These things did not save them; it was just what making up their minds looked like. They were "running."~~
- One more: One hundred years ago, a group of brave, young Christians became known as "**ONE-WAY MISSIONARIES.**" Called that for two reasons:
 - They bought **one way tix** to the mission field.
 - Packed their belongings in a **coffin**.
 - **A. W. Milne** was one of those brave souls. He had heard about a tribe on one of the islands in the New Hebrides; a tribe filled with headhunters and cannibals, who had martyred just about every missionary that had entered there.
 - He said he **did not fear because** he had already "died to himself;" his **coffin was, literally**, already packed.
 - He lived there for **35 years**, and **loved and served** those people.

- When he died, he was buried by the people of that tribe in the most honored place in their village, with a little epitaph on his gravestone that said, “*When he came there was no light; when he left there was no darkness.*”⁶
- **RUNNING! What empowers that?**
- **I have *decided* to follow Jesus... The cross before me (the cross is enough!), so the world is behind me... though *none* go with me** (I don’t need anybody else; the cross is enough!)

Conclusion:

- This is what I want for you. **I want you to go all-in!** How long will you limp along between two opinions? Choose!
- And what do you need to do to show you are no longer ‘limping’? Why not get off the sidelines and join up?

Guest card:

- I am interested in being baptized.
- I would like to know more about membership.
- I’d like more info about Small Groups.
- I’d like more info on joining a volunteer team.
- AREA?: _____ (*Could write in ‘decide to go on a **missions trip** next year’ or what **ministry** to be involved in*)
- *Starting Point*
- *All-In*
- Get connected to *The City*: don’t know what it is? Next Steps tent

Invitation:

First things first. FIRST BOX: “***I am receiving Christ as Savior and Lord.***”

- Christianity is not a task list; it is a relationship in which you receive the offer of Christ to save you and submit to him as Lord.
- *Explain gospel*

⁶ From Mark Batterson, *All-In*. (not yet released through Zondervan)