

From the Pulpit

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“Confirmation Sermon”

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Ben Allred and Victoria Washington

Confirmands

Confirmation Sermon, by Ben Allred

Good morning everyone! Most of you have seen me here for many years. I've grown up in this place; it's been like a home. By a show of hands, how many of you have grown up in this church as well? Now, by a show of hands, how many of you (who've grown up in the church) believe that you have come to *your own* conclusion on who God is, and what his teachings are?

It wasn't until I started taking confirmation that I started to realize, I didn't have any personal beliefs. I didn't know who God was, out of my own beliefs. I didn't have any beliefs of my own on his teachings either. I was always told things, and was expected to believe it and follow it. For example, I was taught by my family that homosexuality is a sin; or that all who don't believe in God are damned to Hell for eternity.

All of this contradicting what I think is right, and what I think is wrong. I didn't know who to trust, my instincts, or what I was being told. Should I believe in myself or my families teachings? I was taught like a child, ignorant, helpless and scared that if I didn't believe, something bad would happen. I don't know what it was that me so afraid to believe what I wanted. Maybe it was the fear shunned, or the fear of being damned to Hell.

But, confirmation gave me a new light on God. It helped me realize that I've been spoon fed my own religion, for my whole life. I was oblivious to the fact that my parents controlled my beliefs, and that the others around me pressured me into believing things. I knew so much, yet so little. I was shocked when I realized this. I mean I didn't realize this for *my whole life*. I was simply spoon fed.

Well, maybe you yourself has been spoonfed. Maybe some of you sitting in the pews, young or old, have been scared into believing things. Well, Romans 12:2 states "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." This means that you shouldn't have to follow what other people believe. Don't let the world tell you what to

believe. *No, you believe, what you think is right and what you think is wrong.* The world is always going to try to put you in line. It's always going to try and tell you what to believe, but remember, it's *your* choice. "Do not be conformed to this world."

It's our lives. If God wanted us all to believe in the same thing, God wouldn't have given us free will. God wouldn't have given us the choice to sin. No, God wanted us to have free will, to believe what we want to believe. He wanted us to be different. So don't let people spoon feed you God. You have to find God on your own. Study God, pray about, God is yours, take God!

That's what I loved about confirmation. They taught us a lesson, and then put it in our hands to find God. To find what we believe. They weren't trying to pressure us into being confirmed, they were guiding us to what we believe.

So I tell you now, go! Go find God in what you believe. And if someone tells you not to believe in what you want, you just turn around and walk away.

It's your life. Live it the way you want to.

Confirmation Sermon, by Victoria Washington

Hi, I'm Victoria-

For the past few months , a few times a week, I have been going through the process of confirmation with many of my friends. Through my confirmation process I have learned about many things I had never given **thought** to before. One thing I realized was that there is always more to learn about the christian faith and **truly** ... more to learn about anything.

Has anyone here ever had a time where faith is discussed and just couldn't help but tell themselves "I know Jesus wouldn't do that" "it's wrong to follow that rule". I know that I have. Often in school a friend will raise their hand and my mind goes straight to "that's a mixture — not a substance" "her analysis is false" "you're supposed to **divide** first" without even stepping back and rethinking the problem for possible ways of it being correct. This happens many times with our faith as well. Jesus isn't only in one place, in one form, in one type of person. Jesus is everywhere and everything, Jesus is the person that keeps my sister Faith from falling on the track, the person that keeps my brother Chase from melting down before a nap, the force that keeps our homes safe as we sleep through the night. Jesus is Mrs. Marty my confirmation mentor taking me out to eat and making me feel like a daughter.

Jesus is the air and the silence. When have you seen Jesus? Have you seen him in the girl on the T.V. commercials smiling and trying to sell her product? Or **maybe** instead have you seen him in the hopeful eyes of someone watching a loved one recover before them. Today, when I looked out upon this large crowd of people I could see the work that God has done, in all its beauty. We were all able to sit down, able to pass the peace of Christ, able to smile and greet each other.

The Christian faith shouldn't be **limiting** but accepting, loving, kind, and reassuring. There are so many great people surrounding all of us around this love, filling us all with gladness. Even on rough unhappy days Jesus tells my brother Jacques to take me out to ice cream or my Dad to just make me laugh. And so, With all that Jesus does, and all that he is, how can one possibly understand our faith to the fullest.

Christianity is complex, and confusing, and amazing, and beautiful and its words can bring people out of sickness and change the life of someone who just needed a friend. Our faith is love. And in my mind, I don't only come to church to celebrate our almighty god or sing praise. Sometimes I just come to church because I know that little Carmen, or Anna Sophia, or Reverend Tim or Mrs. Pam Welsh Huggins will always be a friendly face for me to see in the morning.

Here at church we aren't just a group of united individuals coming together, but a family. So I asked myself. What is it pulling you to this church, to this commitment? Well, it's the promise of love, and the radiance of hope that bad days will move on and that God as well as this family will never judge me that pushes me head first into this large decision. And now, I hope that I have shown a new side of Jesus and his many forms to you and that maybe you will stop and think next time before saying "I know Jesus". Thank you.

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