

Why I still give altar calls or invitations to be born again.

I realize that a lot of the church world has moved away from doing altar calls during their services. Many people have questioned why I continue to use this method of evangelism. Let me start off by stating a few things that I see that would cause leaders to shy away from this method.

1. I understand that just because someone comes forward during a service does not mean that a change has taken place in their lives and many people have walked away confused.
2. Another reason would be because of abuse in the past with high pressure and preaching of hell fire and brimstone that would scare people into coming to the front to receive Christ into their lives so that they would miss hell. When people are scared into coming forward it sometimes causes more harm than good.
3. I also realize that there is no biblical example of altar calls in the bible and that it is a method that the modern church world has adapted for evangelism.

Saying all this, I still like to invite people forward to receive Christ during my services. I am always sensitive to the churches that I am ministering in and the fear factor of the people in the audience to come forward. In some churches people are more reluctant to come forward to receive Christ. And when I sense they are, I usually just pray with people where they are in their seats.

When I do give an invitation to come forward to be born again, I almost discourage people from coming forward. Yet the front is always lined with people receiving Christ. I have been in many services in the past where young people went forward just to get close to the person on stage or hoping to get a special gift or something for coming forward. I have had children in the past come forward expecting to get candy or to play a game.

When I invite people to come to the front to receive Jesus and to be born again, I am very specific about who I want to come forward. I always tell the audience not to come forward to get close to me, see the lights, play a game, or get a prize. I tell them not to come forward because their neighbor does or they think it's cool. The only people that I want to come forward are the ones that are serious and understand what I am talking about. I tell them that if they do not understand or are confused not to come forward.

I am also very specific about what being born again is during my service. I do not just tag an invitation on the end of each service as an afterthought. If I give an invitation to be born again, I spend a little time teaching on the subject.

I believe that faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). If the word is not taught on the subject, how can a person have faith to receive salvation? When an invitation is tagged on the end of each service without any explanation of what we are asking people to respond to, it has caused a lot of confusion in the past.

I am not saying that everyone that has been born again truly understood everything about salvation. God is much bigger than that. I was 6 years old when I was born again. I went forward on New Years Eve in my father's church. No one even prayed with me but, I knew that I was changed that day. I went home and told my mother that I had become a Christian that night.

A lot of people in the world today have many misconceptions about being a Christian. Many believe that anything from being a good person to belonging to a church makes one a Christian.

In the past I have been accused of herding people to the front during invitations. This is why I have become so specific in whom I want to come forward. I also qualify people before I ask them to come forward. I first ask how many know for sure that they have been born again. With all eyes closed and heads bowed, I ask them to raise their hands. Then I tell them that if they have been born again that they do not have to keep being born again over and over. If they mess up and sin that the bible says in 1 John 1:9 that if we confess our sin that he is faithful and just to forgive us. This does not mean that we have to keep getting born again and again.

Next, I ask how many have never been born again or are not sure that they have been. With all eyes closed and heads bowed, I ask them to raise their hands. Then I ask for the people that have never been born again and would like to receive this gift to stand up, but only if they are serious and understand what I am talking about. Don't stand up because you want exercise, because your neighbor does it, or you think it is cool, but because you truly want to become born again.

After waiting a little while to give people a chance to stand up if they want to receive Christ, I then tell them that I want them to do one more thing. But before I do I tell them, I do not want them to come forward to get close to me, play a game, see the lights, or receive a prize. I ask them that if they are serious and understand what I am talking about to come forward. No

pressure, no fear, no manipulation, only if this is what they truly want for their lives. 9 out of 10 times the front is lined with people receiving Christ.

After I get them to the front, I sit them down on the floor around me and ask them what they came down here for. Usually a few children raise their hands and answer to be born again or to ask Jesus into my life. I then ask the group if this is why everyone came down front. I proceed to tell them that this is the only reason I want them down here right now. Then I tell them that I am going to say a prayer, and I want them to repeat it after me. I always ask them if they know that just because they repeat a prayer does not do anything for them. When we pray we are talking to God, so I want you to mean this from your heart. If you pray this to God, and you believe it in your heart, and are serious, he will come in and change you on the inside. I always include the whole audience in the prayer. And I tell all in attendance that even if they did not come forward and have not asked Jesus in their life, that they can be born again right where they are.

I never threaten with hell or in any way scare people into coming forward. I believe that it is the goodness of God that brings man to repentance. When people understand the good news of the gospel and that the price has already been paid for them, they will want to receive this gift that has been offered to them.

By coming forward it is making a public profession of their faith. It lets everyone there know what they did. People have more of a grip on it when they come forward than just repeating a prayer in their seats. It is a more personal environment where I can get close to them and lead them into salvation.

There is a new trend that teaches that it is the parent's job to lead the children into the new birth. I do not disagree with this. Ultimately it should be the parent that prays with their children to be born again. I prayed with my son to be born again while driving in a car when he was just a child. But to be honest about this, a lot of parents do not have a firm grip on what being born again is themselves, or are not comfortable discussing it with their children. I pray that this changes.

If we always put it in the parents ball park and they drop the ball, or maybe they are not even born again themselves, or they do not go to church themselves, do we let these children creep through the cracks of our system? There must be a time where children have a chance to be born again while they are attending our services. It must be high on our priority list for children coming up through our churches.

I am in no means saying that this is the only way or even the best way to lead people to the Lord, but it is what works for me. The best way would be

for churches to go into their communities and personally lead people to the lord individually. If every person in every church would lead at least one or two people to the lord each year our churches would double or triple each year. Unfortunately, this is not happening. Even in churches that teach this method of evangelism or was founded on the premise of personal evangelism. Somewhere it always seems we loose our site of the mission in front of us and leave it up to evangelist like myself, to come into the church and evangelize the small group of the community that will come out to the event that the church is offering.

I pray we as the body of Christ will rise up and take back this generation.

You may also want to read another article I wrote several years ago called "[Teaching children about salvation.](#)"

God Bless
Jerry Moyer
The Jubilee Gang
www.jubileegang.com