



CHRISTIAN

Brand Recognition

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We're so glad that you're here, and we want to thank those of you, especially who are joining us from all of our churches all over the Atlanta area, for those of you who are our strategic partner churches all over the country, and those of you who are joining us online at home, hotel rooms, airplanes, we found out, and those of you who are watching television, and especially those of you who are actually in the room. We actually have people in the room. In fact, you should just give yourself a hand for being in the room. Look at that, yeah. This is a great Sunday to be here or to be watching, because we are beginning a brand new series. The way we do series is we pick a topic, talk about it for several weeks, and say everything we know about it, and then move on. You are at the beginning of the movie, so this is a great time to be here if this is your first time with us or your first time joining us online.

So to kind of get our heads around the topic, because in today's introduction I want to do a little word association, so here we go. Everybody knows what an American is, right? Everybody knows what an Egyptian is, right? You with me? Canadian? Right? Comedian, right? See if you're following me, right? But what about this word: Christian? What's a Christian? You know what's interesting—if we divided you up into groups of ten and said to everybody, *Real quick: look around your little group and answer the question: What is a Christian?* You wouldn't get the same answer ten times. You might get five different answers; you might get eight different answers. If somebody were to walk up to you on the street and say, *Are you a Christian?* some of you would say yes. Some of you would say, *What do you mean?* Some of you would say, *Yes, but . . .* Some of you would say, *No, but . . .* Some of you would say, *I am, but I'm not like that group.* Right? For some of you, the way you were raised, you like *became* a Christian, right? You became a Christian because you prayed a prayer. *That's the tradition I was raised in.*

Some of you were told, *Now you're a Christian, because you were baptized.* As you got older, they said, *You're a Christian because you were baptized. You don't remember it, but we baptized you.* Some of you were told that now that you've finished a class, or some sort of confirmation, or after confirmation you were a Christian. Right? So, we've got all these different views. Some of you or us were raised in traditions where we were basically taught that our brand is the true brand. Right? I won't ask you to raise your hand. You're Catholic, okay, and it's like you're *the* church and anytime anybody mentions the church, you're Catholic, and you're going, *That would be us. I don't know about those other people. We're the church; we're the true brand.* Those of us who are Protestants, it's like, *They're so arrogant, they think they're the church. They're not the church, they're just part of the church, but you know, we're part of the*