

# *Los Altos Church of Christ*

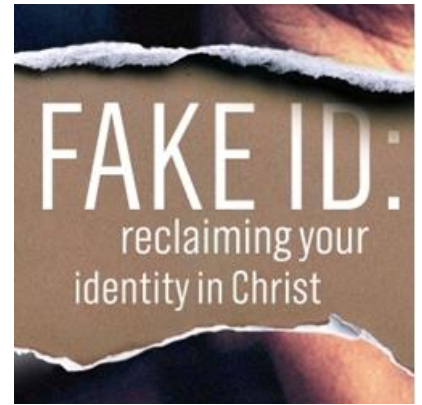
*"...being of the same mind, maintaining the same love,  
united in spirit, intent on one purpose." Philippians 2:2*

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## **This Sunday...Voter ID**

In this series we will take a look at some of the "Fake IDs" many of us carry around and reclaim our true identity in Jesus. When we live out of our identity in Christ, it changes how we see ourselves, how we see others, and how we see that others see us. Sometimes people define us by our voter ID. Labels are put on us when we declare ourselves to be Republican or Democrat. Kyle Idleman says one of the identities we are given in Christ is "Alien" or "Foreigner". While it is appropriate for us to celebrate the country we live in (especially on this 4<sup>th</sup> of July) we must never forget that our true citizenship is in heaven. In Ephesians, Paul reminds Christians that what unites us in Christ is much greater than what separates us.



**Wednesday Night Fellowship**... Dinner at Terrie's 6:30...video 7:00, "God's Heart For You."

**PRAYERS** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7*

**Continue to pray** for Lu...Jocelyn's mother...Christine's mother...the Gordon family...John and Jennifer... Walter Grove...Pancho's brother Don... Tim's recovery... Roger Townsend... Berry... Jeff's mother... Jene's hand... Allen Sawyers...The Britton Family ... Barbara... Gwen and her son Caleb... Emmy Creswick... City of Children... Healing Hands International... Japhet's work in Zimbabwe...and New Hope Uganda.

## **Thoughts for the week...**

*We must welcome the night. It's the only time that the stars shine. - Michel Quoist*

## **Time For a Laugh**

At a picnic for a Christian school, a teacher stacked a pile of apples on one end of a table with a sign saying, "Take only one apple please - God is watching."

On the other end of the table was a pile of cookies, on which a second grade student had placed a sign on saying, "Take all the cookies you want -- God is watching the apples."

## A Major Comeback

By Phil Ware

You can imagine my humorous delight at the end of 2013 to see the notice in my Gmail Inbox from Amazon.com saying: "Johnny Cash's New Album Releasing March 25, 2014." I chuckled and thought to myself, "Way to go Johnny, that's some major comeback!"

You see, Johnny passed away September 12, 2003. So the wording struck a chord in my twisted sense of humor. You have to admit, to release a "new album" ten-and-a-half years after his death is quite an accomplishment, even for a legend like Johnny Cash. That's quite a career after death. Of course, I figured that this album, "Out Among the Stars," would be a remix of old favorites, but it is not. These are songs never released. So in a way, if the album does well, it is a major comeback.

Years ago, my dad and I played Johnny Cash tunes together on cheap guitars in our den to please no one but ourselves. When my dad passed away when I was twenty-five, my guitar playing pretty much disappeared. However, I have stayed in touch with the latest Cash releases, and was deeply moved by Johnny's re-do of the Nine Inch Nails song, "Hurt." His video release of this song is still deeply moving to me as he deals honestly with his failings as a man who wants to be more than what he has become.

No one that I know in music has had more major comebacks in his career or his life than Johnny Cash. While he blew it so many times, his faith (and the tenacity of his second wife, June Carter) reached into the ash heap he had made of his life and raised him back up — from drugs and alcohol, womanizing, depression, prison, and bad health. So the "Man in Black" is back with all new stuff past an age where such things are possible. Such is the Johnny Cash mystique.

I don't know where you are in your own journey, but maybe it's time for you to have a major comeback. It's not just Johnny Cash that the Lord can empower to a major comeback. He can do one in you. It's one of the things Jesus specializes in doing. The old apostle of love, John, wrote these hope-filled words about the power of Jesus to help us make our own comeback from our own personal ash heap of a life:

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).*

Jesus doesn't just forgive; he purifies! He re-makes us clean and new, ready for a holy comeback. Maybe that's just what you need to hear today. Maybe it's something someone close to you needs to hear. Maybe it's something you need to hear about someone else. Jesus wants us all to move beyond the "hurt" and into the living.

Confessing our sins, confronting our moral and spiritual failures, is not something we do alone away from people who love us and love Jesus. Confession means telling the truth about our sin to God and other living and breathing people who can accept us, support us, forgive us, and encourage us to make a comeback. As Jesus' brother put it:

*Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed (James 5:16 NLT).*

Forgiven. Purified. Healed. That's restoration. That's the work of Jesus and Jesus' family when someone experiences the "hurt" of sin and its devastating effects. That's the beginning of a major comeback. That's what Johnny Cash experienced. That's what Peter experienced. Who's next? It's time for another major comeback.