

- Introduction: Greg Brower – Leader of the Great Lakes City Classis.
- One of the most popular streaming shows right now is Suits.
  - In the show, Harvey’s poker skills are portrayed.
  - Frequently in the show, a plot will get resolved through a poker game when someone goes all in. They push all their chips or their stack of cash to the middle of the table and risk everything for one hand. Everything is at risk. Nothing is held back.
- At some point we all have to choose to be all in on **something**: marriage, a job, choosing a school, Jesus.

### **Matthew 8:18-22**

- When we come across one of these hard sayings from Jesus, then temptation is to find a way out of the hard saying. To make it a little more palatable. A little less challenging. A little less controversial. It seems as though Jesus is just saying to have more faith.
- Two men come to Jesus:
- The first comes and asks Jesus to follow him.
  - He likely expected Jesus to ask him some hard questions about Torah and the prophets and then be accepted as a student.
  - But Jesus, rather than asking questions, explains the reality of following him. Following Jesus will inevitably include **sacrifice** and some **suffering**.
- Then a second man comes to Jesus. He is ready to make a huge commitment to Jesus, just not quite yet.
  - This is not an odd request. The first priority for a Jewish male, above all other obligations, even religious obligations was honoring his father and mother, in particular his father.
  - Everyone knew that these obligations came first. But not to Jesus. Even the most important obligations in our lives come second to following Christ.
- Jesus is not accepting applications for hobby Christians, for casual believers, for intellectual friends, but for faithful followers and **imitators** of Christ!

1. Crave acceptance from **people** more than acceptance from **God**.
    - a. They worry more about other people’s opinions than God’s opinion.
  2. Rarely share their **faith** in Christ.
    - a. They don’t talk about their faith in Christ and act as if it doesn’t really matter.
  3. Do whatever it takes to alleviate their **guilt**.
    - a. They go to church a couple Sundays a month or maybe decide to read their Bible for a few days.
  4. Think more about life on **earth** than **eternity with God**.
    - a. They aren’t too concerned about an eternity with God, because life is about the here and now.
  5. Gauge their morality by **comparing** themselves to others.
    - a. “At least I’m not as bad as those people” they figure and leave it at that.
  6. Want to be saved from the **penalty of sin** without **changing** their lives.
    - a. They want a cheap grace that leaves them stuck in their patterns of sin, because deep down they like the sin.
  7. Only turn to God when they are in a **bind**.
    - a. When things turn around, they ignore God and act as if God does not matter.
  8. They give whenever it doesn’t **hinder** their standard of living.
    - a. A recent Gallup study from around 2009 showed that non-Christians were actually more generous than Christians.
  9. Are not much **different** from the rest of the world.
    - a. They look and act pretty much like the rest of the world.
  10. Want the **benefits** of what Christ did without **conforming** to who He is.
    - a. Give me all the good stuff, but don’t make me become like Jesus.
- This is a hard sermon to preach. You may think it is hard to hear, but it is even harder to preach. I am preaching to some extent mostly to myself. You see, it is easy as a pastor to only go half in with Jesus.
  - Some of you may be in a similar position.
  - We’ve got to know Jesus more **fully**!

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Text to go on the screen:

Matthew 8:18–22 NIV

When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”

Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

Another disciple said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”