
issue #3

Religion or Relationship?

"You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have life." John 5:39-40

The main thing about life in Christ, is not the work we do but the relationship we maintain in Christ and the blessed fruit that is produced by that relationship. As someone has rightly said, 'Fruit is not born out of activity but out of abiding'. The Pharisees and scribes saw their diligence in study as that which brought them eternal life, but they were wrong. The Scriptures, the very breath of GOD, are His indispensable means whereby we are brought to Christ. To know Christ is God's desired end as you study the Scriptures. You can know the Book, yet fall short of knowing and loving the Author. In this passage above we see the difference between religion and relationship, think about the chart below:

RELIGION

Truth is only concepts and principles
Religion says, "Follow a formula!"
Knowing about – 2nd hand
Lifeless letter
My ministry

RELATIONSHIP

Truth is Christ, a living Person
Relationship says, "Follow Christ!"
Knowing – 1st hand
Living Spirit
Life

Religion is big on form and void on power. Religion is big on performance and doing, but trouble is that you never know if you have done enough or if what you have done is good enough. So you just stay on the tread mill of activity – doing something. John reveals that this was true in his day too!

"Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." John 6:28-29

Here we see clearly the request of men centered on behaving, while God zeroes in on believing.

Take a few minutes with your co-workers and explore the following questions:

- Why is relationship so hard?
 - Or to ask it another way – why would we rather work for God than to believe in Him?
 - How would describe your relationship with Christ at present?
 - How does your relationship with Christ impact your involvement with YFC?
 - What specifically do you believe God desires in you at this time in your life?
-