

Main idea: Christianity is relational not behavioral.

Growing up in Church

If you grew up in church you will probably relate to this statement: “When you are little, church is like a big religious game of ‘**Jesus says**’.” Jesus says this...Jesus says that...Do this...Don’t do that. It’s exhausting! Further, the more you focus on the rules, the more judgmental you become.

Religion and Jesus

Religious people say, “**Change and you can join us.**” This has been the case for centuries. And it’s not just Christian religious people; it’s all types of religious people. Non-religious people cause problems for religious people. They don’t fit in. You can’t hold them accountable. Religion loves uniformity.

But Jesus said repeatedly, “**Join us and you will change.**” That’s totally different. Jesus changed everything when He continued to hang around non or irreligious people. He ate dinner with tax collectors and prostitutes. To Jesus it didn’t matter what you believed or how you behaved. The invitation was the same – **Follow Me.**

It’s Relational

Jesus did not come into the world to personally deliver God’s list of dos and don’ts. He came into the world to introduce us to the Father. The more you read and study the Gospels the more you begin to understand that it’s relational not behavioral. Religious people have made it all about behavior, but Jesus made it clear, it’s relational. It’s not as easy, and you won’t be able to judge your neighbor as you would like, but it’s real! It’s authentic! It’s personal.

Being a sinner does not disqualify you, it’s a prerequisite. There is no sin that disqualifies you from following Jesus. It was only the religious people who resisted Jesus. They thought they were sinless.

Being an unbeliever does not disqualify you either. Did you know that none of Jesus’ earliest followers believed. For two years they traveled with him and did not believe.

The invitation to follow is an invitation to relationship not religion. Following Jesus is not about religion, nor obedience, nor the rules.

Following forces me to focus on where I am not where you are not. Religious people focus on where other people are not. Following should not become evaluating.

Family Night Big idea – Read Matthew 9:9-13

Begin using the term “follow” when you talk to your children about Jesus, salvation, and heaven. You want your children to follow Jesus, not rely on some kind of church exercise or ritual.

Elementary School – Ask, “What was Matthew’s job? Who was eating at Matthew’s house? What did the Pharisees ask the disciples? Who did Jesus come to save (v.12)?”

Middle/ High School – Ask, “Why were the Pharisees offended? What judgments were they making? What does Jesus mean in v.13? Why do we get caught up in behavioral Christianity? What makes your faith relational?”

Prayer "Father, we want to follow Jesus. Help us know You better. Amen.

Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

Velocity: At the church this Wednesday, March 27th.

Gravity: Yes! In the Community Room.

Today’s Songs

The Lord’s Prayer.....Matt Maher

Holy Spirit.....Jesus Culture

Hosanna.....Hillsong

PlusOne

PlusOne represents your opportunity for spiritual growth by strengthening your personal relationship with God. In addition to attending one of our Sunday services, we are encouraging our adult population to commit to a **PlusOne** opportunity. Adding something to your worship is the best way to grow in your faithwalk. See flyer in the Lobby.

Night of Worship

Everyone is invited to come hear our band play a concert this Friday evening, March 29th. There will be a children’s part in the program also. The evening starts at 6pm.

Velocity Summer Camp

Sign up now for Summer Camp Rafting, June 3-7. A \$100 deposit is due by May 12th to secure your spot. Register now by going to gracestatesboro.com.

Kenya Mission Trip

Trip is July 6th-14th. Deposit is due by March 31st. Please see Chad for more information.

GCC 101 Membership Class

April 28th after the 11:00 service. Sign up in the Lobby.