

引言 INTRODUCTION

看起來像是真的東西實際上可能是假的。2012年，有人在網上登廣告，以125,000美元的價格出售他的汽車。這大概是一般人在買車時支付的幾倍價錢。但是，如果你知道這部二手車的價格通常超過一百萬美元，那你就會同意這個價位是超值的。這部汽車是，或者應該說它看起來像是布加迪·威龍 (Bugatti Veyron)。這是一輛昂貴的意大利超級跑車！但這輛車其實只是一個複製品。車主投資了大量時間和精力來改裝一部2002水星·美洲獅 (Mercury Cougar)，使它看起來像 Veyron。不僅外觀，而且連內部看起來也像真的一樣。當然，當開動時，人們可以立即得知這與原版差距甚遠。那部意大利的真貨配備了8公升和1,200馬力的引擎。美洲獅只有2.5公升和170馬力的引擎。在路上行駛時，你可以輕鬆地打敗那輛冒牌貨。賣方明確表示，他所出售的只是那一部超級跑車的「複製品」。但是誰會花那麼多的錢買假貨？只有外表但沒有內涵是不能欺騙任何人的。保羅在今天的經文中提出了一個令人震驚的信息 – 僅有外表的猶太人並不是真正的猶太人。在上週的討論中，保羅將猶太人和外邦人放在同一條船上。每個人都要服在神的審判之下，因為沒有人能夠達到神完美的要求。保羅在今天的經文集中討論猶太教信仰的兩個基本要素，就是律法和割禮。猶太人認為，滿足了這兩個條件就會使他們得救。保羅回應說，神要求的是建立在關係上的順從。

Something that looks real may in fact be fake. In 2012, someone put up an online ad to sell his car for \$125,000. Most of us may only pay a fraction of that when buying a car. But it is a huge bargain if you know that a used model of that car usually sells for over a million dollars. The car is, or we shall say it looks like, a Bugatti Veyron. It is an expensive Italian supercar! This particular car was only a copy. The seller invested a lot of time and effort to convert a 2002 Mercury Cougar to make it look like a Veyron. Not only the outside, but the inside seems real too. But of course, one can immediately tell it is far from the real deal when driving the car. The Italian mammoth is equipped with an 8-liter and 1,200-horsepower engine. Whereas, the cougar only has a 2.5-liter and 170-horsepower engine. You can easily beat the counterfeit cousin with your car on the road. The seller made it clear that what he was offering was only a “replica” of the exotic machine. We may wonder who would spend that much money to buy a fake item. Having the look without the substance cannot fool anyone. In our passage today, Paul made a shocking proposition – a Jew merely on the outside is not a real Jew. In our study last week, Paul put the Jews on the same boat as the Gentiles. Every person is liable to God’s judgment because no one can ever achieve God’s requirement for perfection. Paul then picked up his argument by focusing on two fundamental elements of the Jewish belief, namely, the Law and circumcision. The Jews thought that they could be saved by fulfilling those two requirements. Paul responded that what God looks for is an obedience as a result of a relationship.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 規條的不足 Inadequacy of the Rules (v. 17-24)

猶太人認為擁有律法就可以使他們得救。保羅解釋說，這些規條不足以拯救任何人。首先，保羅針對猶太人的驕傲。讓我們看一下第 17 節：**你稱為猶太人，又倚靠律法，且指著神誇口。**猶太人為自己的國籍感到自豪。他們是神的選民。神與他們立約，並賜給他們律法。這些都是舊約中的歷史事實。但是，所有這些特權並不能使他們得救。猶太人忘記了神主動呼召他們的祖宗成為祂的子民在先，然後祂才頒布律法。一切始於神與亞伯拉罕立約。神在創世記 12:2-3 中要求亞伯拉罕離開家鄉時對他說：**2「我必叫你成為大國。我必賜福給你，叫你的名為大；你也要叫別人得福。3 為你祝福的，我必賜福與他；那咒詛你的，我必咒詛他。地上的萬族都要因你得福。」**這段話是神在頒布賜予律法之前幾百年說的！此外，神還打算通過亞伯拉罕祝福全世界的人，而不僅僅祝福猶太人。以色列人離開埃及到達西奈山後，神重申了祂的計劃，使以色列人成為祂的子民。祂在出埃及記 19:5-6 中對摩西說：**5「如今你們若實在聽從我的話，遵守我的約，就要在萬民中作屬我的子民，因為全地都是我的。6 你們要歸我作祭司的國度，為聖潔的國民。」...。**」順服不是訂立盟約的前提，因為神已經召喚以色列人成為祂的子民。但是順服是他們的責任，也是帶來神祝福的條件。今天，當你簽署申請汽車或房屋的貸款合約時，即表示你同意遵守那些條款。如果你每月繼續付錢，你便可以享用汽車或房子。同樣，當我們接受耶穌成為我們的救主和生命的主宰時，我們已經成為基督徒。我們不必做任何其他事情就已經是個基督徒。但是，我們服從神的指示是獲得祂祝福的唯一途徑。

The Jews thought that they could be saved by possessing the Law. Paul explained that those rules were inadequate to save anyone. First, Paul attacked the pride of the Jews. Let us look at **verse 17**: Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and brag about your relationship to God. The Jews were proud of their nationality. They were God's chosen people. God established a covenant with them and gave them the Law. Those are all historical facts from the Old Testament. However, all those privileges will not grant them salvation. The Jews forgot that God took the initiative to call their ancestors to be His people before He gave them the Law. It all started when God made a covenant with Abraham. God told Abraham in **Genesis 12:2-3** when He called Abraham out of his home country: **2** "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." God said so several hundred years before He bestowed the Law! Also, God had intended to bless people all over the world, not just the Jews, through Abraham. After the Israelites left Egypt and arrived at Mount Sinai, God reiterated His plan to make the Israelites His people. He said to Moses in **Exodus 19:5-6**: **"5** Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, **6** you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' ..."

Obedience is not a prerequisite to enter into the covenant, because God had called the Israelites to be His people already. Rather, obedience is their duty that will bring God's blessings. Today when you sign a contract to apply for financing a car or a house, you agree to abide by the stipulations. If you keep sending monthly payment, you can continue to enjoy the car or the house. Likewise, we have become Christians when we accept Jesus as our Savior and Lord. We do not have to do anything else to make us Christians. However, our submission to follow God's instructions is the only way to receive His blessings.

保羅在隨後的經文中闡述了猶太人不僅擁有律法，而且還向其他人傳講律法，並成為他們的導師。這些都是值得稱讚的地方。但問題是，他們只有知識，卻沒有任何實踐。保羅在

第 21 節中把他們定罪：**你既是教導別人，還不教導自己嗎？你講說人不可偷竊，自己還偷竊嗎？**這讓我想起了中文的一句俗語：能醫不自醫。救得了別人，卻救不了自己的疾病。那些猶太人善於告訴人們應該做什麼，但是他們並沒有遵守相同的命令。他們教導人們誡命說「不可偷竊」。但是他們在某些方面表現得像強盜。耶穌時代的法利賽人就是這樣。他們是社會上受人尊敬的老師。但是他們搶奪神的榮耀。在馬可福音 7:10-12 中，耶穌譴責法利賽人歪曲神的命令 - 10「摩西說：『當孝敬父母』；又說：『咒罵父母的，必治死他。』11 你們倒說：『人若對父母說：『我所當奉給你的，已經做了各耳板』，12 以後你們就不容他再奉養父母。」法利賽人通過製造漏洞來妥協神的真理。那個時候沒有社會保障基金或退休金。年邁的父母不得不依靠孩子來奉養他們。「各耳板」是一個口頭的承諾，就是一個人答應奉獻一定的金額到聖殿。這聽起來好像挺不錯。但問題是，這種承諾不需要立即執行。於是他們就可以對父親說：「老爸，很抱歉。我本來打算用來買食物的錢已經答應了捐給聖殿。」這給了人們一個不用奉養父母的藉口。這就證明了規條的不足。律法看起來像一疊冷冰冰的文件。它規範了我們可以做什麼和被禁止做什麼。人們可能會因為害怕受到懲罰而被動地遵守這些規則。任何快車手看到路邊有警車時都勉為其難地慢下來。要付上 70 美元的罰單提早幾分鐘到達目的地是不值得的。規則還導致人們竭盡所能地履行最基本的義務。報稅的季節已經開始了。大多數人會嘗試找到減稅的方法。現在我們可以在網上報稅，連打印和郵票的費用都可以省掉！耶穌在馬太福音 23:3 中告誡聽眾要小心那些律法老師 - 「**凡他們所吩咐你們的，你們都要謹守遵行；但不要效法他們的行為；因為他們能說，不能行。**」耶穌告訴人們要尊重法利賽人為老師；但不能把他們視為榜樣。那真是很諷刺！我讀這節經文時就反省自己。我只在講台上和教室裡看起來很虔誠嗎？一位牧師朋友與我分享，他告訴會眾他不會要求他們做任何他自己不會去做的事情。這是一個很好的提醒。我可以整天說聖經教導我們要保持謙卑、善待每個人、寬恕冒犯我們的人，以及其他建議。但是，我必須說到做到。我並不是說任何人可以達到完美的。沒有人可以。我感謝大家對我的不足之處顯示出恩典和耐心。但是我們會繼續成長更像基督嗎？也許你每週只在教堂見我兩次的機會。但是我的家人和我生活在一起。他們在家中和教堂裡看到的是同一個人嗎？還是我回到家後就把羊皮捲起來，變回一頭狼？我向你們提出同樣的挑戰。我們會實踐我們所相信的真理嗎？家長們：「你的孩子在家中是否將你視為一本活的聖經？」對於我們中間的上班族：「你的同事在辦公室裡能看到基督徒員工該有的樣子嗎？」我們服從神是因為我們愛他。我們明白聖經的道理，但我們也必須遵守那些命令。

In the subsequent verses, Paul elaborated that the Jews did not only have the Law, they also taught others about it, and became their mentors. Those are all commendable things. But the problem was, they only had the knowledge but they lacked any practice. Paul convicted them in **verse 21**: You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? That reminds me of a Chinese saying: a skillful doctor who can treat others but cannot deal with his own illness. Those Jews were good at telling what people should do, but they did not observe the same commands. They taught people the Commandment “you shall not steal.” But yet they acted like robbers in some ways. The Pharisees in Jesus’ time were exactly like that. They were the respected teachers in the society. But they robbed God’s glory. In **Mark 7:10-12**, Jesus condemned the Pharisees for twisting God’s commands – 10 “For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ 11 But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: ‘Whatever help you

might otherwise have received from me is Corban' (that is, a gift devoted to God), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother.” The Pharisees compromised God’s truth by creating loopholes. In those days there was no social security or retirement fund. Aging parents had to rely on their children to support them. The “Corban” was a verbal promise that a person would dedicate a certain amount to the temple. That sounds like a noble cause. But the catch is that the agreement does not have to be carried out immediately. They would then say to their father: “Sorry, pop. The money that I’m supposed to buy you food is already pledged to the temple.” That gave people an excuse not to provide for their parents. That shows the inadequacy of rules. The Law looks like a pile of cold documents. It regulates our behavior of what we can do and what are forbidden. People may passively obey those rules for fear of penalty. Any fast driver slows down reluctantly when they see a police car by the roadside. Paying a \$70 ticket to get to one’s destination a few minutes earlier is not worth it. Rules also lead people to do the bare minimum to fulfill their responsibilities. Tax season is here. Most people will try to find ways to pay less tax. Nowadays we can file tax online to save the cost of printing and stamp too! In **Matthew 23:3**, Jesus cautioned His audience about the Teachers of the Law – “So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.” Jesus told people to respect the Pharisees as teachers; but they could not look up to them as role-models. That is quite a sarcastic remark! I reflect on myself as I read this verse. Do I only look pious on the podium and in the classroom? A pastor friend shares with me that he tells his congregation he will not ask them to do anything that he will not do it himself. That is a good reminder. I can say all day that the Bible teaches us to stay humble, treat everyone with kindness, forgive those who offended us, and all the rest. But I have to walk the talk. I am not saying that any person can be perfect. No one can. I thank all of you for showing grace and patience toward my imperfections. But do we keep growing to be more like Christ? Perhaps you only see me twice a week in the church. But my family members live with me. Do they see the same person in me at home as in the church? Or do I roll up my sheep skin and turn back to a wolf after I return home? I will give the same challenge to every one of you. Do we practice what we believe? Dads and moms: do your children see you as a living Bible at home? For those of you at work: do your colleagues see Christian employees in your office? We obey God because we love Him. We have the rules, but we also must heed the rules.

2. 禮儀的不足 Inadequacy of the Rite (v. 25-29)

保羅指示規條的不足之處。擁有律法永遠無法救一個人。接下來，保羅解釋猶太人的禮儀也不足以拯救任何人。他在第 26-27 節中說：**26 所以那未受割禮的，若遵守律法的條例，他雖然未受割禮，豈不算是有割禮嗎？27 而且那本來未受割禮的，若能全守律法，豈不是要審判你這有儀文和割禮竟犯律法的人嗎？**保羅在之前說過，外邦人在某程度上對律法有一定的了解。神給他們良心。如果外邦人能憑良心生活，那麼他們比猶太人優越。因此，未受割禮的外邦人可嘲笑受割禮的猶太人。但是，當然實際上沒有人能做到完美。保羅說這一切，是要否定割禮可以確保人與神的關係這個觀點。這個儀式追溯到創世記第十七章。那時候神要求亞伯拉罕給家裡每一個男生行割禮，以表示他們與神立約的標誌。從此以後出生的以色列男孩也必須這樣做。猶太人自豪地宣稱他們是「挨了一刀」的人（這個形容的原意是指一些被挑選來擔任重要任務的人）。大衛王與巨人歌利亞搏鬥時，他蔑視他的敵人，稱他為未受割禮的非利士人。然而，就像遵守律法一樣，割禮的要求是在神與以色列人立約之後而不是之前。這個禮儀是象徵而不是建立他們與神的關係。現在

你可以買到任何名校的衣服。但是，穿上衣服並不會使你成為那一所大學的學生。但是，如果你無法實現去就讀那些學校的夢想，那麼穿著它們的衣服可能會讓你感覺好一點。如果你真的是從那所學校畢業的，那就完全不一樣了。成為大學的一員使那件衣服變得有意義。猶太人錯誤地認為，割了一刀就可以使他們成為神的兒女。保羅接著在第 28-29 節中告訴我們實際什麼才是關鍵的因素：**28 因為外面作猶太人的，不是真猶太人；外面肉身的割禮，也不是真割禮。29 惟有裡面作的，才是真猶太人；真割禮也是心裡的，在乎靈，不在乎儀文。這人的稱讚不是從人來的，乃是從神來的。**猶太人接受了割禮對神沒有多大的意義。人都是尋找外在的憑據，但神在乎的是內在的關係。「心中的割禮」這個形容是來自申命記。(和合本的翻譯是：「將心裡的污穢除掉」)它出現在 10:16 和 30:6 中。神說，祂會像行割禮的那樣從祂的子民中拿掉一切的悖逆。神清潔他們的心，使他們順服神。這就再次表明，與神建立關係比儀式更重要。在第一世紀，當福音傳給外邦人時，他們一些人接受了耶穌。結果在耶路撒冷的教會引起了爭議。一些猶太信徒認為外邦人必須行割禮，他們也必須遵守舊約的律法。意思是外邦人必須先成為猶太人，然後才能成為基督徒。使徒行傳第十五章記載了教會領袖開會討論這個問題。然後彼得在第 10-11 節中分享了他的見解：**10「現在為什麼試探神，要把我們祖宗和我們所不能負的軛放在門徒的頸項上呢？11 我們得救乃是因主耶穌的恩，和他們一樣，這是我們所信的。」**彼得爭辯說，他們不應重複祖先的錯誤。他們試圖通過履行義務來獲得救恩，但他們做不到。因此，沒有人應該強迫外邦信徒做不可能做到的事情。猶太人和非猶太人得救的方式都是一樣的：都是通過耶穌。然後，巴拿巴和保羅作見證，分享神如何在外邦人中行神跡，以證實祂的同在。最後教會決定，外邦信徒只需要「禁戒偶像的污穢和姦淫，並勒死的牲畜和血。」當時的猶太基督徒也是遵循相同的要求。今天，作為基督徒，我們不受任何禮儀的束縛。但是，我們會不會把一些禮儀看得太重要呢？我們作為浸信會的會友非常重視浸禮。我們也應該如此。但是，我們是否將浸禮視為得救的根據呢？一些弟兄姐妹只記得他們受浸的日期，卻不記得他們信主的日期。有些信徒則催促仍未信主的家人和朋友趕快接受浸禮。一些教堂強調歷年以來受浸的人數。我甚至聽到有些教會每個星期日都有水準備好來進行浸禮。人們可以在同一堂聚會中接受耶穌並受浸。我這麼說並不是要質疑任何教會的做法或是任何人的得救。我擔心的是，一些基督徒和教會無意甚至有意地宣稱我們是透過接受浸禮得救而不是信耶穌得救的。如果水可以使人得救，那麼我應該每週進行戶外崇拜。我一隻手拿著聖經，另一隻手拿著水管。任何人要得救我就在他身上噴一點水。但這不是聖經所教導的！如果沒有與神建立關係，這個禮儀就毫無意義。結婚證書使兩個人可以合法共同擁有財產、聯名報稅、並在一個配偶去世時賦予另一個人財產的繼承權。但是，一張證書並不代表婚姻。互相承諾的關係才是真正的婚姻。今天許多人花很多的時間和金錢準備一場婚禮，但他們並沒有花很多精力來經營他們的婚姻。作為基督徒和教會，我們不應該製造一些半熟的基督徒。我們需要幫助人們理解福音。我們都是罪人。耶穌為我們而死，因為我們無法擺脫神的審判。只有通過耶穌，我們才能與神建立永恆的關係。接受耶穌只是我們新生命的開始。我們必須每天學習聖經，過順服主的生活，討主的喜悅。

Paul argued about the inadequacy of the rules. Having the Law can never save a person. Next, Paul pointed out that the Jewish rite was inadequate to save anyone either. He said in **verses 26-27**: 26 If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? 27 The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the

law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker. Paul explained before that to a certain extent, the Gentiles had some knowledge of the Law. God put a conscience in them. If the Gentiles could live by their conscience, then they were more superior than the Jews. Hence, the uncircumcised Gentiles could shame the circumcised Jews. But of course, in reality no one can do so perfectly. Paul said all that to nullify the idea that circumcision could secure one's relationship with God. The rite goes back to Genesis chapter 17. God asked Abraham to circumcise every male in his household as a sign of their covenant with God. Any future Israel man must also do the same. The Jews proudly claim that they are people who "make the cut" (the original meaning of the expression refers to people who are chosen for an important assignment). When king David fought Goliath the giant, he showed contempt at his enemy by describing him as an uncircumcised Philistine. However, just like obedience to the Law, the circumcision requirement was given after, not before God made a covenant with the Israelites. The rite symbolizes, rather than establishes, their relationship with God. Nowadays, you can buy a shirt with the name of any renowned college on the front-side. However, wearing the shirt does not make you a student of the university. But in case you cannot fulfill your dream to go to those schools, having a shirt may make you feel better. It is quite a different story if you actually graduated from that school. Being a member of the college makes the shirt meaningful. The Jews mistakenly thought that by going under a knife could make them children of God. Paul went on to tell us in [verses 28-29](#) what actually counts: 28 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. 29 No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God. A circumcised Jew means little to God. People look for an outside sign but God cares about an inward relationship. The expression of "circumcision of the heart" comes from the book of Deuteronomy. It appears in both 10:16 and 30:6. God said that He would remove any rebellion from His people like performing a circumcision. God cleans their hearts so that they would obey Him. Again, it shows that relationship with God is more important than the rite. In the first century, some Gentile received Jesus when the gospel was preached to them. That caused a controversy in the Jerusalem church. Some Jewish believers maintained that the Gentiles had to be circumcised and they had to follow the Law too. In essence, they said that a Gentile had to convert to a Jew first before he could become a Christian. [Acts chapter 15](#) records a meeting of the church leaders to discuss the issue. Then Peter shared his opinion in [verses 10-11](#): 10 "Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? 11 No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are." Peter argued that they should not repeat their ancestors' mistakes. They tried to earn salvation by fulfilling their obligations, but they failed. Therefore, no one should force the Gentile believers to do what was impossible. Jews and non-Jews were saved by the same means – through Jesus. Barnabas and Paul then testified how God performed miracles to verify His presence among the Gentiles. The church then decided that Gentile believers only had to "abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood." Those were the same stipulations the Jewish Christians followed in those days. Today, as Christians, we are not bound by any rite. But do we see some rites more important than we should? We as Baptists put high regard on baptism. And we should. But do we somehow equate baptism with salvation? Some brothers and sisters only remember their baptism date but not their conversion date. Others urge their non-believing family members and friends to receive baptism. Some churches boast how many people were baptized in previous years. I even heard

churches that have water ready to perform baptism on any Sunday. People can receive Christ and be baptized in the same service. I say all that not to judge any church or anyone's salvation. My worry is that some Christians and churches unintentionally or even intentionally preach that we are saved by water, not by Jesus. If water can grant salvation, then I should do an outdoor service every week. I hold a Bible in one hand and grab a hose in another hand. I give a splash to whoever wants to be saved. But that is not what the Bible teaches! The rite means nothing without a relationship with God. A marriage certificate legalizes two persons to share ownership of their possessions, to file tax together and to empower the right of inheritance when one spouse dies. But a paper does not make a marriage. A committed relationship does. Nowadays, many people spend a lot of time and money to prepare a wedding, but they do not invest much effort to cultivate a successful marriage. As Christians and as a church, we should not produce any half-cooked Christian. We need to help people understand the full gospel. We are sinners. Jesus died for us because we cannot save ourselves from God's judgment. Only through Jesus can we build an eternal relationship with God. Accepting Jesus is only the beginning of our new life. We have to learn day-by-day to submit ourselves to the Lord and to live an obedient life that pleases Him.

結論 CONCLUSION

神要求的是建立在關係上的順從。保羅譴責猶太人，因為他們為自己所擁有的感到自豪。他們試圖遵守律法，並接受割禮。但是，如果沒有與神建立真正的關係，這一切的努力都沒有任何意義。有人說得很好：耶穌來不是要創立一個新的宗教；祂來是要與我們建立永恆的關係。宗教是關乎教條和儀式的。但是關係是神與祂的兒女之間的動態聯繫。那應該是任何教會的使命。我們所做的一切都應該是引導人與主建立關係。對於已經接受了基督的人，我們幫助他們加強這個關係。我們也不應該教導律法主義。如果你每天閱讀聖經，在周五和周日參加聚會，奉獻金錢來支持教會的事工或參與不同的服事，這是一切都是很好的事。但是，如果你不接受耶穌成為你的救主和生命的主宰，那麼你所做的這一切都不會使你成為基督徒。另一方面，如果你說你是一個基督徒，但對於屬靈的事情毫無興趣，那麼你就必須問問自己，你是否真的與神有永恆的關係。就像你回到家中，你應該是很高興地與家人共度時光，主動地幫助做家務一樣。如果你不願意有任何的參與，那麼你需要問你是否將自己視為家庭成員，以及你是否真正珍惜這份關係。我們的心應該驅使我們有相應的行動。

What God looks for is an obedience as a result of a relationship. Paul condemned the Jews because they took pride in what they did, instead of what they should have. They tried to obey the Law and they received circumcision. But doing all that without a genuine relationship with God amounts to nothing. Someone said it well: Jesus did not come to establish a new religion; but He came to build an eternal relationship with us. Religion is about dogmas and ceremonies. But relationship is a dynamic connection between God and His children. That should be the mission for any church. All that we do should be leading people to build a relationship with the Lord. For people who have accepted Christ, we help them strengthen that relationship. We should not teach legalism either. It is a good thing if you read your Bible every day, attend meetings on Friday and Sunday, offer money to support our work or serve in various ministries, etc. But doing all that will not make you a Christian if you do not accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord. On the flip side, if you say you are a Christian but you have little interest to grow spiritually, then you have to ask yourself if you truly have an eternal relationship with the Lord.

It is like you should find joy in going home, spending time with your family and gladly volunteer for housework. If you are reluctant to do any of those matters, then you need to question if you treat yourself as a family member, and whether you truly cherish the relationship. Our hearts should direct our hands.