

What's Missing?
9-22-2024

“ We're all like fish out of water gasping for the water we were meant to breathe.” C.S. Lewis

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” 3 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” 4 Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 9 Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10 Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? 11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. John 3:1-17

Religion - information	Relationship - Intimacy
Religion - built on law	Relationship - built on love
Religion - feels like guilt	Relationship - feels like grace
Religion - activity focused	Relationship - Identity focused
Religion - My works	Relationship - His finished works

1) You can be loved before you belong

2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” John 3:2

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

2) You can belong before you believe

9 Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10 Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? 11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? John 3:9-12

15 *Later, Levi invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. (There were many people of this kind among Jesus' followers.)* Mark 2:15 (NLT)

3) You can believe before you behave

16 *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.* John 3:16

28-30 *"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me— watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."* Matthew 11:28-30

33 *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.* Matthew 6:33