



Steve Vaughan—Executive Pastor  
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## RELATIONSHIP NOT RELIGION

If you don't know something's purpose, you will likely abuse it.

Theologian J.D. Smart wrote, “One of the unique features of the Biblical faith is that there is no genuine relation with God that is not at the same time in relation with the brother.”

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied, “You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.” <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ <sup>40</sup> The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.” **Matthew 22:37-40 NLT**

<sup>9</sup> If anyone claims, “I am living in the light”, but hates a fellow believer, that person is still living in darkness. **1 John 2:9 NLT**

<sup>2</sup> We know we love God's children if we love God and obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup> Loving God means keeping his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome. **1 John 5:2-3 NLT**

## RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS LOVING GOD AND OTHERS.

<sup>26</sup> If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup> Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

**James 1:26-27 NLT**

## Isaiah 58:1-13a NLT

- Religion seems praiseworthy.
- Religion can become self-serving.
- Religion can harden our hearts toward God and others.
- Religion often evolves into going through the motions.

## Relationship changes our hearts.

<sup>1</sup> If I could speak all the languages of the earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

**1 Corinthians 13:1-3 NLT**

## Relationship brings God's blessing.

## Relationship brings God's direction and purpose in your life.

### NEXT STEPS:

- You need a relationship with God – Salvation.
- Let go of religion that is keeping you from a relationship with God and others.