

Volume 4, Day 7: Habit or Personal Desire

Do you have religious practices, such as going to church, feeding the hungry, providing shelter for the homeless, or giving to charity? Do you have predictable activities in which you engage or songs you might sing or books you might read? Is it possible that even what you do in worshipping God is the same week after week?

Why would I think that God would be happy with my monotonous routines? Aren't we made in God's image in order to be in relationships with each other and with God Himself? Maybe it's time to become up close and personal.

I was in church with my family from the time I was a few days old. My parents were so religious that they took me several times a week. I learned the Bible stories, I memorized scripture, I said the prayer for salvation in Sunday School at age six and as an early teen even led in worship with my music teacher. But I reached the point when I didn't want to go to church any more, but would not admit it.

When I was 14, an evangelist came to our church to conduct a revival. I don't even remember what he preached about, but his messages kept my attention. After the last meeting, I went to meet the evangelist and thank him for his good sermons. But I was caught off guard when my pastor put his arm around me and asked, "You're going to be a preacher too, aren't you? Not wanting to be embarrassed, nor to embarrass the pastor, I replied, "If God wants me to, I will."

As I lay in bed later, God spoke to me in my thoughts. "Did you tell the pastor that you would be a minister if I asked you to?" "Yes," I replied. He continued, "Did you mean that?" I said "No!" I quickly recoiled in fear that He might strike me for lying to the pastor. In the loud silence that followed, I asked myself, "If God cares enough about me to meet me up-close-and-personal in my own room, why wouldn't I do anything He asked of me. So I said, "I'll say it again now and this time I mean it!" My heart flipped as I fell in love with God and was truly born again. Never again did I go to church just for appearances sake. I loved God's house!