

Don't let the ritual replace the reality

What happens when we go through the motions without meaning - Isa 1:10-14 -10 Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah! 11 "The multitude of your sacrifices — what are they to me?" says the Lord. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. 12 When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? 13 Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations — I cannot bear your evil assemblies. 14 Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

Rituals represent something real - Col 2:17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Purpose means everything and our purpose must be God - Matt 6:1-8 - "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Ritual	Reality	Some Scripture
Going to Church	To Hear the message from God and Mature with others in the body.	Ecc 5:1 - Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. <u>Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools,</u> who do not know that they do wrong. Eph 4:12-13 -12 to <u>prepare God's people for works of service,</u> so that the <u>body of Christ may be built up</u> 13 until we all <u>reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God</u> and <u>become mature,</u> attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.
Reading Bible	To know Christ & fully equip man.	John 5:39-40 - 39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life. 2 Tim 3:16-17 - 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for <u>teaching, rebuking, correcting and training</u> in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
Praying	To talk to our Father in Heaven.	Phil 4:6-7 - 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Communion	To remember Christ gave his body and shed his blood for us.	1 Cor 11:23-27 - 23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, <u>took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."</u> 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me. " 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.
Giving	Recognizing our true provider	2 Cor 9:6-8 -6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 <u>Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.</u> 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.
Worship	To praise and Adore the one and only God the way that truly worships.	Matt 15:6-9 - 6 he is not to 'honor his father' with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. 7 You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: 8 <u>"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 9 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men."</u> John 4:23-24 - 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the <u>true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth,</u> for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

We must fully give ourselves to God the way God says to give ourselves to God - - Rom 12:1-2 - Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Relationship with Christ to stay in Reality

Go to Christ and Learn from Him - Matt 11:28-30 - 28 "**Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.** 29 **Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,** for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Stay in Christ and keep the Word in you - John 15:7-8 - 7 **If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.** 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Follow Christ to truly minister to others - Mark 1:18 - "Come, **follow me,**" Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."