

## **A Reality Check**

(Is Jesus really the answer?)

“Jesus is the answer” is a great quote that you may have often heard or repeated. Our desire is to challenge you to consider whether or not Jesus truly is ‘the answer’ to all your life issues - rather than to give you the information for the ‘Reality Check’ (part one). It also was not a matter of having more time to fill in the answers, but whether or not you have a recall of the information for use in your day-to-day life.

Now, realizing how few of these questions might actually be consciously recalled or practiced, it challenges us to rethink whether the words of Jesus really are the answers to our life situations. Jesus makes a statement about our obeying Him as a condition of whether we love Him:

*<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, if anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him and He will come to him and make our abode with him. <sup>24</sup> He who does not love me does not keep my words, and the word which you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent Me.’ (John 14:23-24)*

A typical response from a frustrated or defeated Christian to the above scripture might be, “How can I obey it if I don’t know it.” It’s more difficult to obey Him if we haven’t spent the time in the Word to know what He wants us to obey. Since the Bible is the written expression of the ‘Living Word’ (Jesus), it is only possible to know Him, and to obey Him, by having conscious recollection of what He says.

A lack of time in daily fellowship with Jesus, and time spent in the Word, provides little opportunity for practical application or obedience to the words of Jesus. Also, having a tremendous knowledge of theology, doctrines, etc., does not mean a person has practical wisdom or is necessarily obedient to the words of Christ. Instead, in both of these cases, a person tends to be a ‘practical atheist’. A practical atheist is someone who doesn’t practice or obey the words of Jesus due to a lack of knowledge, recall or relationship.

Another way to evaluate whether Jesus really is the answer in your life is to ask yourself, ‘When things get tough, or don’t go my way...

Do I run ‘to’ Jesus or do I run ‘from’ Jesus?

Do I run ‘to’ the Word or do I run ‘from’ the Word?

Do I run ‘to’ fellowship with the Body or do I run ‘from’ fellowship with the Body?

Running ‘from’ is illustrated when a Christian has been confronted by another believer with the application of the Word, and then ‘runs’ from fellowship with that believer (or Church) rather than to obey.

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The second grouping of words of the 'Reality Check' (or 'Part Two') asking you which things you seek, was another way to show you whether you are involved in 'religion' or true Christianity. The gods of all the religions of the world require their followers to 'pay' for their sin, or gain 'righteousness', in order to qualify for heaven, nirvana, etc. The gods of these 'religions' expect their followers to demonstrate their devotion first in order to earn their god's love or blessings.

Christianity is unique to all the world's religions. Christianity is the antithesis of 'religion' in that it provides the payment for sin through imputation as a personal gift from God. The God of Christianity demonstrated His love first and then encourages His followers to live in accordance with the new Life they've been given.

Take a second look at the list of words that you checked regarding what you seek. Notice that they represent what every religion of the world promotes (or religious people seek). Christianity is unique to all the 'religions' of the world. The Christian believer is committed to something other than a 'religion'.

(✓) blessings

Blessor

(✓) sanctification

Sanctifier

(✓) truth

The Truth

(✓) healing

Healer

(✓) gifts

Giver

(✓) peace

Prince of Peace

(✓) guidance

Guide

**RELIGION**

**RELATIONSHIP**

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In contrast, Jesus (the Word) speaks very clearly, on many occasions, that a believer should, 'seek', 'love' and 'fix' their eyes upon Him and Him alone. For example:

*'I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me.'*  
(Proverbs 8:17)

*'And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.'*  
(Jeremiah 29:13)

*'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'* (Matthew 22:36)

*'fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith...'* (Hebrews 12:2)

As you'll notice, the words on the right side are what the Word/Jesus says every Christian should seek. The Christian seeks a 'relationship' rather than 'religion'. This 'relationship' is with a person, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, represented by the words on the right side of the list.

The 'Blessor' rather than blessings

The 'Sanctifier' rather than sanctification

THE Truth (Jesus) rather than 'truth'

The 'Healer' rather than healing

The 'Giver' rather than gifts

The 'Prince of Peace' rather than peace

The 'Guide' rather than guidance

Now you may consider the above to be minor distinctions. However, Biblically it's the difference between being involved in a dead 'religion' and having a living 'relationship'. God, the Lord Jesus, has always sought a relationship rather than performance for acceptance, or sacrifice (Hosea 6:6).

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The effect of having relationship results automatically in receiving the benefits most people seek as described above. An intimate, dynamic relationship with the Lord Jesus determines whether or not you run 'to' Him, to His Word and His Body when life gets difficult. Ultimately, it's all summed up in the Scriptures, which say,

*<sup>15</sup> And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:15-18 NAS)*

*<sup>17</sup> These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the **reality**, however, is found in Christ. (Colossians 2:17 NIV)*

When you consider what's happening in the life and relationships of believers, in comparison to those of the world, there seems to be little difference. The 'religion' of the American Christian, in general, doesn't look, sound, or act much different than the 'unbelievers' of the world. This is statistically reflected in regard to entertainment, financial spending, parenting, pornography, promiscuity and divorce.

Jeremiah 2:13 says, 'For My people have committed two evils:

(1) They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters,

(2) to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.'

You'll notice the first 'evil' is forsaking Jesus. The second 'evil' is creating, or developing, your own self-sufficient means of fulfilling your own needs or solving your own problems. Although this was spoken of in the Old Testament in reference to Israel, in most cases it is no different in the new millennium regarding individual believers or the Church.

For Jesus to be more than Savior, He must be Lord. If He's not Lord **of** all – He's not Lord **at** all. This is not to say that one is perfect, but one who, like Paul, said:

*<sup>7</sup> But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, <sup>9</sup> and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him,*

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*and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; <sup>11</sup> in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. <sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. <sup>13</sup> Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ (Philippians 3:7-14)*

The complete information in regard to 'Part One', and the things listed as to what Jesus specifically says about many of the things of life, is a part of the curriculum of Reality College. This knowledge is gained by a student at Reality College when taught for the purpose of 'transformation' rather than 'information'.

Reality College provides an environment where a student can learn not just the 'information', but experience the 'transformation', necessary to grow and mature in Christ. They have the opportunity to integrate the Word into every area of their life through Biblical discipleship. They also are able to enjoy the benefits of being a part of a body of believers who are committed to the reality of openness, transparency, honesty, integrity, and compassion while caring for one another.

This 'Reality Check' and your understanding of it will help you appreciate the uniqueness of Reality College. Its purpose is 'transformation' not just 'information'. Reality College is committed to provide the necessary understanding and relationships to facilitate our mission.

*<sup>28</sup> And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.'(Colossians 1:28)*

If you have any further questions, or if we can be of any help to you, you can contact us at:

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