

Johnny's mother noticed her toddler playing 'church' with their cats.

As the cats watched Johnny he preached to them.

She smiled at his imagination and went back to her housework. A few minutes later she heard loud meows and hisses. Johnny was baptizing their cats in the bathtub.

His mother quickly told him to stop and said, "cats are afraid of water!"

Johnny looked up and said smartly, 'They should have thought of that before they joined my church!'

Intro to Wednesday night Bible study

Started out simple

Got out of hand

God's sovereignty

Created all things

God created us

Right to judge

Deserves all praise

Satan and man at his invitation assumed the rights of God

The 'innocent' questions:

Does it bother you when you are not in control? Yes or No

Does it bother you when things don't go your way? Yes or No

Do you have trouble asking for help? Yes or No

Do you get impatient when people don't do things right? Yes or No

Does it upset you when you don't get good service? Yes or No

Do you try to change people? Yes or No

Do you look for approval or thanks from others? Yes or No

Do you try to keep other people happy? Yes or No

Do you reject those who mistreat you? Yes or No

It then went on to make the claim that:

“If you answered “yes” to **any** of these questions, even if your yes depended upon your situation, that is an area where you are trying to be like God (assume the rule, role, and power of God) in your own life or the lives of other people”

...this can't be right...I am a believer...this is Wednesday night...I could be at the cinema...half price night...but I'm here at Bible study...surely I'm in better shape than this silly Cosmopolitan style survey suggest!

But am I fully surrendered to Gods will and providence in my life.
Divine providence...God providing for my daily needs
Can I claim that as my way of life?
Can you?

Ouch...now what?

I believe that “Jesus is Lord,”
And I “believe in my heart that God raised him from the dead”
So God's word tells me that I “am saved”.

I am a believer but it is possible to believe in something and fail to live up to it.
Sure it is.
God is merciful and recognizes that...thank God....

So how do I avoid poor test scores?
How do we avoid poor test scores?

Complete and total surrender...

What?...complete and total surrender

So here's where we start to get a little worried about that living water thing...maybe a bit afraid of the water

I should have thought about that before I joined Christ's church...

Actually I spent a lot of time thinking about it...

being in control

making things go my way

do it myself

impatient

just trying to get a little service over here

change the world

show a little respect...a little gratitude

why can't I make you happy

I'll meet you half way or I won't meet you at all

And somewhere in the midst of this I discovered that I wanted Christ in my life...that I needed Christ in my life

Do you need Christ in your life?

Is it your goal of to have Christ in your life?

I thought I did but I don't...

I do not need Christ in my life...

And guess what...Christ has no desire to be in your life

I am discovering by the guidance of the Holy Spirit that my life needs to be 'in' Christ

Not Christ in my life but my life in Christ.

Will you say it with me.

Not Christ in my life but my life in Christ.

Not Christ in my life but my life in Christ.

Christ will not fit into your life...He's bigger than that
He's not a charm or talisman you wear around your neck
He's not a refuge to run to when you're in trouble
He's not a get out of hell free card to play minutes before your death
He is not your co-pilot
Christ is not an air freshener to hang from the rear view mirror of your car
Christ is not an accessory and we can't make Him one.

Jesus Christ, God, invites us into right relationship with Him

Right relationship places us in Him

If we accept His invitation we enter into His kingdom

We do not get to bring our own kingdom with us

Some people think that you enter God's kingdom when you die
...and they are right...kinda...
the thing is that you die to self in this life in the here and now
because God's kingdom is open to you in this life in the here and now

Mark 1: 14 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

16 As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen.

17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

18 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.

There is a reason that these verses occur together.
Take away the situational information and hear Christ's words:
"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent
and believe in the gospel...Follow me."

They left their nets and they followed Him **into the kingdom**
where Christ became Lord of their lives.

Not pick up your nets and follow me...just follow me.

The stuff of your life the 'nets' are just entanglements... not what
you need in the kingdom and not allowed into the kingdom.
Everything you need in the kingdom is found through the
providence of the Lord.

When Jesus needed to feed people fish He didn't need nets.

God can provide for the needs within His kingdom.

If you think you can or need to you have a problem...you are not
God

God's kingdom is here and now and you are invited.

And what about the poor grades?
God wants you to see what stuff you are trying to drag along

If you look at the questions you will note that they are all about the
way we handle relationships with people...because those are the
fruits by which we are known...or rather how we are with people
speaks volumes about who is really in control in our lives.

Matt 7

12"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

13 "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. **14** For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

When we can't seem to find our way into the kingdom it could just be all the stuff (control stuff) we are trying to bring with us. Just like physical death, death to self is a 'can't take it with you situation' as well,

How do we let go? We can start by asking for help

Hebrews 12 excerpted from verses 1 and 2 says:...*let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith;* (KJV)

Or

So we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially the sin that just won't let go. And we must be determined to run the race that is ahead of us. 2 We must keep our eyes on Jesus, who leads us and makes our faith complete. (CEV)

Jesus is the deal closer here

The deal...He gave his life for your life...you give your life for His

1 Cor 15:53,54 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the

mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

Clothed in Christ and freed from death
The living water of the Holy Spirit of God will flow through your
life and veins

It's a baptism from the inside out
Once the mortal man is clothed in the Immortal Christ
The 'get it while you can' world loses it's sense of urgency
And becomes unimportant...an unwanted distraction

And it won't bother you when you are not in control.
...when things don't go your way
You won't have trouble asking for help or being patient when
people don't do things right.
It won't upset you when you don't get good service
You'll see God change people
You will bless and thank the Lord
You will please God
And you will love and forgive those who mistreat you

And you'll get better grades

Deut 6: 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.