

ARE YOU TRAPPED IN A *SPIRIT OF RELIGION?*

by BRYAN ELLIOTT • from MORE THAN GOLD

There are many reasons why people get trapped in a lifestyle or mindset of “religion” versus having a true relationship with God. I once heard someone refer to Christians stuck in the spirit of religion as “imprisoned royalty,” operating from a false reality and false identity.

For some reason, we think we are “good enough” and deserve to go to heaven on our own merit. Here is the truth: We don’t deserve heaven and have no part in our salvation, but God’s love made the way through faith alone. This gift of grace may be hard to comprehend, but it is one we all need to receive. If you don’t know that you are God’s beloved child, it is easy to think you have to perform for His love. I know I did. Even if you don’t think you are practising your faith out of the spirit of religion, it never hurts to pause and search your heart for any wrong motive in your actions or decision-making. Take a few moments to read through the questions below as you check in with your spirit and ask God to reveal the condition of your heart.

- Do you feel like you will be punished if you make a mistake?
- Do you struggle to believe God is infinitely good and loves and accepts you unconditionally?
- Do you feel like you are falling short?
- Are you stuck or chained to the past?
- Are you a Christian and do not experience peace, joy, and freedom from a relationship with Jesus?
- Have you ever felt disqualified?
- Are you insecure and fearful?
- Does faith feel like a burden?
- Do you feel burnt out in life?
- Are you trapped in performance-based living?
- Is your value or identity based on what you do rather than who God says you are?
- Have you ever felt like there's a punisher standing on your shoulder?
- Have you ever felt like your heart is accusing you or condemning you?

- Is it difficult to rest in the presence of the Lord?
- When you see someone living in sin, do you feel led to condemn, shame, and compare?
- Do you find it hard to receive God's forgiveness or forgive others?
- Do you tend to over-spiritualise everything?
- Do you feel like you have to act and look a certain way?
- Is it difficult to hear the voice of God?
- Do you dwell on right or wrong (in yourself, others, and the world)?
- Are you motivated by fear of punishment instead of God's love?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you are likely living out some aspect of your faith in the spirit of religion and/or simply not receiving God's truth. This is thinking as an orphan (not a child of God) due to operating out of a false identity. You can see how orphans and the religious spirit go hand in hand.

Remember, God loves and accepts you just as you are, but He won't leave you as you are! He wants a heart-level relationship with you! He's not worried about you being perfect or getting it right every time. It's not up to you to make sure everyone else gets it right every time, either. The religious spirit makes God's love conditional, requiring one to earn it. This is a total lie. When we receive His unconditional love, we experience true rest, peace, and joy.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This resource is from Bryan Elliott's book, *More than Gold*. Bryan is the President and co-founder of M46 Ministries along with his daughter, Bryn Elliott. Their mission is to inspire, disciple, and bring hope to the nations.

Find more resources at **m46ministries.com**

