

## NORTH CHRISTIAN CHURCH PREP SCHOOL LESSON

### Christianity vs. Religion Part 1

Let us begin our study with a short story- Imagine that you ride your bike to school and have gone the same exact way for the last 2 years. One day you notice that there are new signs put up along the way. One reads, "Bikes on path only" and another one says, "Stop here". You realize that you have been riding your bike unsafely, not staying on the bike path or stopping where you should have! OOPS! You start to feel a little guilty for riding wrongly without even knowing it. You know, though, that these signs were put into place to tell you how you should be riding in order to keep you and others safe.

**Romans 5:13** *"For until the Law, sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law."*

Without the rules, or law, you would not have realized that you were riding unsafely or "sinning"! Now that you do know, you begin doing your best to obey the laws so that you do not get into trouble. One day, your mom tells you that you need to start wearing glasses every day in order to see more clearly. You do as she says and always make sure to wear them. As you wear these new glasses, the rules begin to make sense to you and you find that you actually **want** to obey them. As you see more and more clearly, you also begin to have a love for others that becomes your motivation to obey.



You may be asking yourself, "How does this story help us learn about the differences between Christianity and false religion?" The story shows us that it is both the source of power and the motivation for obedience that makes them so very different. The bike ride symbolizes your daily life and the glasses represent the Word of God. When believers in Jesus Christ read the Bible every day, we begin to see more clearly and are given the power and motivation from God to obey and live a righteous life.

False religion was created by Satan, who hates God, in order to lead people away from true salvation and life with God.

The world's religion tells people that they are to DO and BE "good" but with the wrong power and for the wrong reasons. The Bible says we can only do truly good things with God's power and our motivation should be love for Him and other people! Without the Word of God, we will approach doing "good" like it is a chore- doing things because we have to, in order to avoid punishment, and to look good to others. Without God's Word, all we see is the street signs or laws. With it, we see the love of God!

See, false religion gives people bits and pieces of the truth and this causes people to trust in themselves instead of seeking the whole truth in God's Word and learning to trust Him. Since Jesus Christ is the Word, when we get to know the Word, we get to know Him!

**John 1:1 *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."***

False religion teaches people that they must earn God's love, earn salvation, and earn eternity with God. Therefore, people are left afraid and never sure of their relationship or future with God because they do not know Him.

**1 John 4:18 *"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."***

The Bible teaches that we must believe in and trust in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved from the power and penalty of sin and live a life of freedom in Christ. It says that God loves us with a perfect, never-ending love because of who He is, not because of any good that we do. We neither earn nor deserve His love and He does not stop loving us if we fail. It says that we will obey because of our love and gratitude and will have peace and joy!

**John 15:10-11 *"If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."***

So, false religion says that we have the power to work for and get the credit for earning salvation. True religion teaches that Jesus Christ did all the work and we must believe in and live in that Truth. How wonderful the Truth is!