

NEW CREATION

3/04/18 | JOHN 3:1-10, 16-17

Are religion and Jesus two different things?

We have experienced a God who promises to fill our lives with meaning, grace, mercy, love and truth. In order to relate to this God we created a system of thinking and behaving, and we named it "religion." With this system of thinking and behaving came rules and regulations. These rules and regulations grew and grew, sometimes fed by those in power who created new rules to benefit themselves.

Did this system of behavior, this religion, eventually displace God? Did the joy and freedom of God's life-giving promise disappear? Was the original intent of relationship lost? Is it still lost? If so, can we get it back? How?



In today's story, Nicodemus is a wealthy, respected leader. He's super smart and he spends a lot of time trying to get all the answers right. Nicodemus knows a whole bunch about following all the religious rules, but he still thinks something is missing in his life. What do you think that is?

Is there something about wonder and excitement, about hope and curiosity, about truly loving the people around you, that changes the way you live? Is that what Jesus is trying to tell Nicodemus? What would you tell Nicodemus if you were there?