

RELIGION	GOSPEL
“I obey; therefore I’m accepted.”	“I’m accepted; therefore I obey.”
Motivation is based on fear and insecurity.	Motivation is based on grateful joy.
I obey God in order to get <i>things</i> from God.	I obey God to get <i>God</i> —to delight and resemble him.
When circumstances in my life go wrong, I am angry at God or myself, since I believe, like Job’s friends, that anyone who is good deserves a comfortable life.	When circumstances in my life go wrong, I struggle, but I know that while God may allow this for my training, he will exercise his fatherly love within my trial
When I’m criticized, I am furious or devastated because it is essential for me to think of myself as a “good person.” Threats to that self-image must be destroyed at all costs.	When I am criticized, I struggle, but it is not essential for me to think of myself as a “good person.” My identify is not built on my performance but on God’s love for me in Christ.
My prayer life consists largely of petition and only heats up when I am in need. My main purpose in prayer is to control circumstances	My prayer life consists of generous stretches of praise and adoration. My main purpose is fellowship with him.
My self-view swings between two poles. If and when I am living up to my standards, I feel confident, but then I am prone to be proud and unsympathetic to people who fail. If and when I am not living up to standards, I feel humble but not confident—I feel like a failure.	My self-view is not based on a view of myself as a moral achiever. In Christ I am at once sinful and lost, yet accepted. I am so bad he <i>had</i> to die for me, and so loved he was <i>glad</i> to die for me. This leads me to deeper humility as well as deeper confidence, without either sniveling or swaggering.
My identity and self-worth are based mainly on how hard I work or how moral I am, so I <i>must</i> look down on those I perceive as lazy or immoral. I disdain and feel superior to others.	My identify and self-worth are centered on the One who died for his enemies, including me. Only by sheer grace am I what I am, so I <i>can’t</i> look down on those who believe or praise something different from me. I have no inner need to win arguments.
Since I look to my pedigree or performance for my spiritual acceptability, my head manufactures idols—talents, moral record, personal discipline, social status, etc. I absolutely <i>have</i> to have them, so they are my main hope, meaning, happiness, security, and significance, whatever I say I believe about God.	I have many good things in my life—family, work, etc., but none of these good things are <i>ultimate</i> things to me. I don’t absolutely <i>have</i> to have them, so there is a limit to how much anxiety, bitterness, and despair they can inflict on me when they are threatened and lost.