

Title: Do I have to?

## 2 things that we define the Christian life in

- 1) All the things I **couldn't** do
- 2) All the things I **had** to do

Sign, sign, everywhere a sign  
Blockin' out the scenery, breakin' my mind  
Do this, don't do that, can't you read the sign?

~ Five Man Electrical Band

## 3 Things that waste our spiritual energy

### 1. Not defined by a big set of rules

Matthew 23:1-7 (CSB)

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples: <sup>2</sup> “The scribes and the Pharisees are seated in the chair of Moses. <sup>3</sup> Therefore do whatever they tell you, and observe it. But don't do what they do, because they don't practice what they teach. <sup>4</sup> **They tie up heavy loads that are hard to carry and put them on people's shoulders, but they themselves aren't willing to lift a finger to move them.** <sup>5</sup> They do everything to be seen by others: They enlarge their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. <sup>6</sup> They love the place of honor at banquets, the front seats in the synagogues, <sup>7</sup> greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called 'Rabbi' by people.

Matthew 22:37-39 (CSB)

<sup>37</sup> He said to him, “**Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.** <sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and most important command. <sup>39</sup> The second is like it: **Love your neighbor as yourself.**

### 2. You don't have to wonder about your standing with Jesus.

1 John 5:12 (NIV)

<sup>12</sup> Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Matthew 6:10 (NIV)

<sup>10</sup> your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

1 John 5:13 (NLT)

<sup>13</sup> I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life

### **3. You don't have to earn God's approval.**

Matthew 10:29-31 (CSB)

<sup>29</sup> Aren't two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's consent. <sup>30</sup> But even the hairs of your head have all been counted. <sup>31</sup> So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

God knows *everything* about us, and he still loves us!

#### **summary**

- we don't have to follow this laundry list of rules
- we don't have to wonder about where we are at with Jesus
- we don't have to earn His approval.

#### **Questions for You Version**

##### **Questions for discussion**

- Why don't we have to live our lives by a big set of rules? If that's true, what about all the stuff like the Ten Commandments?
- How come we can't make God love us more or less? Why doesn't our sin make God love us less and our good deeds make God love us more?
- Explain the verse about sparrows and numbered hairs. What does it have to do with God loving us?

- What are the two rules Jesus gives us? What about all the other rules?
- Aren't there still other things we're supposed to do and not do? Where do they fit?
- Why is there nothing we can do to make God love us more or less? Does that make good deeds a waste of time and sin not a big deal? (Discuss)
- What would it look like for you to totally give yourself to living by those two rules Jesus gave us (love God, love others)? What would change in your life? What might some of the implications be? How would people in your life respond to you if you started living this way?
- What if you did have to earn your way to heaven? What would life be like?
- What if God were "fickle"—if he would love us more and less based on our behavior? How would that affect our lives?
- Which of these three truths did you most need to hear today? Why?
- What needs to change based on your reminder or new understanding of this truth? What will that look like this week?
- What's the "cost" of ignoring these truths?