

Keep It Simple

Think serving God is complicated? Here's how easy it really is—and why that simplicity matters.

Someone I know who's gone to church for many years asked me, "Don't you think being a Christian is really hard?" Years ago, I would have said yes. But that was before I learned that serving God is not complicated at all.

We can be complicated and we can complicate serving God. Before I realized this it was easy for me to complicate things, no matter how simple they were.

One time, I planned a simple get-together with hamburgers and hot dogs. But in the week leading up to it, I made it so complicated. We had to clean the house, paint the barbecue pit, plant flowers and buy new lawn furniture. The hamburgers became steaks we couldn't afford, and by the time everyone came, I was mad about the whole thing.

I'm so thankful that I've learned—and am still learning—to keep things simple now. This is something all of us have to apply to our life and relationship with God. If we let our relationship with God get complicated, it's just not going to work.

Luke 18:17 says, "I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it" (NIV).

This doesn't mean if you're complicated you can't go to heaven, but it will keep us from living the kingdom life God wants us to experience now. And to enter into that life, we must do it as a little child.

One thing that's great about children is they pretty much believe what you tell them. And I think that's one of the best

things we can do too. For us, this means we need to read God's Word, believe it and do it.

Sometimes we can get tripped up at the "believing" step. First, you have to believe the Word above how you feel. Second, you have to believe it above your thoughts. If your thoughts don't line up with the Word of God, your thoughts are wrong. And third, you have to believe it above what other people say. Even if someone told you for years you weren't any good, they were wrong and God is right. It's that simple.

Once you start to embrace this with childlike belief and trust, you'll experience true freedom in Christ. And when you read Scriptures such as John 8:31-32, you'll believe that you can have freedom in Christ.

You can be free *from* so many things and free *to do* so many things. Here are just a few.

You are free from ...

People Pleasing: Why can't we just be happy with who God created us to be? We are not important because of who we are around; we are important because Christ lives in us.

The Power of Sin: I'm not saying you'll never sin again, but you can be free to repent quickly and be free from the power of shame, guilt and condemnation.

Fear of Man: You can be free from the tyranny of rejection, criticism and judgment of others.

And you are free to ...

Say No: We should be free to do this while supporting others in their right to say no as well.

Enjoy Your Life: There are countless people who don't like themselves. We should be able to be comfortable with anyone, anywhere. You don't have to feel out of place because God is

your place. Your worth is found in who you are in Him.

Believe That God Loves You: There are going to be people in this life who don't like you. So why waste time trying to make them like you when all it does is steal your peace? And if you believe that God loves you, it doesn't matter anyway.

God is simply calling us to come to Him as a little child. No matter the situation, how we feel, what we think or what others may say, we need to be able to say, "You know, this may not make any sense, but I simply believe God."

Serving God isn't complicated. You just need to read His Word, believe it and do it. I promise it'll work every time. It's that simple.

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times best-selling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries. She has authored nearly 90 books, including her new *Living Beyond Your Feelings* (Hachette). To read her past columns in *Charisma*, go to . Visit her online at .