

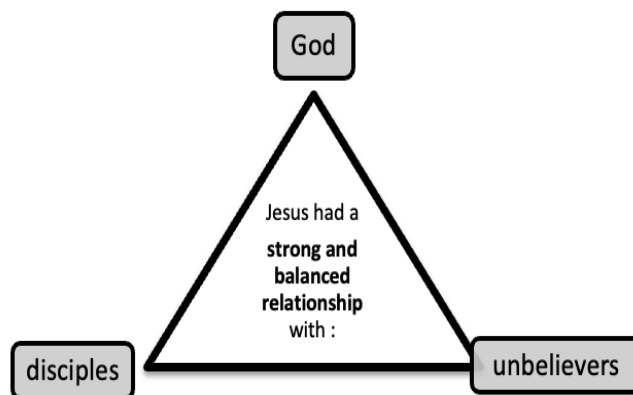
# THE 3 PRIORITIES of the CHRISTIAN LIFE

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## The three main priorities of Jesus

If you observe the entire lifestyle of Jesus, you will quickly realize that he had three main relational priorities:

- 1) Jesus had a **passionate** relationship with his father
- 2) Jesus had an **intimate** relationship with his disciples
- 3) Jesus had a **compassionate** relationship with unbelievers



Jesus prioritized prayer, discipleship, and ministry, spending time with God, his disciples, and others. We should emulate this lifestyle by organizing our lives around these three priorities.

- Jesus spent countless nights and hours with his father, seeking his face and guidance. We should do the same with God.
- He taught and trained his disciples in various situations to grow in character and ministry skills. We should do the same with some Christians.
- Finally, he spent time with crowds, teaching, casting out demons, and healing people. We should do the same with others today.

## Have those 3 priorities and keep them in balance!

Most Christians would agree that Jesus lived a life of prioritizing relationships in those three areas. In theory, that's great, but it's not so obvious in practice.

No one can be strong in just one or even two areas. We need to be strong in all three because they're all connected. For example, if someone says they have a strong relationship with God but aren't involved in the lives of a few Christians by loving and helping them, they're

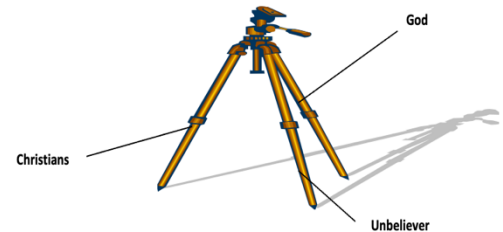
deceiving themselves. (“How can you claim you love God and do not love your brother” ask the apostle John.)

If someone struggles to reach out to unbelievers, they can’t claim to know the God of John 3:16. Pretending to love God and not unbelievers makes our religion empty.

From any angle we look at this triangle, we need to keep all three areas balanced. Some churches are all about worship and revival, but their members don’t have meaningful relationships with each other. Other churches have wonderful relationships between their members, but they don’t reach out to unbelievers. And some churches are so focused on changing the world that they don’t seem to care about God and the Truth. Finding balance is hard, and it’s a sign of how much we want to be like Jesus.

Does your church thoroughly train you to have a passionate, life-changing relationships with God, with a few Christian friends, and equip you to convert and disciple non-Christians?

A tripod is a good analogy to keep in mind. Just as a tripod needs all three legs to stand upright, the Christian life needs all three main relational priorities in balance. Each of these priorities is important and should be valued and nurtured in harmony.



### **Each of those 3 priorities is divided in 3 core values:**

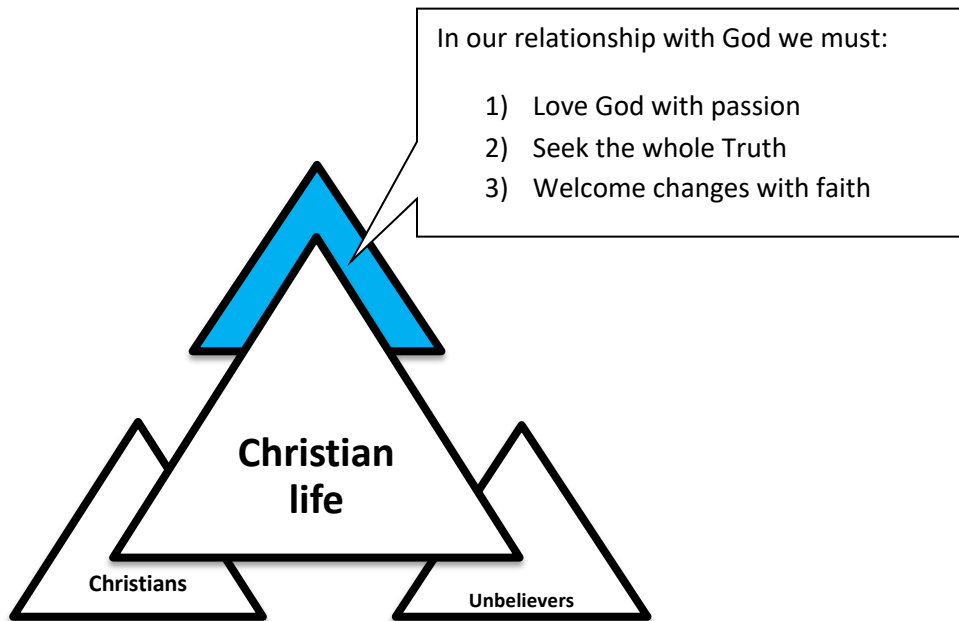
Now, here’s the thing: there are a lot of goals and activities we can choose to achieve to have a great relationship with God, Christians, or unbelievers. But what are the most effective and biblical ones? What are the main ingredients that help us have a passionate relationship with God, life-changing relationships with other Christians and strategies that will impact unbelievers? In other words, what are the core values that practically define those three main priorities?

To keep things simple and essential, I’ve only described three core values for each main area. So, we have a total of 9 core values. Now, if the top 3 main relational priorities of life seem to be universal and transcending every culture, their core values may really differ from one nation to another.

What I’ll be presenting in this paper are values that I believe are applicable to all cultures, but particularly relevant for Western nations that have been influenced by post-modern values.

My reason for this choice is that most Western Christians have a hard time welcoming suffering with faith and finding it even harder to confront others with the truth, because these aren't values that are part of their hedonistic and individualist culture. To include a supernatural dimension in their evangelism is not something they're used to either, whereas this is becoming more common in most churches in the developing world.

## **To love God implies the following 3 core values:**

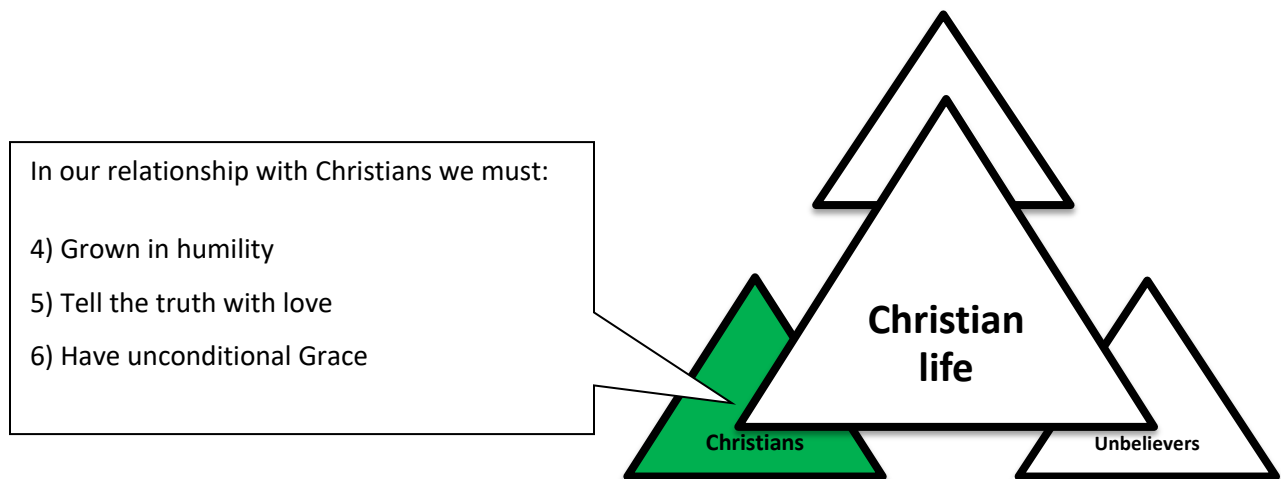


I have much to say regarding each on of those values (you can study all of them in my book and the articles I have on my site), but for now, I'll give you a quick rundown.

- 1) I believe we should have a passionate relationship with God. This means building an intimate and emotional connection with Him through spiritual practices like prayer, meditation, fasting, and personal retreats. We should also seek God in creative and original ways to hear His voice and stay in love with Him.
- 2) The second core value, "seek the whole truth," means we need to be intellectually and spiritually disciplined in asking questions and hearing both sides of any truth. This helps us find the complete truth as revealed in the Scriptures. Ultimately, this quest should lead us to know God and ourselves better, so we have practical answers for every aspect of our lives, whether it's moral, social, political, physical, or any other "al" that life throws our way.

- 3) Finally, the third core value, “welcome changes with faith,” deals with the idea that all suffering in life is an opportunity to change and grow in Christ. Instead of resigning or even opposing these challenges, we should have faith that all things are possible through Christ.

### **To love Christians implies the following 3 core values:**

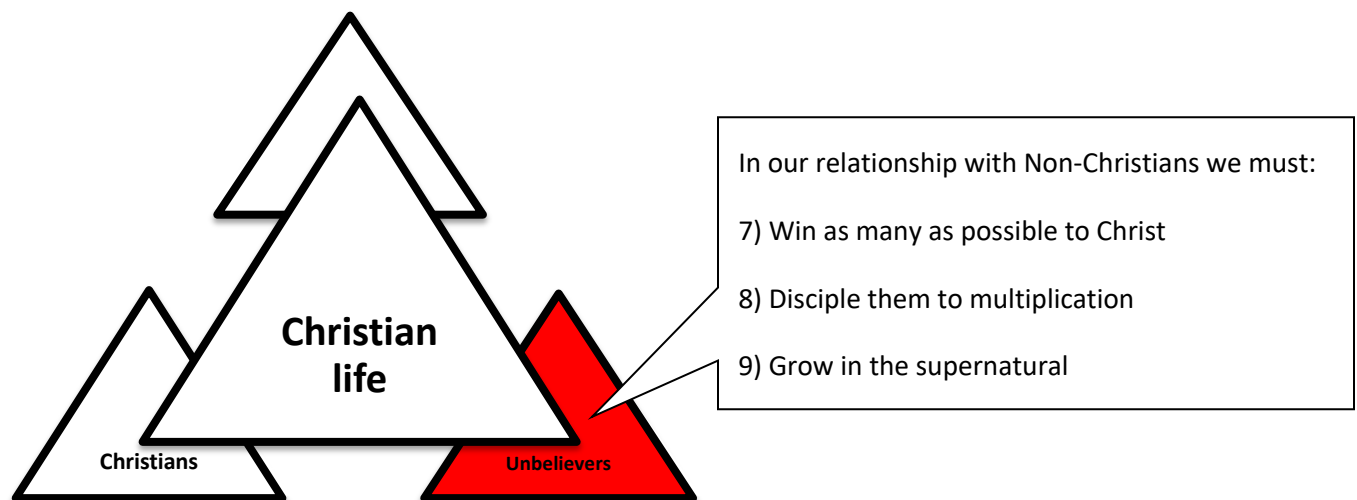


- 4) The fourth value is “humility.” It’s not just about learning from others and accepting corrections. It’s also about being open and honest about our weaknesses and sins with a few trusted friends. If we don’t get a clear picture of ourselves from others, we’ll give them the wrong impression.
- 5) The fifth value is “telling the truth.” It means gently but firmly pointing out the truth of other Christians’ sins, with patience and love. Sometimes, we can’t always speak our minds to believers outside our inner circle, but we should always do this with our close friends. If we don’t do this, our churches will be unhealthy and useless.
- 6) The sixth value is “unconditional grace.” It means accepting and loving people as they are, just like God loves us. Even if we don’t agree with their sins, we must still accept them with patience, no matter if they ever change or not.

Combining these three values above will transform our lives and protect our communities. For instance, Jesus corrected five churches in the book of Revelations that had issues on the values I am advocating:

- Ephesus had lost the first value, her passion for God.
- Thyatira and Pergamum, refused to practice the fifth value, which is to confront sins in their midst.
- Laodicea and Sardis didn't cherish humility, the fourth value, because they gave false impressions of themselves.

### **To love non-Christians implies the following 3 core values:**



- 7) The ultimate goal in our relationship with this world is not just to be compassionate and serving, but to convert as many as possible to Jesus. The seventh core value, to "win as many as possible", challenges us to all develop a lifestyle where all our priorities in life are to lead as many people as possible to the Saviour.
- 8) The eighth core value "disciples them to multiplication" implies not only the idea that we should train every single one of our converts into a complete obedience to Jesus, but that they should do the same with others, such that we have a multiplication of mature disciples.
- 9) Finally, the ninth core value, "grow in the supernatural," encourages us to constantly minister with the Holy Spirit's supernatural power. The focus is not on seeking experiences for ourselves, but on having power to better win others to Christ.

In summary, this leads us to the following:

## To become like Jesus

Passionate  
relationship with  
God

Life-changing  
friendships with  
Christians

Win and mature  
every Non-  
Christian to Christ

Love God  
with  
passion

Seek the  
whole  
truth

Welcome  
changes  
with faith

Grow in  
humility

Tell the  
truth with  
love

Uncon-  
ditional  
Grace

Win as  
many as  
possible to  
Jesus

Disciple  
them to  
multipli-  
cation

Grow in  
the super-  
natural

Translated in today's language, the green is my vision statement, the blue is my mission statement, and the blue are my core values!

### Conclusion:

To truly experience the Christian life to its fullest, we should emulate Jesus' character and learn from the early church. This requires integrating Jesus' three priorities:

- A passionate relationship with God, which includes a relentless pursuit of the truth and embracing suffering with faith.
- Deep relationships with other Christians that radically transform our lives.
- A lifestyle that, with the power of the Holy Spirit, converts and disciple as many individuals as possible.

This is the challenging, radical, and uncompromising Christianity I seek. It follows a simple plan, the master plan, that hasn't changed since Jesus. Do you have those 3 priorities in your own life?