

Message

Title: The Faith Trap

Speaker: Why Following Jesus Isn't A Transaction

Date: 5 July 2026

“Real faith isn’t a trade—it’s a relationship with God that never runs out.”

Introduction

This week, move beyond 'transactional prayers' and seek God simply for who He is.

Have you ever caught yourself trying to 'earn' God's favour rather than simply knowing Him?

Are you following Jesus, or just trying to get something from Him? This week at Assemble Church, we explored 'The Faith Trap'—the easy slide from genuine trust in God to simply treating Him like a cosmic vending machine. Drawing from the restoration of Peter in John 21 and other stories, we learned that faith has to be more than ticking religious boxes or expecting a pay-off for good behaviour.

Instead of transactional faith, Jesus invites us into a life-changing relationship built on grace, not performance. It is only through knowing Him and abiding in Him—especially when things aren't going our way—that our faith matures and bears lasting fruit. Let's make it our goal not to use God, but to deeply know Him: the true treasure of our faith.

Scripture

John 21:15-19 — So when they had eaten their breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I have affection for you.”



He said to him,
“Feed my lambs.”

James 2:19 — You believe that God is one. You do well. The demons also believe, and shudder.

John 15:5 —
I am the vine. You are the branches. He who remains in me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Philippians 2:12 — So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Psalms 63 — God, you are my God.
I will earnestly seek you.
My soul thirsts for you.
My flesh longs for you,
in a dry and weary land, where there is no water.

Luke 15 — Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming close to him to hear him.

Matthew 19 — When Jesus had finished these words, he departed from Galilee, and came into the borders of Judea beyond the Jordan.

John 11 — Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus from Bethany, of the village of Mary and her sister, Martha.

Don't Miss This

- Belief isn't faith: Believing in God is not the same as putting your trust in Him—real faith is about invested reliance, not just agreement.



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Know God · Find Freedom · Discover Purpose · Make A Difference

- Transactional faith disappoints: Using God to get what we want often leaves us frustrated. God isn't a vending machine—He invites us into a genuine relationship.
- Grace restores, not performance: Just like Peter, our place with Jesus is secured by His grace, not by how well we perform or tick the right boxes.

Let's Chat

1. Where do you see the difference between belief and faith in your own journey?
2. How have you wrestled with disappointment in your faith—was it because of unmet expectations?
3. In what ways do you notice 'transactional' thinking creeping into your prayers or Christian life?
4. What does abiding in Jesus (the vine) look like practically during your week?
5. How can your group encourage each other towards relational, not just transactional, faith?

