“Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”

Have you ever come to a place in your life where religion seems dry? I find more and more people our age get stuck in the mire and drudgery that is “religion.” In high school I used to walk around in a daze, tricked into a false sense of morality by the pastors who genuinely loved me very much. A “false sense of morality” is simply the lie that if one does and says the right things and goes to church then one’s relationship with God must be genuine.

I am convicted to tell you that God wants more.

One of the mysteries of our faith that is proclaimed from every pulpit is that “God loves us,” and while this is very true, the weight of it covers up the even more amazing fact that God genuinely likes us for who we are. We have been created and are valued by a God that could think of no better way to spend eternity than to get to know us better.

God doesn’t want our right words or perfect church attendance. God wants our love and He wants us to share our love with our neighbors, as gritty and rough as it may be. Maybe this is true justice, how after all could we be more righteous?

**Life Question:** How does it feel to know God likes (and loves) you, mistakes and all? What are the doubts in your life that religion has cast that are causing you to miss out on this love?

**Prayer:** Gracious God, help us to come to a place of peace with who we are, and to come to realize the potential of your consuming love in our lives. Amen.

*James Demmel, Alumnus, Class of 2014*