

BREAKING OUT OF LEGALISM – PART 1

“What is Legalism?”

Legalism is nothing new; for it has existed throughout human history. People have tried to placate God through sacrifice, denial, giving money, keeping a code, and so forth, to earn his favor. Such was the case with the religious leaders in Jesus’ day. Jesus objected to their legalism and offered freedom from man-made rules, codes, and regulations so that we can enjoy our relationship with him. In this morning’s teaching, we step into Jesus’ world and gain insights into the legalism that existed in his day and still exists today.

#1. THE DEFINITION OF LEGALISM

- A. Definition: Legalism is an attempt to replace the liberty inherent in the gospel with conformity to rules and regulations to earn God’s favor. Whether for salvation or sanctification, one’s adherence to a code is the means by which he gains God’s approval.
- B. Christ sets us free from all manmade rules, Gal 5:1

#2. THE LIBERTARIAN APPROACH TO RULES – LESS IS BETTER

- A. The Greco-Roman religions were libertarian
- B. The situational ethics – postmodernism has no absolutes
- C. The grace mantra – We’re under grace not law
- D. The biblical summary statements that reduce rules
- E. The KIS principle – keep it simple, Mat 22:36-40, Gal 5:13-14

#3. THE LEGALISTIC APPROACH TO RULES – MORE IS BETTER

- A. The legalism of the Pharisees & scribes was crushing, Mat 23:4, Acts 15:10-12
- B. Their oral traditions added commentary to the Bible
- C. Their traditions often conflicted with Scripture
- D. Their legalism was condemned, Mat 23
- E. The Pharisees regarded Jesus as a libertarian, Mat 11:19

4. THE LEGALISM OF THE PHARISEES & SCRIBES PRODUCED FLAWED RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. Their righteousness did not get them in heaven, Mat 5:20
- B. Their righteousness bypassed the heart
- C. Their righteousness was based on keeping a code
- D. Their righteousness was hypocritical
- E. Their righteousness was self-righteousness

#5. THE LORD JESUS FREES PEOPLE FROM THE HARSH LEGALISM OF THE PHARISEES & SCRIBES, Mat 11:28-30

- A. Jesus gives rest for the soul
- B. Jesus is gentle & humble
- C. Jesus’ yoke is easy & burden is light

NOTES:

LEGALIST OR LIBERTARIAN?

1

5

10

Legalism
Add Rules

Libertarianism
Subtract Rules

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are your insights regarding the definition of legalism?
2. What has your experience been with legalism in the home, your church, other Christians and so forth?
3. In what ways are the summary statements in Scripture comforting? (Mat 22:36-40, Gal 5:13-14)
4. In what ways do Christians sometimes abuse the grace mantra: "We're under grace not law?"
5. Read Galatians 5:1 and discuss the implications of that verse for everyday life.
6. What was the bone of contention between Jesus and the Pharisees?
7. Discuss the righteousness of the Pharisees and why Jesus objected to it. (Matthew 5:20)
8. Did the religious establishment regard Jesus as a libertarian or legalist? Why?
9. Discuss how Matthew 11:28-30 stands in stark contrast with the Pharisees and Scribes.
10. What is your takeaway from this teaching?

Welcome

to

Hillcrest Church

Love God, Love Each Other!

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.
Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be
burdened again by a yoke of slavery.*

Galatians 5:1

February 20, 2022

Pastor Bruce Guckelberg, PhD

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIS MORNING'S TEACHING

Pastor Bruce is beginning his new series "Breaking Out of Legalism". For those of you following in the book read chapters 4-9 in preparation for next week's message.

JOIN US FOR OUR ONLINE GATHERINGS

Tuesday Prayer at 7:00pm

Wednesday Bible Study at 6:30pm

Go to the online meeting room on our website (hillcrestRoseville.com) to access the gathering.

YOGA FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Every Saturday at 10am Pastor Bruce is teaching a yoga class which is open to our community at no charge. Invite a friend.

BOOKS FOR THE SERMON SERIES ARE AVAILABLE

Pastor Bruce's book on legalism is available in the back of the sanctuary for \$20, or any donation. The book is also available on amazon in the kindle format. All proceeds of the book go into the building fund.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Our offering box is in the back of the sanctuary. You can place your tithes and offerings there, or you can visit our website and give online (hillcrestroseville.com).