

The 19th Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, October 15 2017

“The Supremacy of Christ ~ Life vs. Legalism”

Colossians 2:1 6-23

Legalism = Strict _____ to the law—specifically as it relates to faith. It’s the religion of human _____ that believes _____ is the only way to gain favour with God.

The danger of legalism is that it makes _____ to man-made rules the _____ of faith and spirituality. It shifts the focus from _____ and what He’s already done us on the Cross to us and what we have to do.

Legalism creates an atmosphere in which people can be _____ of the way they act, but they can’t be _____, because there’s always something more that they have to do. To them, Christianity isn’t a _____ to be enjoyed; but a religion to be _____.

Shadows are merely a one-dimensional _____ of the _____ thing.

Just as the OT laws and festivals were a shadow of _____, keeping religious rules and observing religious rituals in order to please God are only a shadow of the real thing—namely a _____ with God through Jesus.

In Jesus all the _____ of God dwells; in Him we have grace upon grace—and all our made-made rules, regulations, and rituals, are only cheap _____ and poor _____—a shadows of grace.

9 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT LEGALISM

- **Legalism is _____.**
We tend to judge others by our own _____ of what is acceptable and what is not.

- **Legalism is highly _____.**
“These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. In vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.” (Mark 7:6-8)

- **Legalism is _____.**
A strict adherence to the rules can take a _____ faith and make it dull and _____.

- **Legalism produces bad _____.**
It produces large quantities of:

It majors in _____ and misguided _____, urging its followers to evaluate their relationship with God on the basis of standards and scores. This kind of superficial spirituality _____ the Holy Spirit and short-circuits the work of _____ in our lives.

- **Legalism is _____ and _____.**
Legalists insists that everyone live up to the _____ they’ve adopted. When we think this way, we miss the delight of _____ in the church.

- **Legalism is never _____.**
Legalism can be _____ because people want to know exactly how to act and what will be the result of their behaviour. Following a set of rules or regulations may give us a sense of _____, however, it’s only short _____.

- **Legalism enslaves us in _____ religion.**
Christianity is the only religion that is _____-based—meaning it’s based on God granting guilty sinners a full and _____ pardon.

- **Legalism _____ the Lord.**
“You hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces...You blind guides! You are like whitewashed tombs. You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?” (Matthew 23:13ff)

- **Legalism makes it impossible for people to see _____.**
Rules and regulations take away the power of the _____ and the power of _____ in our lives.

CHOOSING LIFE IN CHRIST INSTEAD OF LEGALISM

- Remember our legal _____ before God. We are _____ in Him, _____ in Him, _____ in Him, and _____ in Him. We do not need to _____ ourselves to anything other than Christ and His _____.

- Resist the lures of _____.

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3 WAYS TO RESIST THE LURES OF LEGALISM

#1: Refuse to judge by _____.

“Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.” (Colossians 2:16-17)

Since _____ has come, special diets and obligatory days are no longer necessary because every Old Testament feast looked forward to Him—they were shadows of the _____ that is fulfilled in Christ.

“The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come, not the good things themselves. The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship.” (Hebrews 10:1)

We _____ eternal—especially when it come to the things of _____. Because it’s relatively easy to _____ by externals.

When it comes to matters of faith—it’s what in the _____ that counts and not the externals.

Do you judge by externals?

What role do things like music, liturgy, ritual, tradition play in your faith?

#2: Reject false _____.

“Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.” (Colossians 2:18-19)

Disqualify = *katabrabeuo* =

We should not put ourselves under any spiritual authority that is not _____ to Christ and to the absolute authority of His Word.

Everything we say and do—any words or visions that we feel have come from Go—must be received and _____ in light of _____.

When it comes to our life, our faith, and the church, the _____ alone must be the _____ and _____ of everything we say and do.

Who or what is the authority in your life?

What role does Scripture play in your values and priorities?

#3: Renounce religious _____.

“Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ‘Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!’? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh

treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.” (Colossians 2:20-23)

The false teachers focussed on personal _____ as the way to curb their appetites. This might sound good on the surface because we can all use a little _____ in our lives. However, they were teaching that these disciplines were _____ for fellowship with God.

We can’t _____ God’s favour. All we can do is _____ it.

Rules don’t abolish the _____ because they feed the _____. We need God’s _____ working in us. It’s His grace, not a regimen of rules and activities that affect real life change. _____ is the work of the Holy Spirit in us, not something we grunt out in our own _____ through hard work and discipline.

We need to teach grace before _____, because once grace is understood and embraced, it will always lead to commitment.

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age...” (Titus 2:11-12)

Are you living under grace or under the law?



Grace removes the pressure to _____. God _____ us just the way we are—not as we _____ be. Grace tells us God has _____ it all and God will do it all, and so there’s no longer any _____ for us to look busy, work hard, or seek His applause. (P) Grace sets us free to to enjoy a _____ rather than endure a set of rules.



How would you describe your faith?

Is it focussed on yourself or on Christ?

Has it set you free or tied you up?

Are you a rule-keeper or a grace-liver?

Do you focus on the externals or internals of faith?

Are your enduring religion or enjoying relationship?

What old laws are still on your books this morning?

Are you ready to nail them to the Cross so that you can be free?