

LEGALISM IS NOT LEGAL

I Hate Legalism

6 Reasons Why I Hate Legalism

1. Legalism divides

Galatians 2:11-12 When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. ¹² Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. (NIV)

2. Legalism produces a critical & judgmental attitude

Galatians 2:12 Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. (NIV)

Matthew 7:1-5 “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. ³ “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye. (NIV)

3. Legalism brings confusion

Galatians 1:6-7 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. (NIV)

Galatians 2:13 The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. (NIV)

4. Legalism is motivated by works

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (NIV)

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (NIV)

Galatians 2:16 know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in

Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified. (NIV)

Galatians 3:1-3 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. ² I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? ³ Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? (NIV)

5. Legalism says Christ's death is not good enough

Galatians 2:21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!" (NIV)

6. Legalism is dependent upon self

Galatians 3:21 Well then, are God's laws and God's promises against each other? Of course not! If we could be saved by his laws, then God would not have had to give us a different way to get out of the grip of sin-for the Scriptures insist we are all its prisoners. The only way out is through faith in Jesus Christ; the way of escape is open to all who believe him. (TLB)

Galatians 2:19-20 For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (NIV)

CG Questions

1. Why are legalistic people so judgmental and critical?
2. Why do people think they need to work to be in right relationship with God?
3. How does legalism bring division?
4. Why can't we be saved by our good works?
5. Why is legalism self-focused instead of God-focused?