

Legalism

Many church people today believe that Legalism is directly associated with man-made church laws that no longer are required because those rules and restrictions are from men.

Many churches believe and teach that Jesus has set us free to live anyway we choose without restrictions, and we can do as we please. **“Free to be me”** is a common phrase today in many churches.

When we examine the Scriptures, we find an altogether different story. God has always been involved with His people’s lives and with their lifestyle.

In **Numbers 8:17**, God said that He sanctified Israel for himself. The word **“sanctify”** in the Hebrew means: ***to make, to pronounce, to observe as clean, ceremonially or morally; to consecrate, to dedicate for a specific purpose.***

In the Greek, the word **“sanctify”** means: ***to make holy, to purify, to consecrate, to set aside for a specific purpose.***

To be sanctified is to be set apart from all others. God wanted His people to be separated from everyone else.

He did not want the Israelites to give their sons and daughters in marriage to the ungodly nations that were around them. **(Exodus 34:14-16)**

He knew that the association with these ungodly nations would turn the hearts of His people away from following Him.

This **“isolation”** from the influences of ungodly nations would insulate them from turning away from serving the Lord.

God has always been involved in every way with His people from the food they ate to the clothes they wore. God led the children of Israel in their journeys, through all their ups and downs, through their backslidings and their recoveries.

The Old Testament is full of many examples of God's total involvement with His people. He gave them the Law to be their **"Schoolmaster"** to bring them to Christ. **(Galatians 3:24)** The Law was like a mirror to them. It revealed the inability to keep the Law; it offered no power to do such.

When Jesus came with the Gospel message, it brought power that enabled us to be born again and to become new creatures in Christ. **(2 Corinthians 5:17)**

He put His laws into our hearts. **(Hebrews 8:10)** Through the born-again experience that the Gospel of Jesus Christ gives us, we now have new drives, new incentives, new desires, new motives. We have become partakers of a divine nature. **(2 Peter 1:4, James 1:22-27)**

Yet, in every child of God, there exist a warfare of the mind. **(Romans 7:23)** What you feed your fleshly mind will determine the outcome of your life and your lifestyle. **(Romans 8:5,7)**

It is the input of teaching that will determine the output of the life you live. The old saying is true: ***"What ceases to be preached, ceases to be practiced."*** What is **NOT** taught from the pulpit of churches today will not show up in the lives of those in the pews. It is the leaders of the churches today who are at fault.

Church members who do not read or study the Word of God are being misled into deception and falsehood accepting a way of compromise.

Many churches have become activity centers involved with being busy but not being busy with saving lost souls. The lullaby of compromise is being heard all over our world today.

God is more interested in the quality of souls being saved, that is, truly repented and changed lives, rather than the quantity of people joining churches. The old saying is so true: ***“If you do what you have always done, you will get what you always got.”***

Many changes have taken place in churches today. Many Christians who were once strong are now become weak. When you get weak, you do weak things.

You become known for your weakness. Many people who look for a church today prefer a **“Burger King”** Church.

A **“Burger King”** church is one that promotes a ***“Have it your way”*** lifestyle; an ***“anything goes”*** lifestyle; God is ***“ok”*** with whatever-lifestyle-you-choose church.

Nothing could be farther from the Truth. This whole ***“do what you want”, “go anywhere you want”, “look any way you want”*** is simply **NOT** in the Bible anywhere.

Let’s see what the Bible says: ***“But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation”*** (1 Peter 2:15-16)

That word **“conversation”** means not only in our speaking, but in our total behavior or lifestyle. Other notable Scriptures that tell us what is acceptable and pleasing to God can be found in **2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1, Hebrews 12:14, James 1:27, and James 4:4.**

The whole Bible is full of many more Scriptures just like these. The Scriptures always have the final word. In the Scriptures, we learn what is pleasing to God and what is **NOT**.

God said in **Isaiah 62:6** that He put watchmen on the walls of the city to warn of approaching danger. It is God who is aware of everything.

In **Isaiah 56:10-12**, we find a description of watchmen who are **NOT** doing their job for the people. Today, the **“watchmen”** in this reference refers to the leadership in our churches today.

Many of our leadership are at fault here. They refuse to teach and warn their people about the approaching danger of worldliness. The church leadership has a tremendous responsibility. (**Ezekiel 33:6-9**)

Often times, when leadership changes, churches change. (**Isaiah 9:16**) Being ignorant is not knowing the facts but being willingly ignorant means you do not want to know the facts.

Remember, we prove the choices we make by our lifestyle. (**1 Samuel 16:7**) Our outward appearance does affect others. We are walking and talking Bibles. (**2 Corinthians 3:2**)

Conclusion

The term **“Legalism”** has absolutely nothing to do with the passing away of the Old Testament Law; for Jesus said that He came to fulfill the Law. (**Matthew 5:17**)

Now, He has written His laws in our hearts and in our minds. (**2 Corinthians 3:3, Hebrews 10:16**) Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (**Hebrews 13:8**)

What displeases God in the Old Testament is still displeasing to Him today. The fact that the Old Testament Law has “ended”, does not give us a license to live and look any way we want.

The Bible teaches us just the opposite. **(1 Peter 2:9)** Now, it is more important than ever before to **NOT** give in to the **“Lullaby of Compromise”**.

We must never live our Christian lives as a haphazard, **“anything goes”**, casual affair. Remember, casual is just two letters away from casualty.

[BACK](#)