



Sermon Notes: Legalism vs. Love

Characteristics of Legalism:

1. Legalism adds rules to God's Word.
2. Legalism is obsessed with keeping the letter of the law.
3. Legalism exposes your failures in order to condemn you.
4. Legalism completely misses the purpose of the law.
5. Legalism is blindly hypocritical.
6. Legalism is more concerned with who's right than what's right.
7. Legalism thinks people exist to serve the law.

Characteristics of Jesus:

1. Jesus says the law exists to serve people.
2. Jesus is obsessed with observing the spirit and purpose of the law.
3. Jesus exposes your failures in order to restore you.
4. Jesus saves you from the curse of the law through a costly exchange.

Gospel Applications:

1. Do I love being correct or do I love compassion?
2. Do my interpretations and applications of Scripture help or harm people?
3. Am I more passionate about a system or a Savior?



Application Questions: Legalism vs. Love

1. What's one thing you did this week to make your church feel less like a museum for saints or a pub for sinners and more like an E.R. for the sick and broken?
2. What are some examples of rules that you've seen Christians add to Scripture?
3. Pick an answer from #2 that you're pretty familiar with. Why do you think that rule was created in the first place? How do you think people got away from that original intent and made it into a legalistic thing?
4. Where do you see a "who's right, not what's right" attitude in culture today?
5. Let's say for the sake of illustration that both Jesus and a legalist caught you telling a whole web of lies. How do you think Jesus would react to the exposure of your sin? How do you think the legalist would react? Which is closest to your natural reaction?
6. In light of #5, what are some things that should characterize the way Christians correct one another?
7. Why do you think people are so obsessed with being "correct" even when they're obviously and hypocritically wrong? What does this reveal about our hearts when we act this way?
8. What system is most important to you - i.e. most central to your identity? (Hint: This system might be religious, political, ideological, financial, organizational, etc.) What's one way you've let Jesus overrule your system in the past month? If Jesus isn't challenging and overruling your system from time to time, what does that show you?
9. What are some possible things Jesus might've meant when he said, "The Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath"? What was the Sabbath meant to be/do for you? What are some practical things you could do to enjoy the Sabbath in these ways?
10. What one personal interpretation or application of Scripture makes you least merciful toward others? What could you do to hold your conviction with more compassion?
11. What one thing is God calling you to do in response to this message?