

Leader's Guide / For Sunday Jan. 14, 2018

Quick Review

1. According to Pastor Mark Brunott, there are five reasons why legalism is flawed. What are they and how does knowing this information help you live out your faith on a daily basis?

LEADER NOTES

1. Legalism is not necessary because we are complete in Christ.
2. Legalism is a long list with no end.
3. Legalism is manmade.
4. Legalism looks spiritual but isn't.
5. Legalism doesn't allow us to conquer the flesh.

My Story

1. Name one rule that you have had to follow at some point in your life that never really made sense to you. (such as rules at home, school, work, public, etc.). What do you think provoked the creation of the rule and what benefit did it serve?
2. Do you prefer to follow specific rules/guidelines that govern your life or do you prefer general and vague principles that give you freedom to interpret and apply them as you see fit? What are the strengths and weakness of each approach?

Digging Deeper

1. Tricky Verses: If unclear to the group, address these specific questions from Colossians 2:9-23:
 - 2:11 - What does it mean that you have been circumcised in Him [Jesus]?
 - 2:12 – What does it mean that we have been baptized in Him [Jesus]?
 - 2:16 – Explain what this verse is saying.
 - 2:20 – What does it mean that you have died to the elemental spiritual forces of this world?
 - With these questions answered, summarize Paul's argument in Colossians 2:9-23.

LEADER NOTES

- 2:11 – most likely a reference to conversion and an expression of solidarity with Christ.
2:12 – identification with Christ in his death and resurrection.
2:16 – Some were advocating for following Jewish observances in order to advance their faith or to establish their spiritual standing with God.
2:20 – most likely means demonic spirits or association with pagan principles.
2. Read Matthew 5:17-20. How does Christ fulfill the Law of the Prophets? What does this mean in terms of the importance or relevance of the Law for Christians?
 3. Read Galatians 5:1-6. How is our spiritual standing with God determined according to this passage? What does it mean to have freedom in Christ and how does that relate to legalism?
 4. Read Matthew 15:1-9. What does Jesus teach about external rituals and inward purity? What is the application for someone who is trying to live as a Christian?

Taking it Home

1. There is an odd tension between living a life of obedience and freedom in Christ. How does trying to be a good Christian without being too legalistic tug at your heart? Where do you feel this tension and how do you address it when you experience it?
2. What needs to happen in your life in order to be less legalistic?
3. What does it mean to be complete in Christ? After your group has created a short list of what it means to be complete in Christ, pray it for one another at the end of your group meeting.