



**"More rules and regulations make a person more spiritual."**

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**Legalism:** Any attempt to *help God out* with extra *rules* & *regulations*.  
(Man made rules / rituals / ceremonies -- not found in Bible  
but we think it will help us walk with God and  
protect us from sin or make God like us more.)

**→ Legalism is not obedience to Christ's commandments**

If you're a follower of Christ He expects us to follow Him in wholehearted obedience.

**Tit. 2:11-12**

*"The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age"*

**→ Legalism not adopting strong personal convictions**

→ There is nothing wrong with extra *rules / regulations / ceremonies / rituals that are self imposed* – i.e. you have added them to your life to protect a unique spiritual weakness in your life or to build a strength. You have freedom in Christ if it is a good thing for you or it helps you avoid what drags you down.

**Legalism is** when we take those rules and we **impose them on others.**

**Isa 29:13**

*The Lord says:*

*"These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of **rules taught by men.**"*

**1 Tim 4:1-6**

*The Spirit clearly says ( i.e. is absolutely certain to happen) that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and **things taught by demons.***

"Taught by demons" - whether it is:

→ "Big L" legalism is any attempt to earn your salvation by contributing your own works to the work accomplished by Jesus on the cross. In others words, it's a "Christ-plus" message.

### **Gal. 1:8-9**

*"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed."*

➔ "Little I" legalism, common even in "good churches" today, they may accept salvation by grace alone, but then believe all must follow certain prescribed extra-biblical standards for godly conduct and favor in God's sight.

### **1 Tim 4:1-6**

*(Here is how this demonic teaching is disseminated) 2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron (What kinds of things do they do?) 3 They forbid people to marry ("if you are really spiritual than you will be celebrate.") and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. 4 For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. 6 If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus,*

## **Why is the Legalism Myth so Dangerous?**

### **1) It assumes God forgot something.**

*"If we just put this extra fence up people won't sin. Add this extra rule or prohibition and people will follow God more carefully..."*

### **Prov 30:5-6**

*"Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. 6 Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar."*

### **2) it produces spiritual arrogance.**

### **Luke 18:9-14**

*And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: 10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 "The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' 13 "But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' 14 "I*

*tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." NASU*

**3) It is spiritually powerless** (contrary to what the legalist might think – it is spiritually powerless – and make one more likely to violate God’s law than less likely.)

**Col 2:20-23**

*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: 21 "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? 22 These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. 23 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.*