



PICK AND CHOOSE

Compartmentalizing Sin

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Pockets of legalism continue to exist in today's church. It's a pick and choose system of Christian living that sets many apart by self-righteousness. As a matter of fact, many legalists tend to be mean spirited, even hateful when others fall short of their self-imposed religious dogma. Legalism by definition is a strict adherence to the law, which supposedly makes one acceptable to God. Legalists believe their good works please God and eventually secure them a place in heaven. In other words, they must earn their salvation. How sad!



Legalism is destructive, and self-contradicting. It provides a convenient cover up for those who live to hide their true, darker sides. Consider these real life scenarios:

1. A pastor uses his pulpit to bash other pastors and churches who may not "preach it right," or who negate the power of the Holy Spirit, while he secretly views internet porn.
2. A man posts Scriptures on Facebook, often with a corrective edge. What most don't know is that he lives with a woman to whom he is not married.
3. A man who attends church only when it's convenient, or if he doesn't receive a "better offer," but freely criticizes and gossips about the pastor and others in the church.
4. Christians who work feverishly to hide their beer and wine habits, some who even have stocked bars in their homes, but who insist that it is inappropriate to wear casual clothes to church.
5. The one who says, "I will not sit in church with her. If only people knew the "real" person." With that, she climbs into bed with her live-in lover.

Legalism promotes a pick and choose attitude, wherein people compartmentalize their faith, choosing what is pleasing to God and what is not. Sin is determined by personal opinion.

Frankly, it's a disgusting way to serve the Lord. And to get all eyes off their self-righteous behavior, legalists are free to attack others who may disagree with, or even confront their folly.

Remember saint. We all struggle with the pull of sin in our lives and each of us will give an account one day for those things "done while in the body." True righteousness cannot be earned. It is Christ's imputed righteousness, placed upon us at salvation, that qualifies us for heaven. Our righteousness is filthy rags. We are not saved by good works, but surely, good works will follow us who truly love the Lord. Legalism, in my opinion, has done more to drive people out of the kingdom than all the other "bad stuff" combined.

To understand more about the destructive toll that legalism brings, study the books of Galatians and Romans. Allow the Holy Spirit to bring you into real freedom!