

Legalism - posted by ArtB (), on: 2014/8/25 20:29

I am replying to Savannah's posts, "Are you a Legalist?" which she wrote in the 'Articles and Sermons' I did not wish to post in the Discussion Forum: 'Articles and Sermons'. I am not writing a sermon, or an article, just my personal point of view.

In Savannah's 1st post, I was dumbfounded that when the Professor's college students complained about the Bible is very legalistic, but when they were asked to define legalistic, none of them could give a true definition of legalism. If I were there, I would have gave them the answer:

Legalism: a strict or EXCESSIVE conformity to a set of laws, or to a religious or moral code. By definition legalism goes beyond the LAW or statutes, be it the Bible, or man's laws.

An example of legalism is the Salem Massachusetts Witches Trial. Several children and teens were tried and convicted of being witches, and executed by hanging. And these people saw themselves as Christians upholding God's Laws.

Furthermore, The Mosaic Covenant is not the Covenant of Jesus Christ. As Paul clearly stated, well, it is :

Whoever puts themselves back under the Mosaic Covenant to live by keeping The Mosaic Law will have nullified the finished work of Christ and will Perish. Listen to what Paul says:

Gal 1:6-12

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 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! 9 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!

10 For, am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

11. For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Gal 3:1-14

You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? 2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? 4 Did you suffer so many things in vain â€” if indeed it was in vain? 5 So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

6 Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. 7 Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. 8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU." 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

10 For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM." 11 Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." 12 However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "HE WHO PRACTICES THEM SHALL LIVE BY THEM." 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us â€” for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE" â€” 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive

e the promise of the Spirit through faith.
NASU

So if salvation is through faith and all efforts by man of Salvation by keeping the Mosaic Law is doomed, then why did God give the Mosaic Law? -

Gal 3:15-29

Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it. 16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ. 17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. 18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

19 Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made. 20 Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one. 21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. 22 But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith that was later to be revealed. 24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

NASU

Gal 5

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 3 And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. 4 You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

7 You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you. 9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough. 10 I have confidence in you in the Lord that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you will bear his judgment, whoever he is. 11 But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. 12 I wish that those who are troubling you would even mutilate themselves.

13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

NASU

In the New Covenant with Jesus, we live by the Spirit, we walk by faith in God, and live under the Laws of Christ and not under the Mosaic Law. As Paul points out in Hebrews chapter 7, Jesus is not a Priest under the order of Levi, but has an eternal priesthood under the order of Melchizedek, and that where there is a change in priesthood, there is a change in law. Paul states that the "Old Mosaic Covenant" is replaced by the far superior "New Covenant" for we who have in Jesus, as is predicted by the Hebrew (Old) Testament.

Heb 7:11-8:13

11 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? 12 For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. 13 For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. 15 And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, 16 who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is attested of Him,

"YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

18 For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness 19 for the Law made nothing perfect, and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. 20 And inasmuch as it was not without an oath 21 (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, "THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND," "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER");

22 so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

23 The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, 24 but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. 25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

26 For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.

Hebrews 8

8:1 A Better Ministry

Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. 4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; 5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN." 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

7 A New Covenant

For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. 8 For finding fault with them, He says,

"BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; 9 NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD. 10 "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. 11 "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. 12 "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE."

13 When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. NASU

Re: Legalism, on: 2014/8/25 20:51

Art I am in agreement with your position as I have expressed a New Covenant position in different threads

The New Testament sets forth that we are under a New Covenant. Our hearts under the New Covenant are ruled by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Not by observing the external code of Sinai.

My thoughts.

Blaine

Re: , on: 2014/8/25 23:23

It's not so much the rightness of my position that is all important, although I am a lover of the Truth and my very soul is cast upon it, yet the condition of my heart carries equal weight. What does it profit a man if he understands all the mysteries yet have not love in his heart?.....bro Frank

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2014/8/26 8:21

Art:

It seems that many use the term legalism to mean the standards that another person tells me I am to uphold but that I do not wish to uphold. If I say, "As a believer you had not ought to do such and so", I will be branded a legalist by those who think they ought to be able to do that thing. The more separated from what are seen as societal "norms" a person's behavior is, the more "legalistic" they are branded.

Think about the other "isms". Buddhism, Taoism, etc.. These are all attempts to be right with God by following the teachings and tenets of Buddha, etc.. In like manner, legalism is the attempt to be right with God, to please Him, by following the law. Legalism has everything to do with your outward behavior only inasmuch that the person believes that their outward behavior is what God is interested in and goes about in their own effort to please God. True Christianity is also concerned with behavior, but in another sense. True Christianity is concerned with allowing the God that has already saved them by grace to change their outward man to ever increasing conformity to the image of a Holy God.

Re: - posted by ArtB (), on: 2014/8/26 13:36

"by appolus on 2014/8/25 23:23:58

It's not so much the rightness of my position that is all important, although I am a lover of the Truth and my very soul is cast upon it, yet the condition of my heart carries equal weight. What does it profit a man if he understands all the mysteries yet have not love in his heart?".....bro Frank

appolus, your words brought to my mind some things Amadeus Mozart said.

Mozart on Love:

â€œNeither a lofty degree of intelligence nor imagination nor both together go to the making of genius. Love, love, love, that is the soul of genius.â€

â€ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart on Jesus crucifixion, and death:

â€œAs death, when we come to consider it closely, is the true goal of our existence, I have formed during the last few years such close relationships with this best and truest friend of mankind that death's image is not only no longer terrifying to me, but is indeed very soothing and consoling.â€

â€ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

"I thank my God for graciously granting me the opportunity of learning that death is the key which unlocks the door to our true happiness."

- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Re: - posted by ArtB (), on: 2014/8/26 14:51

I thank you, Blaine, for your good comment.

Even in the OT, it was not even God's plan that to issue what came to be called 'The Mosaic Covenant', and He did so because the peoples of the Exodus, specially the gentiles, wanted a contract whereby they could hold God liable to terms which included very long lives, good health, and prosperity, for the them. God wanted them to walk by Him in faith and trust. So God gave the peoples of the Exodus what they asked for. God gave the Laws to Moses to give to the peoples of the exodus. Right Before Moses read the Law to the peoples of the exodus, God informed Moses before he gave the Law to the peoples, that these peoples are stiff-necked and they will not keep the terms of the LAW!

God wanted the people of the Exodus to walk by faith, not by Law, but walk with Him with full trust in Him. They wanted to hold God liable to His promises in writing. So he gave them what they asked for. Right before Moses gave them The LAW known as the Mosaic Covenant, bearing Moses name.

Right before God has Moses read the 'Mosaic Covenant' God tells Moses that theses peoples are stiff-necked and they will not keep My contract with them - the Mosaic Law. They crossed the Red Sea, and spent 40 years in the wilderness in what we call today, Saudi Arabia. Of all the people that were older than 19 when they left Egypt, all perished except Joshua and Caleb, whom God was pleased with them because of their faith in God.

Joshua is very special. His birth name was Hosea, the son of Nun. God asked Moses to go to the man named Nun, and take his Son, Hosea, and to change his name to Joshua. During the Exodus on the wilderness the Saudi Peninsula. Joshua was the only one on the Mountain called Sinai when Moses was receiving the Torah - The Law. during the 40 years in the wilderness, God lived in a Tent every night. The only persons to enter that tent that God dwelt in the night, were Moses, and this Joshua - the Son of Nun. Moses would go in and out of that Tent in which God dwelt by night. But Joshua stayed in that Tent where God dwelt. So this Joshua is a very important person, I believe that this person is actually whom we call Jesus, our Savior. Moses broke the Mosaic Covenant when he took credit for providing the water via the big rock that God split to give the peoples of the Exodus much needed fresh water., and therefore Moses could not enter the promised land, It is Joshua who brought God's people into God's Promised Land we now call Israel. And the days will come that Joshua (Gr. Jesus) brings us into Heaven. Our salvation is given freely through Jesus our Savior, and He will return.

urn and will take us Christians, and all true Israel as well, into Heaven where God dwells

Re: - posted by ArtB (), on: 2014/8/26 17:11

Well TwayneB, I did not consider you to be a legalistic person. The very purpose of the Mosaic Covenant is to cause sin to increase, thereby we come to the knowledge of sin, enticed by sin, and sin increases. That is what Law does.

Except for Jesus, everybody else sins, and often. So if your goal is to be obedient to and keep all of the Mosaic Laws that would apply to you, approximately 340 Laws, you will not succeed, nor obtain salvation via keeping the Law.

So God, in His mercy sent His only begotten Son, God from God in the flesh, the only Begotten God of God the Son, God from God. Jesus in the flesh was perfect, He never sinned. Then something strange happened, Y'shua -Joshua-Jesus instead of receiving all those great blessings promised to anyone who kept the entire Mosaic Law without sinning, instead Jesus took upon Himself the punishment due to a sinful violator of the Mosaic Covenant. His was the ultimate substitute Lamb of God, no further sacrifices are necessary for the removal (washing away by the blood of the TRUE and everlasting Perfect Lamb of God - Our Paschal Lamb, Y'shua, whose blood washed away our sins for to all whom accept it, and for all time). No Further sacrifices are necessary, Jesus was the perfect Lamb of God. And this is exactly the "FREE GIFT" from God as Paul called it, that whoever call upon the name of Jesus and accept this 'free gift', shall have everlasting life, and the abundantly good life, and He will remove our tears and fears from our eyes. There is POWER in the Blood of our Savior, and the love of God, our true Father.

Jesus never taught or preached the New Covenant while He lived, at best, He merely hinted of a New Covenant. Jesus was a true Rabbi, the real High Priest, and He only reached out to the people of God, the offspring Judah. If Jesus had taught of a New Covenant while He lived, He would have violated the Mosaic Law, making Him a sinner, and that would have been disqualified as a perfect Lamb of God! At one point, a gentile woman approached Jesus and asked for food for her and her child, Jesus response was that the food belongs to God's people (the Jews) and not for dogs. But she answered, do not masters give food to even their dogs. And because of her Faith in Jesus, Jesus gave her the food.

Upon Jesus death, God annihilated the Mosaic Covenant, and established the New Covenant in Jesus Christ, a Covenant by which God saves us. Does anybody here know the difference between Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant. They can't be the same thing.

Zechariah 11 4- 14

4 Thus says the Lord my God, "I will pasture the flock doomed to slaughter. Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished, and each of those who sell them says, 'Blessed be the Lord, for I have become rich!' And their own shepherds have no pity on them. For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land," declares the Lord; "but behold, I will cause the men to fall, each into another's power and into the power of his king; and they will strike the land, and I will not deliver them from their power."

7 So I pastured the flock doomed to slaughter, hence the afflicted of the flock. And I took for myself two staves: the one I called Favor and the other I called Union; so I pastured the flock. 8 Then I annihilated the three shepherds in one month, for my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also was weary of me. 9 Then I said, "I will not pasture you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be annihilated, let it be annihilated; and let those who are left eat one another's flesh." 10 I took my staff Favor and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples. 11 So it was broken on that day, and thus the afflicted of the flock who were watching me realized that it was the word of the Lord. 12 I said to them, "If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!" So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages. Then the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the Lord. Then I cut in pieces my second staff Union, to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.