

# “Legalism”

*Are we “legalists” by emphasizing  
respect for and obedience to  
Divine law?*

# “Legalism”

1. Respect for and adherence to law
2. Salvation through law-keeping rather than through faith in Jesus Christ

*Weren't the Pharisees "legalists" and did not Jesus condemn them for it?*

- **YES** - If as sole means to justification  
**Rom 3:19-23**
- **NO** - If mean "too strict adherence to law"  
**Mt 5:19-20; 15:1-9; 23:1-3**

*Didn't Paul oppose those who supported law keeping?*

- **YES** - If as sole means to justification  
**Rom 3:19-25**
- **NO** - If mean respect for & obedience to law - **Rom 3:23,29; 6:12-15...23 (1Jn 3:4); 13:8-10**
- Note: "Love" & "spirituality" recognize Law! **1Jn 5:3; Gal 6:1 ("trespass"), 8**

*Wasn't the law nailed to the cross and we now live under grace?*

- **Moses' law** - Col 2:14-17
- “Letter kills” = OT, *not* respect for and obedience to law - 2Co 3:6,7

(“legalism” is sometimes defined as “adherence to letter of the law rather than the spirit”)

## **Wrong views of LAW**

- Substitute human laws for Divine; teach but not do
- Justified by keeping law apart from faith in Christ
- We are under Law of Moses
- *There are no laws (rules, regulations) for the Christian* **1Jn 3:4**

*“Legalism” is **NOT**  
Obedience out of faith*

**Mt 28:18-20; 2 Th 1:8;**

**Jam 2:14f;**