

COLOSSIANS: Guarding the Gospel

Warm-Up Question:

Do you find being a Christian and living out your faith makes you more weary or tired, or does it bring you increasing life-giving freedom and joy? Explain.

READ: Colossians 2:16-23

I. GOSPEL: JOY HIJACKED

- ▶ What were some trying to teach the Christians in Colossians & what does Paul say about these man-made rules & traditions (vs. 16,18, 21-23)?
- ▶ Why would it be attractive to reduce our relationship with God down to simply keeping the rules? Why is it dangerous?
- ▶ Legalism says we are loved and accepted by God by our obedience to God. What does Vs. 23 say about legalism's ability to bear good fruit to God? What are some of the inward and outward bad fruits from legalism?
- ▶ In what ways do you struggle to think you are accepted or loved by God by what you do for him? (Ex. feeling guilt or shame or lack of God's love) How might this affect the way you treat others (spouse, children, etc)?

II. GOSPEL: JOY SECURED

- ▶ Read vs. 20 as well as Rom. 6:5-7, Gal. 2:20-21. What was required to deal with your law-breaking? If you are in Christ now, describe your relationship to Christ and to the law from these verses?
- ▶ Read the bottom two quotes to the right. Are there any ways you struggle to believe either of them?
- ▶ The more we believe the gospel, what are some of the fruits it produces in our own heart and life as well as toward others?
- ▶ What are some ways we can "preach the gospel to ourself" every day? What is one way you can grow in this?

What is one main take-away you want to apply in your life this week?

"Legalism is far more than the conscious belief that "I can be saved by my good works." It is a web of attitudes of heart and character. It is the thought that God's love for us is conditioned on something we can be or do. It is the attitude that I offer certain things—my ethical goodness, my relative avoidance of deliberate sin, my faithfulness to the Bible and the church — that support Christ's work and contribute to God's goodwill toward me."

You are more sinful than you could ever dare imagine and you are more loved and accepted than you could ever dare hope-at the same time.

— Tim Keller

"Our worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God's grace."

"Preach the gospel to yourself every day."

— Jerry Bridges

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