



*For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth... in every place.
(1 Thessalonians 1:8)*

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Schedule of Services

Sunday

Worship	9:30 AM
Bible Study	10:30 AM
Worship	6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study	1:30 PM
Bible Study	7:00 PM

Bible Call

(618) 667-9603

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WHAT IS WRONG WITH LEGALISM?

When one considers religion today, he might think it had been infiltrated by the ACLU. In the opinion of many, the American Civil Liberties Union has made a mess and mockery of our courts. They continue to bring lawsuits before the courts in the name of freedoms of individuals. They think the freedom of the individual is of greater value and importance than the right of all. It even appears they think freedom of the individual is above the law.

In the same way, there are those in religion that have the attitude that man should be free to do as he pleases when it comes to religious beliefs and worship. After all, man is under God's grace. Law is too restrictive. It is concluded that there is freedom in Christ in all things and there must be more tolerance of things to which Christianity has been *traditionally* opposed to. Anything more is legalism.

There are two problems with such an attitude. The first is that those with such an attitude think law and grace cannot coexist. The second problem with the above attitude is that it is contrary to God's teaching.

Consider, now, the first problem. Some think that law is set aside by the grace of God. They often cite scripture as evidence, claiming we are no longer under law, but under grace (Romans 6:14). Yet, the context of that very passage bears out that God demands obedience (Romans 6:14-18). The context of the entire letter demands obedience (Romans 1:5, 2:8, 16:26). Others claim that law is set aside by love. God's love covers all (1 John 4:9-10). Yet, even in His love, He expects obedience (1 John 2:2-5). The point Paul was making was that one is no longer under the law of Moses. He made it clear there is still a law of God for those under Christianity. For he referred to the law of God and being under law to Christ (Romans 7:25, 1 Corinthians 9:21). God is still the Law-giver (James 4:12). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the controlling authority (Matthew 28:18). Through His word one is told how to live and conduct himself (1 Timothy 3:14-15, Colossians 3:17). His law can be transgressed (1

John 3:4, Romans 4:15). When there is no law, there is chaos. Everyone does that which is right in his own mind. That was the problem in the days of the judges of Israel. They formed their own idols. They followed their own morals. And that is what many are trying to do today.

Second, God desires legalism, in the sense that He expects one to strictly and literally conform to His religious law. He has made that clear (Deuteronomy 4:2, 1 Corinthians 4:6, Revelation 22:18-19). Yes, there is freedom in Christ. Yet, that freedom has boundaries. As U. S. Citizens enjoy great freedoms in this country, those freedoms are enjoyed only within certain boundaries. They must still obey the laws of the land that grant those freedoms. They are not free to do as we please in all things. Likewise, the freedom found in Christ has certain boundaries. One must still obey the laws of God. One is free to do as he pleases only within the limits of that law. Yes, there must be tolerance in those matters which might be different from the traditions of the church, traditions that were put in place by men. Yet, the traditions of the church as given by the inspired writers of the Bible are God's truth and cannot be opposed or compromised (2 Thessalonians 2:15). Yes, one cannot impose his own standards, and one cannot legislate. God's word is the standard, and He has already legislated. As one has no right to impose his own standards, one has no right to free himself from God's standard. That is true with regard to salvation, worship, morality or any other matter legislated by God.

If holding fast to the principles of God's word is legalism, then one should want to be a legalist. He should want to please God in his teaching and worship, not man. He is free in Christ, but only free to do God's will. He should be tolerant of the liberties of others in Christ, but only so long as they do not take liberty from God's will. He is not free to impose *his* standard and to legislate *his* law, but neither is the one who desires to be without law. Both must yield to God's law.

TLM

Christ in Hebrews

When it comes to knowing about the characteristics of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit it is foolish to say that you understand every single detail concerning the Trinity. We do not know, nor can we understand fully every single detail concerning each member of the Trinity. However, it is one of the noblest studies to undertake. The book of Hebrews reveals a number of characteristics of Jesus, helping us to better understand who He is. Let us take a brief look at some of these characteristics of Christ.

In the first chapter of the book the reader will notice the supremacy of Christ (1:2). We learn that the Father spoke through the Son, appointing Him heir of all things, and He is by whom the Father made the worlds. The Deity of Christ is displayed in the first four verses. This is demonstrated when we read phrases like: “sat down at the right hand of majesty,” “being made so much better than the angels,” “a more excellent name than they.” It is vital for the Christian to understand the Deity and Supremacy of Christ. Jesus, being Deity, is everlasting. In verse eight we read, “But unto the son he saith, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” In this context we have the Father speaking to the Son calling him “God,” displaying the Deity of Christ and His everlasting nature. Without understanding these things, a loss of respect sneaks in and the Savior becomes devalued.

Now read Hebrews 2:10. Christ is our Captain, that is, our spiritual leader. He sanctifies us (2:11). For God, “madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour...set Him over the works of thy hands... put all things in subjection under His feet... put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him... But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man,” (2:7-9) Christ is our leader, and our sanctifier. He is also our high priest.

Christ being made in the likeness of man is able to relate with us in a fashion that God the Father and Holy Spirit do not. The Scriptures state that the very reason Christ was made like “his brethren” as that He might be able to be a “merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God” (2:17). As our high priest Christ is able to relate to us and comfort us (2:18). This priesthood under Christ is an everlasting one. (7:13-28). The Levites offered sacrifices every year, but Christ offered once, himself. “For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins” (Hebrews 5:1). “Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him. Thou art my son, today have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” By this we understand that Christ is the True, better, and excellent high priest for us today.

As we consider the few characteristics of Christ discussed, we better comprehend the Deity, the humility, the supremacy, the authority, and the sinless sacrifice of Christ. This is merely a sample of what we can learn about the wonderful characteristics of Christ through the book of Hebrews.

- Robert E. Guinn -

Mabery's Minutes



Thanks to all who provided food and helped with the set-up, serving, and clean-up following the monthly area wide singing last Friday. We had quite a few of our members here, and if you were not one of them, you missed a great evening of singing praises to God and teaching, speaking to, and admonishing one another in song. We had plenty of food for the one hundred fifty we planned on. The problem was the seventy-two we had not planned on. With a few pizzas and sub sandwiches bought at the last minute, we made it enough to feed all who stayed for the fellowship.