

## Legalism, License & Living by the Spirit

### **Legalism believes that the rules and appearances matter most.**

#### **The Pharisees – Clean on the Outside, Filthy on the Inside**

Matthew 23: 25-28

*The outside of the cup is clean; the inside is filled with greed and self-indulgence.*

Jesus revealed that many of the Pharisees had their eyes so fixed on themselves and their religious philosophizing and rule-following, that they completely missed the presence of the Christ right in front of them. The Church is at risk of self-indulgence...having eyes so fixed on self that we miss Christ in our religiosity.

### **License believes that grace gives freedom – to sin.**

#### **The “Ultra-Tolerant” – Equate Grace with Freedom to Walk in Sin**

This attitude is growing in popularity as the remedy for legalism. In our enthusiasm to declare that all are welcome to receive Christ’s forgiveness and grace (and all are!), we condone sinfulness before a holy God.

Romans 8:1-16

*There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. [Hallelujah!]...The law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death (vv.1-2).*

We walk under the banner of the Lord’s approval because of Christ’s work on the cross, and it cannot be earned by us! YET, in the name of “freedom” and “being real” about our faults to avoid legalism, some of us have been happy to get some mud on the outside as well as the inside of the cup without concern.

If we are truly set free, we are free from salvetry to sin, and holiness will be the evidence of our freedom.

2 Peter 1:3-9

### **Living by the Spirit**

#### ***The “Filled” – Walking in the Power and Freedom of the Spirit***

Galatians 5:16-25

*Let the Holy Spirit guide your lives... (v.16)*

*If we belong to Christ Jesus the desires of our sinful nature are nailed to the cross... (v.24).*

*“Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit’s leading in every part of our lives” (v. 25).*

“Do not be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18).

- The verb tense in the Greek indicates that we are to be *continually filled* with the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit brings unity among believers and power to walk in holiness (see Ephesians).

Books of interest:

*What’s So Amazing About Grace?* by Philip Yancey

*The Pursuit of Holiness* by Jerry Bridges

*How to Be Filled with the Holy Spirit* by A.W. Tozer