

Love Or Legalism?

When we insist men must adhere strictly to the commandments of God, is it love or legalism?

Men say it is legalism. They say, "We should obey a Savior, not a system." Or, "Give me the man, not a plan." Their idea is that to admit the existence of a law by which man must live in order to be right with God, is legalism.

God, however, calls this love. The Spirit said, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3). Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). Keeping the commandments of God is an expression of love, not legalism. To insist others do the same is love for God and man, not legalism in a system or plan.

The Holy Spirit was sent to reveal all truth (John 16:13). Why would anyone think the truth was revealed so men could be cavalier toward it? It was revealed so men could obey it and be set free (John 8:32). Paul wrote, "But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered" (Romans 6:17). This does not destroy a relationship with the Savior, for it is His system--the gospel (Hebrews 5:9).

Steven F. Deaton