

The Faces Legalism Presents

I have covered legalism before in my New Covenant series¹, but here, Frank Viola adds more for us to consider:

“Face 1. The legalist acts out of religious duty or fear of divine punishment. The reason why the legalist attends church gatherings is out of religious duty. The reason why he prays is religious duty. The reason why he reads his Bible is religious duty. He is afraid of divine punishment or divine rejection. He is under the moral obligation of the Law. His motive is selfish. There’s no freedom in it. It’s simply bondage.

Face 2. The second face of the legalist is that she acts out of self-exerted energy. She tries to be holy. She works hard at being “a good Christian.” She grits her teeth, bites her nails, and clenches her fists. She, in effect, is doing her best to make God happy.

Face 3. The third face of the legalist is that he adds his own personal standards and equates them with God’s demands. In addition, he pushes those standards on everyone else. “Read your Bible every day. Pray every day. Witness to one person every day. Don’t listen to secular music. Don’t watch television shows that contain profanity or violence.” And on and on. What’s interesting is that none of these specific commands are found in the Bible.

Face 4. The legalist is self-righteous and judgmental. She makes a career out of making sure that everyone else is observing her personal standards. Sadly, however, she is deceived. She is out of touch with the fact that she is just as ruined and fallen as everyone she condemns.”²

Check yourself out.

See these teachings for more information:

- “1-How to Identify Legalism”
canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/how-to-identify-legalism.pdf
- “29-So You Think You’re Not Legalistic?”
canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/29-So-You-Think-You-Are-Not-Legalistic.pdf

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1 – canberraforerunners.org/?page_id=4888

2 – Frank Viola (2018) “Insurgence” p:222