

**“Stay Out Of The Ditch (And Out Of Hell)”**

**Philippians 3:1-3, 17-19**

**Sermon Series: “Joy Invincible”**

**-The Genuine Doctrine Of Salvation** (know the real thing before we can detect counterfeits): **Genuine salvation is being declared righteous by God through trusting Jesus alone (justification), growing in Christlikeness as the evidence of genuine salvation (sanctification), and being perfected in heaven as the end result of genuine salvation (glorification).**

**1. Stay out of the ditch of legalism (v. 1-3).**

**-Explain the 3 terms Paul uses to describe the legalists (he is demonstrating the hypocrisy of legalism)**

Dogs: They called the Gentiles this as unclean people outside of the covenant blessings, but Paul is turning it around to say that they are really the ones who are unclean and outside the covenant

Evil workers: Again they said this of the Gentiles saying that they didn't do the works of the Law, but Paul is saying that all their attention to the works of the Law made them evil doers

Mutilation-Play on words regarding circumcision; true circumcision is of the heart and not physical

In the letter to the Galatians, Paul was contending with a legalistic group often called the Judaizers. They were basically a “Jesus plus” group in their theology and teaching. They taught that salvation came through faith in Jesus plus circumcision and keeping the Mosaic Law. Paul was vigorously affirming that salvation and spiritual growth comes by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. He was warning them (and us) against legalism. Galatians 5:1-3 says, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.” We are to cling to Jesus and the gospel and live in the power of the Spirit in order to avoid this spiritually destructive poison.

Here are some ways that legalism manifests itself: (include examples)

**Manifestation #1-It is legalism when we try to earn salvation through attempting to keep the Law, religious practices, or doing good deeds (Galatians 2:16, 21).**

**Manifestation #2-It is legalism when our faith is in Jesus plus anything else (Romans 3:28).**

**Manifestation #3-It is legalism when we believe we are justified by faith in Jesus but go back to the Old Covenant or rely on man-made rules for our spiritual growth (Hebrews 8).**

**Manifestation #4-It is legalism when we make our personal convictions in regard to gray areas binding on others (Romans 14) .**

**Manifestation #5-It is legalism when we elevate human traditions and man-made rules to the level of Scripture (Matthew 15:1-9).**

**Manifestation #6-It is legalism when we strive for outward conformity to the Law without inward heart change and without loving God and others, which is the ultimate point of the Law (Matthew 23).**

**-The key to staying out of this ditch is found in Philippians 3:3.**

## **2. Stay out of the ditch of antinomianism (v. 17-19).**

It could also be called license or lawlessness. Antinomianism says you can be justified without experiencing sanctification while sanctification combines justification and sanctification together instead of seeing sanctification as the fruit of justification.

**Explain the description that Paul gives of them in these verses.** They are false believers because they are “enemies of the cross of Christ” headed for “destruction.” They are self-absorbed living for their own desires, glorying in doing things that they should be ashamed of, and focused on the things of this world.

Galatians 5:13 tells us to “not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh.” Timothy George writes, “Here for the first time in Galatians we have a positive indication that the freedom for which Christ has set his people free can be horribly perverted and misused. Freedom can become a pretext or opportunity (Greek: *aphorme*, lit., a ‘springboard’ or ‘base of operations’) for throwing off all moral restraints and indulging the lusts of the flesh. When this has happened, freedom has been corrupted and liberty turned into license. The result is a fearful delusion, a ‘bewitching’ every bit as spiritually paralyzing as a lapse into legalism.” This type of license can also be called antinomianism, and it is very common in modern Christianity. Phil Johnson writes, “In totally non-technical

terms, *antinomianism* is simply the view that Christians are not bound by any of the precepts of Moses' law-moral, civil, ceremonial, or otherwise."

We are certainly not under the civil or ceremonial law anymore, but the Reformers saw three proper uses for the moral Law, paraphrased by me as:

**-The Law is like a mirror that reveals God and shows us our sinful condition and need for a Savior.**

**-The Law is like a guardrail that restrains and protects against evil.**

**-The Law is like a GPS that guides believers in living life.** Phil Johnson writes of this, "In other words, the 'third use of the law' makes the law's moral standards the rule by which the faithful must order their conduct. In this sense, the moral strictures of the law remain binding on Christians, even though we are 'not under the law' in the Pauline sense-i.e., not dependent on our own obedience for any part of our justification."

**Conclusion: Be on the road of genuine salvation by trusting Jesus alone as Savior and Lord.** (explain this out)

**Matthew 7:13-23**

**Are you genuinely saved? Are you trusting in anything in addition to Jesus? Do you think you can go to heaven but still live however you want to live?**