

GRACE COMMUNION CHURCH



LEGALISM

What is it?

HYDERABAD

*Be Blessed
and
Become a Blessing*

GRACE COMMUNION CHURCH



LEGALISM
the
dark
side of
Christianity

HYDERABAD

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DEFINITION

- ▶ Legalism is an attempt to gain favour with God or to think that God will love me / be pleased with me only because of my works.

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DEFINITION

- ▶ The attempt to acquire merit before God through the performance of various rituals and practices.

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MANIFESTATIONS OF LEGALISM

- ▶ Earning salvation through good works.

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Ephesian 2 (NLT)

- ▶ 8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. 10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

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MANIFESTATIONS OF LEGALISM

- ▶ Concerned with outward performance rather than inward change

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Luke 11

- ▶ **37** As Jesus was speaking, one of the Pharisees invited him home for a meal. So he went in and took his place at the table. **38** His host was amazed to see that he sat down to eat without first performing the hand-washing ceremony required by Jewish custom. **39** Then the Lord said to him, **“You Pharisees are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed and wickedness! **40** Fools! Didn’t God make the inside as well as the outside? **41** So clean the inside by giving gifts to the poor, and you will be clean all over.**”

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MANIFESTATIONS OF LEGALISM

- ▶ How much work is enough?
- ▶ More, more, more !!

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Luke 11

- ▶ 42 “What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.

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MANIFESTATIONS OF LEGALISM

- ▶ People become of lesser importance than law.

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Luke 7

- ▶ 9 Then he said, “You skillfully sidestep God’s law in order to hold on to your own tradition. 10 For instance, Moses gave you this law from God: ‘Honor your father and mother,’^e and ‘Anyone who speaks disrespectfully of father or mother must be put to death.’^f 11 But you say it is all right for people to say to their parents, ‘Sorry, I can’t help you. For I have vowed to give to God what I would have given to you.’^g 12 In this way, you let them disregard their needy parents. 13 And so you cancel the word of God in order to hand down your own tradition. And this is only one example among many others.”

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MANIFESTATIONS OF LEGALISM

- ▶ Focus is on what we do for God rather than what God has done for us.

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Luke 18

- ▶ 9To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’
- ▶ 13“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

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Luke 18

- ▶ 14 “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

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TWO DAMAGING EFFECTS OF LEGALISM

- ▶ Believing that we have to work for salvation, we might not be able to receive that which is freely given.

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John 13

- ▶ Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him. 6 When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7 Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will." 8 "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!"
- ▶ Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me."

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TWO DAMAGING EFFECTS OF LEGALISM

- ▶ Believing that we have to work for salvation, we might not be able to receive that which is freely given.
- ▶ Becoming full of pride.

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Luke 18

- ▶ 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’
- ▶ 9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, ...

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Legalism is a lie

- ▶ Eph 2:8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. 10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

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Titus 2

- ▶ 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

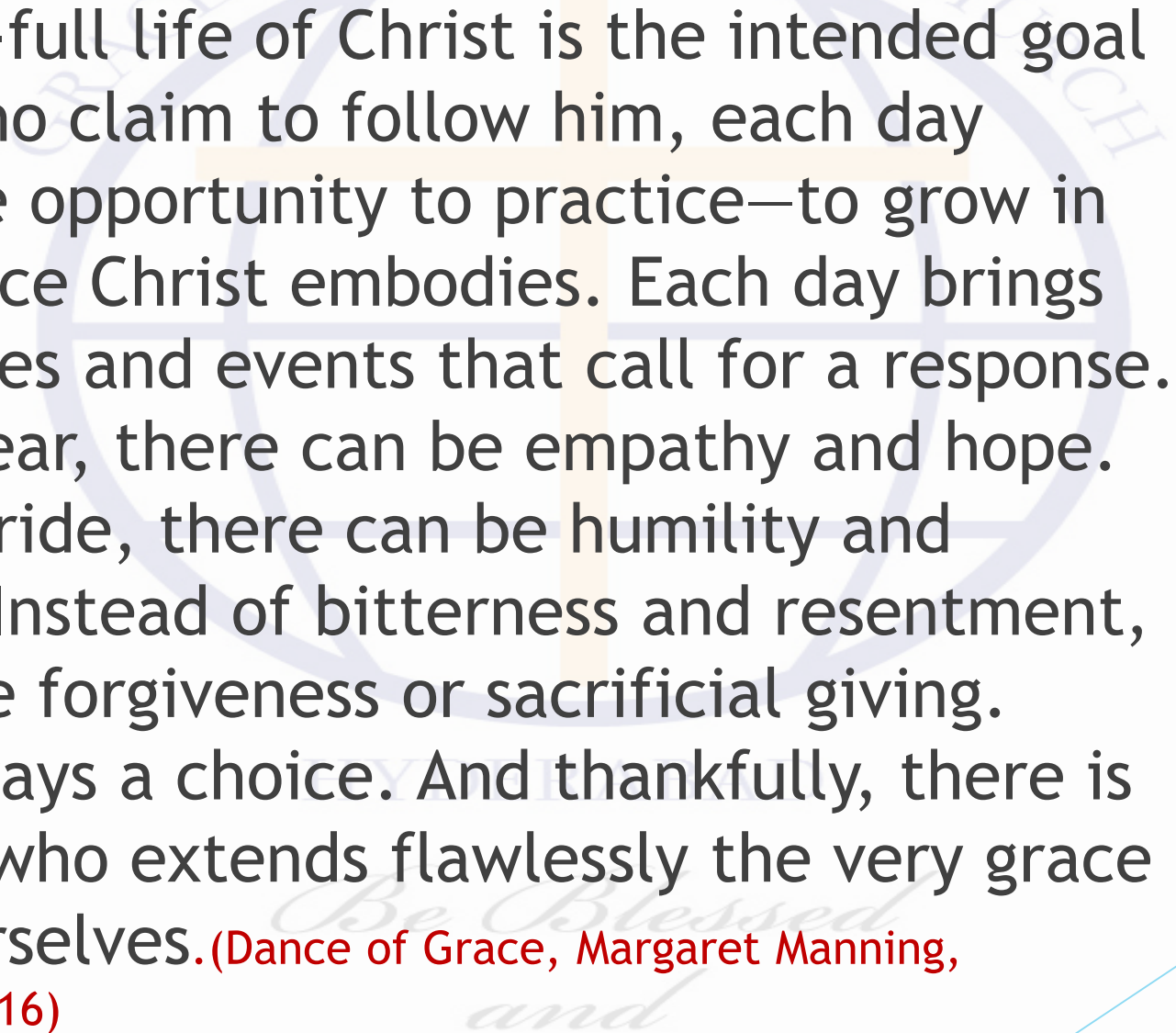
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VIDEO

The Testimony &
Confession of
David Berkowitz

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- ▶ If the grace-full life of Christ is the intended goal for those who claim to follow him, each day presents the opportunity to practice—to grow in the very grace Christ embodies. Each day brings circumstances and events that call for a response. Instead of fear, there can be empathy and hope. Instead of pride, there can be humility and hospitality. Instead of bitterness and resentment, there can be forgiveness or sacrificial giving. There is always a choice. And thankfully, there is always one who extends flawlessly the very grace we need ourselves. (Dance of Grace, Margaret Manning, September 20, 2016)

Matt 7

- ▶ 12 “Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets....”

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