

A rule **dictates** a behavior.

The conscience **inspires** a behavior.

Legalism make religion a human
achievement.

Legalism makes conformity to a rule the **measure** of spirituality.

Legalism invites **comparison**.
Legalism feeds **pride**.

Legalism is deceptive because it offers (external) **standards** rather than (internal) **qualities**.

Legalism is very hard to escape.

I have not come to abolish the law but to FULFILL it. Until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter of the law will disappear until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks even the least commandment will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever practices these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.
(Matthew 5:17-19)

Christ is the END of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. (*Romans 10:4*)

Jesus i.e. the “Christ event”
fulfilled the **PURPOSE** of law
and the **NEED** for law.

The OT laws/sacrifices were shadows (Col. 2:17). A shadow has no reality, rather, the reality makes the shadow. Christ was the REALITY toward which these shadows pointed!

*Man fixates on the external rule while
God seeks the internal relationship.

MYSTICISM

Those who shift their focus from Christ to “my experience” often **intimidate** weak Christians who feel that their “experience” does not **measure up**.

Do not be intimidated by “spiritual” experiences. While faith is **different** than reason, it does not **discount** reason.

Jesus appeared in human history and culture, spoke human language, and appealed to both intellect and senses. God is not reached or honored by abandoning our intellect or natural senses.

Treasure your own “experience” but do not expect others to mimic it.

ASCETICISM

“Whoever would come after me must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me.” (*Luke 9:23*)

Denial of **SELF** is different than abstaining from a **product** or **practice**.

Rules made by mankind may be **valuable** in avoiding danger but cannot **create** or **nourish** a relationship with God.

Abstaining from something for your own spiritual growth may be commendable and may be a great **blessing** to you. If so, do it **joyfully** and **humbly** . (*Matthew 6:16-18*)