

Don't Buy Into This Dangerous Lie That Can Leave You Angry at God, Others

Gone are the days when legalism in faith circles focused only on “clothesline holiness” questions such as: How short can a woman’s skirt be? How long can a man’s hair be? Can you go to the movies? On this episode of *The Leader’s Notebook* on the Charisma Podcast Network, Dr. Mark Rutland explains the true definition of legalism and the dangers that can accompany it.

He says the philosophy of legalism essentially says that “the whole universe, all of human existence, all of reality runs on a set of immutable laws that are if-then propositions.”

This legalistic belief is faulty at best, but borderline heretical when applied to Scripture at its worst. Dr. Rutland says the process goes like this: “We try to build walls of safety around us with these laws. And then, when the laws don’t work as we thought they should, or as we were told they should, we come to moments of great disappointment, disillusionment and anger. Resentment [builds] toward laws that didn’t work or toward ourselves because we do it right, or toward others who sold us on the laws.”

If someone places their faith in a legalistic worldview rather than in God, problems result, Rutland says. That person thinks, “I followed the rules. I did what I was told. I did the ‘if’ very well, and ‘then’ didn’t come out ... Therefore, I’m angry at life, angry at others, angry at myself and ultimately, angry at God.”

The key, Rutland says, is what he calls “the opposite of legalism,” which, he says, is “the belief that God is God, God is transcendent, God is ultimate, God is holy and that the universe rests in the palm of God’s hand. .. At the end of

everything, we say, 'I trust God for the outcome.'"

To learn more about how legalism goes against God's nature and character, listen to the full podcast here. {eo2}