

# A Guide to Being a Legalist

1. Make rules outside the Bible
2. Push yourself to try and keep your rules.
3. Castigate yourself when you don't keep your rules
4. Become proud when you do keep your rules
5. Appoint yourself as judge over other people
6. Get angry with people who break your rules or have different rules
7. Beat the losers

# Martin Luther

- “I hated that phrase ‘the righteousness of God,’ which I had been taught to understand as the righteousness by which God is righteous, and punishes unrighteous sinners. Although I lived a blameless life as a monk, I felt that I was a sinner with an uneasy conscience before God. I also could not believe that I had pleased him with my works. Far from loving that righteous God who punished sinners, I actually hated him....”

# 1. Because we can't believe we're that sinful



## 2. Because we want to see progress

- Luther:

- “I began to understand that ‘righteousness of God’ as that by which the righteous person lives by the gift of God (faith); and this sentence, ‘the righteousness of God is revealed’ to refer to a passive righteousness, by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, the ‘righteous person lives by faith.’ This immediately made me feel as though I had been born again, and as though I had entered through open gates into paradise itself. From that moment, I saw the whole face of Scripture in a new light.... And now, where I had once hated the phrase, ‘the righteousness of God’, I began to love and extol it as the sweetest of phrases, so that this passage in Paul became the very gate of paradise for me.”

## 2. Because we want to see progress

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- Council of Trent (1544) canon 9:
  - "If any one saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified; in such wise as to mean, that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to the obtaining the grace of Justification, and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will; let him be anathema."

### 3. Because we want salvation to be about us.

- “Am I making progress? If I am really honest, it seems to me that the question is odd, even a little ridiculous. As I get older and death draws nearer, I don’t seem to be getting better. I get a little more impatient, a little more anxious about having perhaps missed what this life has to offer, a little slower, harder to move, a little more sedentary and set in my ways. Am I making progress? Well, maybe it seems as though I sin less, but that may only be because I ‘m getting tired! It’s just too hard to keep indulging the lusts of youth. Is that sanctification? I wouldn’t think so! One should not, I expect, mistake encouraging senility for sanctification! But can it be, perhaps that it is precisely the unconditional gift of grace that helps me to see and admit all that? I hope so.” (Gehard Forde)

# Grace Alone, Faith Alone

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1. Because we don't believe we're that sinful
2. Because we want to see progress (and contribute a little)
3. Because we want salvation to be about us