

Baptized FOR the Remission of Sins

David Halbrook

Since you first sinned, you have needed forgiveness from God. God's plan for your forgiveness is revealed in the gospel (Rom. 1:16). Is baptism a part of that plan?

Peter once said, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins... (Acts 2:38) Read that again and answer this question: Why did Peter tell them to repent and be baptized?

Religious groups who teach that God gives the remission of sins before baptism often claim that "for the remission of sins" means "because of the remission of sins." You can test this idea by finding another passage that has the same words. Jesus taught the apostles that His blood/death was "for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). Jesus gave His blood because of sin but not because of the remission of sin! His blood removes our sin when by faith in the working of God, we are baptized (Col. 2:12; Heb. 10:22). Before we receive the benefits of His death, we must be "baptized into His death" (Rom. 6:3). Have you learned about this baptism?

Editor's Note: Not everyone is ready to discuss the subject of baptism—some do not believe God exists or the Bible is from Him. But we all know people who believe in God and the Bible, but who are deceived (or deceiving others) on the subject of the one baptism (Eph. 4:5). Use our *Arkansas Weekly* article to plant these thoughts with a stranger or begin (or continue) a discussion of this subject with a friend.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

Our fall gospel meeting is September 9-14 (Tuesday-Sunday) with Ron Halbrook.

Please check the lists of various assignments and work needing volunteers. From time to time I meet people in the community who say they read the roadside signboard as they drive by. Will you offer them something worth reading?

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Novela Puckett, Samuel Southall, others with ongoing trials, our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians among us.

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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Rejecting the Reins

Lowell Blasingame

In writing to Timothy Paul said that young widows should be refused because when they had begun to wax wanton against Christ, they would marry (**1 Tim. 5:11**). In discussing the derivation of the word translated "wax wanton," Adam Clarke says that it is taken from two words which mean to remove the rein and that it is a "metaphor taken from a pampered horse, from whose mouth the rein has been removed, so that there is nothing to check or confine him" (Clarke's Commentary, Vol. VI, pg. 609). The folly as well as the danger of this is evident to all who have had any experience with horses, and yet we find this to be a fitting description of the course being advocated by many in our society.

Moral Reins There is some clamoring for the removal of all moral reins. Judging others by themselves, they have concluded that there is no such thing as virtue in either man or woman and that any claim made for such is sham and hypocrisy. They want us to believe that the solution for a guilt complex is the removal of the reins that check and confine man in the realm of morals and his being given the liberty to act as he chooses without censure. We might be duped into believing that these pampered horses have discovered the secret for a happy life if it were not for the fact that history has recorded numerous examples of advocates of this philosophy, and the only contributions they have made to society have been heartache and sorrow. This is the inevitable end to which all come that refuses the reins of moral restraint that God has imposed.

Religious Reins There are others who seek the removal of reins in religion. They do not want to be checked or confined to what the Lord has said but wish to be left free to teach and practice what they will. To them, restraint in religion is equated with intolerance and bigotry and to ask for a "thus saith the Lord" equals practicing Bibliolatry. These loose constructionists view the inspired writings as just the best

philosophical thought of a past age and insist that if religion is to serve modern man; it must alter itself to keep pace with his progress. They do not wish to be restricted to the doctrine of Christ (**2 Jn 9**) or confined to building "according to the pattern" (**Heb. 8:5**), but like pampered horses, want the reins removed so they can kick up their heels and run as they wish. Some of my own brethren have joined this herd!

Submission to the restraints of God is for the good and happiness of man. Let those who have named the name of Christ recognize this (**Col. 3:17**) and not be found with that number who seek to remove his reins.

http://www.aubeacon.com/Articles2014/Article_RejectingTheReins.html

Are You A Legalist?

Brett W. Hogland

Most Christians have, at one time or another, been accused of being a "legalist". Of course, the term legalist is used in derision intending that we would run backwards in horror of being connected with the denominational implications of this word. In most religious circles, the term legalist is connected to the Pharisees and its meaning is assigned as being necessarily devoid of love or any proper motive. Obviously then, no one wants to be characterized as a legalist. But have you ever stopped to think about what legalist really means?

What does "legalist" mean? First, it is important to realize that this word is not even used in the Bible. Since the word is not found in the Bible, we will have to define it from the English language. Webster defines legal as: "*deriving authority from or founded on law*"; "*conforming to or permitted by law or established rules*". So then, a legalist is one who *derives his authority from law, or founds his authority on law*. The true legalist *conforms to the law or established rules*. He does those things which are *permitted by law or established rules*. Now you will obviously see that, while this word is not found in the Bible, the concept of "legalist" is definitely found there (**Col.3:17**) (**He.8:5**) (**Jo.4:24**) (**Mt.28:18-20**) "...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you". It is also interesting that the *concept* of legalism or legalist is not used in derision in the Scriptures! We can often learn a lot about a term or a phrase by examining its antonym or opposite. The opposite of legal is illegal. There is no such word as "illegalist" (which is what our accusers really are) so what is a person who is not a legalist? We can see from the definition that one who is not a legalist is one who **DOES NOT derive his authority from law**. He **DOES NOT conform to the law and DOES NOT do only those things permitted by law**. The

Bible actually has a term that describes a person who does not *found his authority upon law* – that term is "lawless". This word is used in (**Mt.7:23**) where Jesus says "depart from me, you who practice *lawlessness*". The KJV translates this word "iniquity". It is the Greek word *anomia* which means *without law*. A legalist conforms to law, thus one who is not a legalist is essentially *without law* or *lawless* – a *spiritual outlaw*! John tells us that "whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness" (**1Jo.3:4**). The Bible tells us that Jesus "hated lawlessness" (**He.1:9**). Would that make Jesus a "legalist"? You see, a legalist is not necessarily devoid of love or any proper motive. The word "legalist" simply describes a person who finds it important to conform to the proper law or authority. A man's motive, love or lack thereof does not inhere in the word. There is no doubt that our motive to keep God's law must be love (**Mt.22:37**), but love without law keeping is condemning (**Lk.6:46**) and really isn't 'love' at all (**Jo.14:15**). Jesus did NOT rebuke the Pharisees for their strict attention to law. When He spoke of their tithing of mint, anise and cummin (**Mt.23:23**), He did not criticize their tithing but their failure to show mercy, justice and faith. Jesus said "these you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone". We should not pursue law keeping and ignore justice, mercy and faith, but neither should we pursue justice and mercy while ignoring law keeping. Jesus never criticized law keeping, but rather, He himself kept the law perfectly. I ask again, was Jesus a legalist? I believe He was and I am satisfied to be as Jesus. The alternative to being a legalist is to be lawless, which is the reason that many who hate legalism will also tell us that we are not under law. This effort to escape the accountability of Christ's law is lawlessness and lawlessness is sin. Are you a legalist or are you lawless?

Jesus Christ is preeminent over all, having been given "*all authority...in heaven and on earth*" (**Matthew 28:18**). We all live under the authority of Christ; both the lost and the saved. The question to ask yourself is whether or not you are respecting His authority. The answer is not hard to ascertain; it is found in whether or not you are humbly obeying Him. Jesus rebuked those who called Him "*Lord, Lord*" while disobeying what He said (read **Luke 6:46**). There is no blessing for acknowledging Jesus as the head of His church while violating His revealed word. Whatever we say and do must be in harmony with His authoritative word (read **Colossians 3:17**). Honor Christ and His authority today by carefully following His word.

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