

► **Outline**

Today's message is based on **Colossians 2:16-23**.

*And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him.*  
**Colossians 2:6 (NLT)**

**A. Introduction**  
(Colossians 2:10-15)

**B. To have a relationship with God:**

( \_\_\_\_\_ instead of \_\_\_\_\_ )

**You don't have to:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ man-made rules.  
(Colossians 2:16-17. C/R: Romans 14:21; Galatians 5:1)

2. Have a \_\_\_\_\_ experience.  
(Colossians 2:18-19. C/R: Matthew 4:10; 1 Timothy 2:5)

3. \_\_\_\_\_ your self-denial.  
(Colossians 2:20-23. C/R: Matthew 6:1,16-18)

**Answers:** B. Therefore, if 1. Follow 2. particular 3. Prove

**Resource Information:** Unless otherwise noted, outline and onscreen verses are from NLT version (New Living Translation) of *The Holy Bible*. C/R, if noted, refers to a 'cross reference' of Scripture verse(s). Today's outline and discussion guide are available to mobile device users through the Brookwood Church app available through your favorite app store.

## ► Discussion Guide

Use this guide with friends or on your own to pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus. For additional Bible Study tools, guides and devotionals, check out: [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com), [bible.com](http://bible.com), [youversion.com](http://youversion.com) and [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org).

### Conversation Starter

Would high school teachers have labeled you a rule-follower or rule-breaker?

### Personal Reflection/Group Discussion

Read [Colossians 2:16-23](#).

1. What's your initial reaction to this passage? What stands out to you?

#### LEGALISM

Merriam-Webster defines legalism as *strict, literal, or excessive conformity to the law or to a religious or moral code*.

In the church, legalism is a term that describes our tendency to rely on *what we can do for God* rather than *what He has done for us*. It's an over-focus on religious activity to the neglect of an intimate relationship with a loving God. It can be described as a rigid, often impersonal, judgmental, self-reliant approach to the Christian life. Legalism often sounds like this:

- I can earn my way to heaven by being good enough to deserve it.
- I think I'm a Christian, but I can't be sure unless I prove it by good works.
- God must be disappointed with me. I should be praying more.
- That person might not be a true Christian because they don't read their Bible and pray before going to work in the morning.

2. Can you identify with any of these statements? Explain.
3. What are other ways legalism shows up in your life?
4. What are signs that a church has become legalistic?
5. Paul describes some spiritual dangers for those who rely on their own performance to be right with God ([vs. 17-19](#)). What are they? Can you think of other results of having a legalistic approach to the Christian life?

6. If rules are powerless to change us ([vs. 23](#)), how are we to understand passages like [1 Peter 1:13-16](#)?
7. What do you think Jesus meant when He said *If you love Me, you will keep My commandments* ([John 14:15](#))?
8. What should our approach be to the standards of Christian living? In other words, what's an alternative to legalism?  
For further insight, check out [Galatians 5:13-15](#); [1 Peter 2:16-17](#).
9. What is Jesus' message is to you personally this week?
10. What do you think Jesus' message is to Brookwood this week?

### Soul Training

Pursue Jesus anyway you want to this week. The Bible describes many practices that will help us grow closer to God. What will you do?

### Memory Verse

*And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him.*

[Colossians 2:6 \(NLT\)](#)

### Daily Reading

Day 1: [Colossians 2:16-23](#)

Day 4: [Psalm 119:57-64](#)

Day 2: [Matthew 6:1, 16-18](#)

Day 5: [Jude 24-25](#)

Day 3: [Romans 8:12-16](#)

### Prepare for Next Sunday

Next Sunday, August 5, we'll continue the series *Living Changed Lives*. To prepare for the message, read [Colossians 3:1-11](#).

### Why Jesus?

If you've never experienced God's grace and forgiveness, we'd love the opportunity to talk with you about a life-changing relationship with Jesus. Email [mark.taylor@brookwoodchurch.org](mailto:mark.taylor@brookwoodchurch.org) or call [864.688.8211](tel:864.688.8211).

